

# STRIKING NEWS TODAY

March 8, 2006

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## Why go on strike?

No one wanted a faculty strike, for many reasons. Yet a strike has become necessary. You might wonder if there is another way to get beyond this impasse with the management bargaining team. “Can’t we all just get along?”

Sadly, no. Striking is our right and responsibility as union members. The historians among us know that until the solidarity of unions brought about changes to labour relations practices, workers were at the mercy of their employers. Today, we have a structured work relationship with our employer based on our Collective Agreement which sets out the terms and conditions of our contract. Just as the employer has certain rights and responsibilities regarding our workload and working conditions, we have rights and responsibilities regarding how we deliver that labour, and in the case of a strike, how we withhold it.

**A strike is the next step in the collective bargaining process.** When bargaining fails to achieve the fair agreement we seek, when negotiations stall, the Labour Relations Act provides for us to deprive our employer of our time and talents to bring pressure to bear on reaching a settlement.

**It draws attention to our cause.** News coverage of a strike helps us gain public support. This is a way to put pressure on government, and often the employer as well, to settle the matter. When students, parents, and other members of the community with a vested interest in quality education lend their voices to ours, it sends a strong and direct message to those responsible for making education a priority.

**It brings work to a halt.** No pain, no gain, as they say. Stopping work, withholding our labour from our employer, is a clear and forceful way of telling the employer, “We want a fair agreement and we want it *now*.”

**It forces management to take action.** A strike is a noisy, messy, thorny, sprawling disruption to what is usually a well-ordered routine. A strike draws the community and the media into the fray. Management *must* deal with the situation; they cannot ignore it.

**It ensures the validity of the collective bargaining process.** After the union receives the mandate to strike, we must go through with it unless the strike is prevented by agreement, legislation, or arbitration. Without the will to follow through and carry out a strike, we cannot demonstrate our support of our union leaders, our collective agreement, our demands, or our commitment to our jobs. A strike equalizes the power balance between workers and management.

We didn’t *want* a strike, but STRIKE WE MUST, as we have exhausted our other options.

A strike is not meant to “punish” the employer. We don’t want to be in an adversarial relationship with our college management. What we DO want is to exercise our legal right to strike to bring attention to our valid and government-mandated demand for quality education. A strike is our ultimate source of leverage in the collective bargaining process, and we *must* exercise this power to achieve a fair settlement.

E-mail us your photos & stories: [union@opseu560.org](mailto:union@opseu560.org)

# Quality Education means Quality Evaluation

Quality education means quality evaluation—and that takes time and expertise. However, management's workload proposals would require another approach. That's where Plan B comes in handy for evaluating student work in a flash. See how this works for you.

**Philosophy:** What is a grade?

**Mathematics:** Grades are variable.

**Computer Studies:** Random number generator determines grade.

**English:** Professors total the number of As, Bs, Cs, etc. in each student's essay and assign the letter grade that occurs most frequently. Spelling counts.

**Music:** Each student must figure out his grade by listening to the instructor play the corresponding note (+ and - would be sharp and flat respectively). Tone-deaf students fail.

**Statistics:** All grades are fitted to a normal curve.

**Psychology:** Students are asked to blot ink in their exam books, close them and turn them in. The professor opens the books and assigns the first grade that comes to mind.

**History:** All students get the same grade they got last term.

**Police Foundations:** A, if you don't get caught.

**Theology:** Grade is determined by God.

**Physical Education:** Everybody gets an A.

**Fire Protection:** Students are graded on the amount of weight they can carry up a ladder.

**Electronics:** If the little light goes on, A.

**Fashion Design:** B is "hot" this year.

**Technical Communication:** The grade assigned is on page 242 of the manual, but nobody reads the manual.



## Pickers — Got Questions???

If you've tried to reach the union office, you'll know how difficult it is to get through! So, when you have questions about your picketing duties — for example, requesting a change to your shift, or wondering what to do if you've fallen ill and can't come in to picket — please contact your picket captain.

Please ask your picket captain for his/her telephone number, and try to make your calls at a reasonable time of day.

If your questions aren't urgent, please wait and ask them on the picket line. As well, the Local 560 website ([www.opseu560.org](http://www.opseu560.org)) contains lots of helpful information.

## Warning for Newnham Picketers

**Avoid the prospect of costly towing expenses and the inconvenience of a trip to the pound at the end of your shift.** Do NOT to park in the Skymark Mall or Fairview Mall parking lots. Parking enforcement is out with a vengeance in the Van Horne/Seneca Hill Drive area as well.

Please use the TTC. For those who drive in from a great distance, we have a 'shuttle service' from our union office (Suite 119, 2942 Finch Ave. E. at Victoria Park). Please come up to the office 15 minutes before your shift to request a ride.

**E-mail us your photos & stories: [union@opseu560.org](mailto:union@opseu560.org)**