

FAQs for Faculty Members and Librarians

These Frequently Asked Questions present the Vice-President Academic & Provost's "Strike Policy and Guidelines for Faculty and Librarians." The policy and guidelines follow from the decision by the Deans of all Faculties, in conjunction with the Chair of Senate, on the suspension of academic activities.

Q. Who is on strike?

A. CUPE Local 3903, representing the University's contract faculty, Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Graduate Assistants (GAs).

Q. Does this mean that all members of CUPE 3903 are on strike?

A. Yes. All employees represented by CUPE 3903 are on strike. They are not being paid or expected to perform any work.

Q. Even if an individual member wishes to opt out of the strike?

A. Yes. All employees represented by CUPE 3903 are on strike.

Q. What is happening to classes and examinations in the event of a strike?

A. The Deans of all Faculties, in conjunction with the Chair of Senate, previously agreed that all academic activities would be suspended. Academic activities mean classes, examinations and other instructional activities, on or off-campus. There are certain specified exceptions to the suspension: e.g. degree credit activities provided by Osgoode Hall Law School at its downtown campus; graduate degree credit activity in the Schulich School of Business; the Masters of Human Resources Management program. For details on the suspension policy and a list of exceptions please go to the York Secretariat's [Labour Disruption](#) page.

Q. Does this suspension apply to online courses, or distance education courses?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it apply to graduate as well as undergraduate classes?

A. Yes, it applies to both (with the exceptions noted above).

Q. Can I move my classes off-campus and continue to hold them?

A. No. All classes are suspended.

Q. What does this suspension of academic activity mean for the other work that full-time faculty members perform?

A. The suspension of academic activity applies to classes, examinations, and other instructional activities. Faculty members are still expected to maintain their research/scholarly/creative activities and their service obligations. This includes, for example, graduate and undergraduate program reviews, or academic and academic-administrative committees.

Q. What about meetings such as Department meetings or committees?

A. These meetings are not suspended by the policy on suspension of academic activities. Faculty are expected to fulfill their professional responsibilities as regards service, including participation in the decision-making councils of the University, and sharing in the necessary administrative work of their Departments, Faculties, and the University. Faculty are reminded that they are expected to deal fairly and ethically with their colleagues, students, and other members of the University community. Among other things, this means that Council and administrative activities having an imminent impact upon colleagues and students must proceed on schedule.

It is expected that meetings that are normally held on campus will continue to be held on campus. The presence of picket lines is not a reason to refuse to attend meetings on campus, nor is it a reason to require non-academic employees to attend an off-campus meeting.

If there are facilities on campus for a dial-in or teleconference connection then that is an option for faculty/librarians to attend meetings.

Q. What if I have course assignments that were scheduled to be handed in on dates that CUPE 3903 will be on strike. Can I require that the assignments be submitted on the original schedule?

A. You cannot require that the original deadlines be met during the strike. Please see section 2 of the Senate policy on “Academic Implications of Disruptions or Cessations of University Business Due to Labour Disputes or Other Causes.” You may find the policy at the York Secretariat’s [Policies, Procedures and Regulations](#) page. This also means that you cannot require that they submit their assignments via e-mail or regular mail.

Q. Are candidacy exams, comprehensive exams, dissertation exams, thesis exams, MRP exams suspended?

A. No. Already scheduled candidacy exams, comprehensive exams, dissertation exams, thesis exams, MRP exams may be held.

Q. Can these exams be moved to an off-campus site?

A. No. It is the expectation that these exams will take place in the already designated site. If you do not wish to hold these exams in the designated site the alternative is to reschedule the exam.

Q. What about candidacy exams, comprehensive exams, dissertation exams, thesis exams, MRP exams that have not yet been scheduled?

A. Candidacy exams, comprehensive exams, dissertation, thesis and MRP exams/defenses can continue to be scheduled. They must be scheduled at a designated on-campus site and conducted in accordance with established FGS policy.

Q. What should external examiners be told and by whom?

A. According to current FGS regulations, GPDs 'shall poll the examining committee one week before the oral to ascertain agreement that the dissertation is examinable.' At that point the GPD should, as part of the polling, determine whether committee members are willing to attend the exam if CUPE 3903 should still be on strike on the day of the exam.

Q. Are seminars suspended?

A. Seminars that provide degree-credit activity are suspended. Seminars not associated with degree-credit activity, such as brown bags or colloquia, are not suspended unless the organizers choose to suspend them.

Q. I have arranged for a guest speaker to present to a brown bag lunch. What should I do?

A. University facilities will be open and operating. You may choose, however, to move the event off-campus. No central funding will be provided for this, however.

Q. I have organized a conference. Will the University pay the expenses for moving this conference to an off-campus site?

A. No central funding will be provided.

Q. Can I continue to work with individual students – undergraduate or graduate – on their own individual projects?

A. Yes. This would include, for example, their research/scholarly/creative projects, theses and dissertations, MRPs, papers intended for publication or presentation, performance projects.

Q. Once the strike ends, what will happen to make up the work in academic activities that have been suspended?

A. The Senate policy on “Academic Implications of Disruptions or Cessations of University Business Due to Labour Disputes or Other Causes” would apply. You may find the policy at the York Secretariat’s [Policies, Procedures and Regulations](#) page.

Q. I have a Graduate Assistant. Will s/he continue to work for me during the strike?

A. No. Graduate Assistants are represented by CUPE 3903 and will not be paid and not be expected to perform any work.

Q. What about my Research Assistant?

A. Research Assistants are not covered by the CUPE 3903 collective agreement. They are expected to continue their activities and will continue to be paid during the strike. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to know whether your Assistant is a GA or an RA.

Q. I maintain a Web site for my courses where I post lecture notes, old exams, and old assignments. Must I remove them from my site?

A. No.

Q. Does the suspension of classes and examinations mean that faculty members will not be paid?

A. Full-time faculty members will be paid their normal salary during the strike.

Q. Will the University be closed?

A. No. All academic offices are open during their regular business hours. This includes academic departments, libraries, research services and other administrative departments.

Q. Will students have access to labs, studios, music rooms, rehearsal space during the strike?

A. Yes, provided that appropriate Health and Safety regulations are maintained, and that there is the appropriate supervision from non-CUPE 3903 employees.

Q. What will happen to mail?

A. Arrangements have been made to continue the mail service during the strike. It will arrive at its normal destination and be distributed as normal.

Q. I have a sabbatical scheduled to begin in January. If the strike causes the term to be extended into January will I be able to start my sabbatical on schedule?

A. This would be addressed with your Dean/Principal/University Librarian, and would depend upon the outcome of discussions between the Employer and the York University Faculty Association.

Q. My schedule is such that I have all my teaching responsibilities set for this Fall and my research set for the Winter term. How will this be affected if the strike causes the term to be extended into January?

A. This would be addressed with your Dean/Principal/University Librarian.

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