

Toward consistent and contained teaching loads

Already burdened with mounting workloads from class size increases, declining resources, and the use of new communication technologies such as email, YUFA members anticipate the 25% double cohort enrolment increase with trepidation.

For this round of collective bargaining, YUFA members identified addressing workload issues as one of the union's top priorities.

The task of dealing with management-imposed workload increase has been downloaded to units, and the Collective Agreement offers inadequate protections for members in this crucial area. In the last round of bargaining, YUFA took first steps toward reining in teaching loads to the levels guaranteed by the Agreement by requiring units to formulate more uniform ways of calculating teaching loads in light of all the components of workload, e.g. supervision, class size, and course co-ordination.

Now YUFA is bargaining the four proposals below in order to begin achieving consistent and reduced workloads across the University:

YUFA survey respondents (n=430) who say...		%
Workload is an important priority		62
My workload has increased in the last 5 years		67
Overall, email from students has significantly increased my teaching load		51
My class sizes are too large for optimal learning		43
Other aspects of workload are so heavy that few members in my unit want to do committee work or fill chair and programme director positions		43
It is very difficult to achieve a balance among teaching, research and service		42
I receive no teaching load credit for graduate supervision		39

1 Increase openness & transparency

- Units will specify how they determine 'normal teaching load', subject to some basic requirements
- The method of assigning workload will be distributed to all unit members

2 Recognise of certain basic teaching load factors

- At least 0.5 additional course credit will be given for:
 - Supervising graduate students
 - Co-ordinating courses with 5 or more tutorials
 - Preparing and giving an internet or correspondence course for the first time
- Teaching assistance will be provided for all courses with over 50
- YUFA and the Employer will jointly address the inundation of email communication with students on teaching load

3 Safeguard your time free of teaching for research (and life)

- Outer limits of the 'teaching day' will be set
- The following will not be required:
 - More than 5 contact hours per day
 - Teaching on two days in a row without a 13-hour break
 - Teaching more than 5 days in one week
 - Weekend teaching
 - Teaching for more than ten consecutive months
 - Teaching more than two summers in a row if untenured

4 Preserve the teaching complement

- Maximum student : YUFA faculty ratio will be established
- Maximum student : [YUFA + CUPE instructors] ratio will be established

Your voices ...

Fundamental changes imposed on York (demographic changes, funding changes) have increased workload for all. Faculty who ignore the changes, refuse to teach large classes, refuse all service, refuse to supervise grad students are, and will be increasingly, rewarded for the research they are free to do. Increasingly, incentives for the individual oppose critically the well-being of YUFA and York. If am right in both my reading and understanding then YUFA's opportunity lies in addressing workload: transparency, equality, and full and proper credit for non-research activities. The chaos, resentment, personal lobbying and disenfranchisement are similar to that one might see in a class for which there are no published, consistent set of evaluation criteria. (Atkinson)

My department still has a three-course load for full-time teaching, plus graduate supervision and committee work. (Arun Mukherjee, Arts)

I would like recognition for graduate supervision. (Glendon)

I don't have markers, but I have students who write a lot – I believe this practice is essential. Therefore, I am constantly marking. Why do some courses have markers and others don't? (Jana Vizmuller-Zocco, Arts)

From personal correspondence with a faculty member at University of Regina: "5 students in a practicum seminar? At my university our practicum seminars are capped at 30!" (Naomi Norquay, Education)

Using email, internet, increases workload. Email means more personal interaction is required, it is longer and more difficult to respond to questions. Internet means more sources of information to maintain, plus more "canned" work is expected. (FPAS)

There is absolutely no equivalent in workload between a seminar of 25 courses and a course of 260 students with a ten-person teaching team. Supervision and pedagogic mentoring of teaching assistants (while extremely important and valuable) demands significant time and energy, as does negotiating the complex relationships between students, TAs and course directors. Never mind the email correspondence! Given that students earn 9 credits for such Foundations courses, I wonder if there is not some associated reasoning in terms of YUFA members' workloads. (Arts)

My concern is about course loading – whether some limits might be set in place regarding the length of time a certain

teaching load might demand faculty to be on campus. I believe 'day length' measures are in place for YUSA but are not in place for YUFA. If I'm scheduled to teach at 9:30 a.m. and teaching until 8:30 p.m. (regardless of breaks), are there limits in place to determine how many consecutive days can be demanded? (Fine Arts)

Given that our value as faculty is often based on our publications and the amount of grant money we bring in to York, yet often we spend a lot of our time preparing and giving lectures, it seems that we are placed in a difficult position as we attempt to juggle the teaching load and combine it with grant/article writing. (Susan Murtha, Arts)

The increase in teaching and service has had a direct impact on my ability to devote time to research projects. (Fine Arts)

We need to begin to specify number of people taught in the contract – and, at a minimum, to guarantee that there will be no further deterioration in these numbers. (Nick Lary, Arts)

For me, workload is the critical issue; we need considerably better protections in the collective agreement from arbitrary increases. (Linda Briskin, Arts)