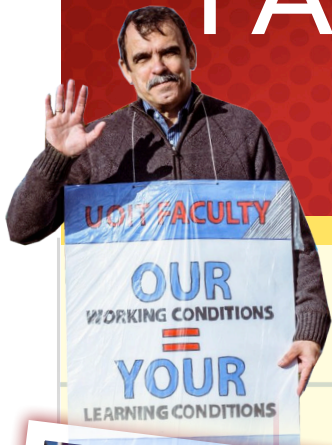


FACULTY STAND WITH students



Dear students:

We understand that the last five weeks have been very difficult for you, as they have been for us. Rest assured: we would have preferred to be in class with you.

We are glad to be back working with you again. We are committed to your success. We will do what is required to save the semester.

We want to be clear about why faculty went on strike. No worker goes on strike without good reason, and college faculty, who are passionate about their work and about education, are no different. If the College Employer Council had been willing to negotiate on the important issues faculty raised, we could have quickly achieved a deal without missing a single day of class. Unfortunately, this is not what happened, and we were left with a difficult choice – either allow the college system to continue its steady downward slide, or take a stand.

Faculty went on strike because we believe that students should have the best education possible. If professors, instructors, counsellors, and librarians don't have the ability to ensure academic standards in our courses and programs, it is students who lose.

We also went on strike because a system with over 70 per cent of faculty being precarious workers can't be sustained. This situation is unfair for contract faculty and students alike. We need more full-time faculty in the classroom so that they have the time to support your learning.

Finally, we took a stand against the notion that all that students can expect when they graduate is a precarious life in a part-time "gig economy." We do not accept that coming generations can't have secure full-time jobs. You deserve better, and our contract faculty do, too.

The one thing faculty did not strike over was money in our pockets. Each faculty member lost thousands of dollars in this strike – money we don't expect to recover. In this light, we would also like to clarify statements made by the College Employer Council (CEC) on November 16. When the union was trying to achieve a settlement with the help of the provincial government, one of the things it looked at was compensation to cover wages lost during the two weeks it took the CEC to hold their time-wasting forced offer vote. The CEC jumped on this and represented it as negatively as possible, calling it a bonus and saying it would come out of a student hardship fund. This is simply untrue.

We appreciate that some students may not agree with what faculty did. You were caught in the middle of a conflict between two visions of what post-secondary education, and our very economy, will look like in the coming years. This was a fight about the future – your future. We look forward to working with you to make it as bright as possible, and to support your success as you move forward.

Sincerely,

Your college faculty

