

March 29, 2024

Academic workers across Canada face a critical moment in Canadian labour history. Stagnating wages, post-Covid austerities, and a cost-of-living crisis continue to adversely impact the well-being of academic workers across Canada. An impassioned organized labour movement is growing in the academic sector in response. **We, the unionized representatives of academic workers at six universities across the Prairie Region (Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan), stand in solidarity with the many Unions fighting for a better deal for academic workers in Canada.**

In February 2024, 6800 academic workers – including Teaching Assistants (TAs), Invigilators, Course Instructors, and Postdoctoral Fellows – with the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 3902 at the University of Toronto voted 94.4% (Unit 1) & 95.1% (Unit 5) in favour of strike action, before reaching a last minute ‘historic’ deal within hours of the strike date of March 4th [1](#) [2](#) [3](#). On Monday, February 26th, 3000 academic workers with CUPE 3903 at York University, Toronto, commenced strike action [4](#) [5](#). On February 28th, thousands of academic workers with CUPE 2626 at the University of Ottawa voted 91 percent in favour of strike action [6](#). On Monday, March 25th, 1600 academic workers with the Association of Graduate Students Employed at McGill (AGSEM), McGill University, Montreal, commenced strike action [7](#) [8](#). On Thursday, April 11th, over 2000 academic workers with the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) Local 610 at the University of Western, London, Ontario, will be in a legal strike position with a strong strike mandate from their membership [9](#) [10](#). In Alberta, the Graduate Labour Union has spent sixteen months in bargaining with the University of Calgary, has reached an impasse and is seeking an essential service exemption before entering formal mediation [11](#).

Academic workers at York University and McGill have voted a clear mandate for job action with strong turnouts on the picket lines. Support them with a message [12](#) or donation today [13](#) [14](#). Strike votes at the University of Toronto, the University of Ottawa and Western University have sent a strong message to employers and provincial governments that **academic workers in Canada deserve better!** We commend the fortitude demonstrated throughout the respective collective bargaining processes and applaud CUPE 3902 for negotiating wage increases of 12.8% over three-years [3](#).

After years of tuition increases, rising inflation and exorbitant increases in food and housing costs, academic workers are facing an untenable economic reality without any commensurate increases in wages or benefits. Our members cite similar issues, such as food insecurity, over reliance on foodbanks, and a lack of accessible housing. Whether you live in Toronto or Calgary, Montreal or Brandon, the numbers just do not add up. Academic workers deserve fair compensation for their research and teaching labour, and wages that allow them to live with respect and dignity. **We unequivocally call for a living wage for all academic workers in Canada!**

As we collectively fight for a better future for academic workers in Canada, we, the GLU (UCalgary), GSA-LRC (UAlberta), ULGA (ULethbridge), PSAC 40004 (USaskatchewan), PSAC 55601 (Brandon), PSAC 55600 (UWinnipeg), express our enduring solidarity with CUPE 3903 (York), CUPE 2626 (UOttawa), AGSEM (McGill), and PSAC 610 (Western).



In solidarity and support, we present this statement on behalf of the undersigned.

Graduate Labour Union, University of Calgary, Alberta

Labour Relations Committee, Graduate Students' Association, University of Alberta

Academically Employed Graduate Student's Union, University of Lethbridge, Alberta

Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) Local 40004 at The University of Saskatchewan

Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) Local 55601 at The University of Brandon, Manitoba

Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) Local 55600 at The University of Winnipeg, Manitoba

References:

1. [CUPE units reach tentative agreement with U of T minutes before entering legal position to strike – The Varsity](#)
2. [Potential CUPE Strike Update | University of Toronto Faculty Association \(utfa.org\)](#)
3. [UNITED WE WON! CUPE 3902 + CUPE 3261 Tentative Agreements Reached! – We are U of T](#)
4. ['Breaking point': Thousands of academic workers at York University go on strike | Globalnews.ca](#)
5. [Strike 2024 | CUPE 3903](#)
6. [Academic workers at University of Ottawa vote resoundingly in favour of strike - CommunityWire](#)
7. [1,600 McGill teaching assistants to strike over salary dispute starting Monday - Montreal | Globalnews.ca](#)
8. [McGill TAs on Strike | AGSEM-AÉÉDEM](#)
9. [TA union takes next step towards strike action | News | westerngazette.ca](#)
10. [TA, postdocs rally for livable wages, supports | News | westerngazette.ca](#)
11. [Bargaining Updates – GLU Calgary](#)
12. [Solidarity with CUPE 3903 - CUPE Ontario](#)
13. [AGSEM Strike Fund for McGill Teaching Assistants on strike \(zeffy.com\)](#)
14. [Support Striking Workers at York University! | CUPE 3903](#)

