

Examiner



www.opseu240.ca

December, 2010

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to All!



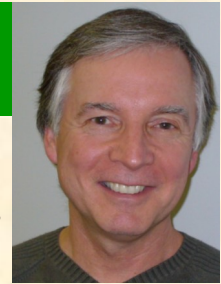
Santa discovers how e-Learn courses are created at Mohawk College...on his own time, of course.

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Prez sez— What's in store for 2011?

By Sam Maga



The new year presents many challenges for the officers and stewards of Local 240. I can break down the numerous issues into three main areas: staffing, e-Learn@ Mohawk and faculty morale.

Staffing

I recently received a staffing report from Human Resources that was submitted to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU). The report is a snapshot of a week in October 2010 that includes everything from sick days used, how many professors are on professional development leave, number of faculty coordinators and who is teaching credit courses at Mohawk.



The report shows there are 400 full-time professors at Mohawk College and 1478 non-full time professors delivering credit courses. At present there are 3 full time professors under layoff notice and as a result we will soon have fewer than 400 full time faculty. Considering that 35% of faculty are coordinators working under reduced workloads, this report shows we are being stretched to the limits of academic leadership and delivering curriculum. We are bursting at the seams with students, and the shrinking number of full time teachers is left with the task of mentoring part time

teachers all semester, without any recognition on a SWF!

In the past, Local 240 officers have defined our work as day-class courses. Now that program associate deans administer continuing education credit courses, the definition of academic work will have to change to reflect the reality of how programs are being delivered.

A recent report by Colleges Ontario shows tremendous growth in Ontario Learn enrolments. How much work is being done by this branch of MTCU? Who is teaching Ontario Learn courses? Will it be a Mohawk College professor or a retired high school teacher, and what impact will this have on full time professors? I will ask the MTCU for data submitted by Mohawk College concerning credit courses delivered by Ontario Learn.

Despite the increase in students, the college has taken millions of dollars out of academic delivery to spend on building a larger corporate structure and supporting "innovation".

Last year a student reporter for the Satellite asked me how Mohawk would handle the increase in student enrolment. My response was that Mohawk would hire more part time professors. This year we saw another 6% increase in student enrolment and a reduction in the full time teacher staffing level. Despite the increase in students, the college has taken millions of dollars out of academic delivery to spend on building a larger corporate structure and supporting "innovation".

Mohawk College continues to focus on customer service and process improvement through initiatives such as Simply the Best; yet at the same time, academic staff reduction continues to be an area of concern. Are students really getting the best education experience in over-crowded classrooms being taught by inexperienced teachers?

eLearn@Mohawk

Recently, I reviewed the Winter 2010 SFWs, looking for assigned eLearning activity, and there was little to none. I have heard many stories of professors helping each other complete eLearning modules and create eLearn-based curriculum. While this new method of teaching may be intriguing to some, at this time it is not widely recognized as part of professors work loads. If you have not been SWFed an eLearn activity, focus on what you have been assigned.



“What the #&@ did you do with my widget?”*

When eLearn work is not assigned it signals that the College doesn't want professors to get involved.

The eLearn@ Mohawk buzz from last spring has fizzled. We shouldn't be surprised that a Dean and a handful of support staff and that faculty couldn't do more than move course outlines from Mocomotion to eLearn@Mohawk. I'm sure there will be some traces of blended learning at Mohawk in the future, but compared to other institutions, eLearn@Mohawk won't have much impact on the way we do business. The new D2L version may have lots of exciting ways to create and deliver courses, but it's not part of our workload. I have received many questions and comments over the past year about the Mohawk library managing eLearn. However, the library is staffed by a very small group of academic members who shouldn't shoulder the responsibility of such a major project.

Morale at Mohawk

The good news is we have money, so millions of dollars are going into Mohawk reserves with a multiple year budget to maintain this activity. The bad news is that as a teaching institution we have lost the academic synergy needed to succeed as a place for students to learn and for employees to effectively teach.

Mohawk appears to be moving in a new direction that will continue to challenge academic employees in faculty, support, and administration. I can see the stress of "work life" imbalance wearing on teachers and academic managers. Also, the turnover of senior management is concerning because it destabilizes the leadership. As a result, some professors and managers may not be able to convert from the role of an educator to that of an “entrepreneur”, and will leave Mohawk, perhaps for a learning environment which adheres more to the principles of education and public service than those of a corporate-style agenda.

Change may be good, but good change is better.

XMAS NEWS BULLETIN: this just in

Dasher, Dancer and Blitzen have left Santa's team to pursue other options. It is rumoured that they were unhappy with the way Santa has been treating the elves and will join Rudolph to drive the Mohawk Collage sled just a little farther to the left this year.

**Blitzen remarked as they went on their quest:
"Mohawk will now be Simply the Best!"**



ILO urges McGuinty to address part-time college worker concerns

From the website of OPSEU

November 19, 2010

The McGuinty government has snubbed the International Labour Organization by refusing to respond to OPSEU's allegations regarding the rights of part-time college workers to organize, according to a recent ILO report.

The report requests that McGuinty meet with OPSEU, stating "the committee requests the Government to initiate consultations with the union concerned with the view to address the concerns raised by [OPSEU]."



Two men, one view of workers rights

"We call on McGuinty to meet with OPSEU and address the concerns raised by the International Labour Organization," said OPSEU president, Warren "Smokey" Thomas. "This government must see that the Ontario Labour Relations Board opens the ballot boxes and counts the cards."

Ontario's part-time community college workers are still being denied the basic right to form a union and participate in collective bargaining.

Thousands of Ontario part-time college workers cast ballots over 22 months ago in the largest vote on unionizing in Ontario history. These ballots remain uncounted.

OPSEU represents more than 15,000 full-time faculty and support staff at community colleges across Ontario.

Working Together

By Ann Bennett, Communications Officer



In a professional working environment we should strive to **support the principles of cooperation and mutual respect**. At all times we should act in a manner that promotes fairness and dignity, recognizing the competence and integrity of our colleagues, never deliberately undermining or discriminating.

What is being done to foster this ideal at Mohawk?

CCA/WMG/ESC: At Mohawk we have a union -management committee, as mandated by the Collective Agreement Article 7, where **the union and management interact for the purpose of discussing and resolving problems** before they become grievances or bigger problems. Our union -management committee combines 3 committees in one: CCA/WMG/ESC (College Committee Academic, Workload Monitoring Group and Employment Stability Committee).

The team exists of 5 representatives from Local 240(the current officers: Sam Maga, Geoff Ondercin-Bourne, Roberta Burke, Greg Cormier and Ann Bennett) and from Management: Chief of Human Resources Karen Pashleigh, Director of Staff Relations Fred Deys, Associate Dean Chris Blackwood, Dean Joanne Westerby and Dean Paul Armstrong.

We meet bi-weekly to discuss topics such as staffing, use of part-time faculty, Modified Workload Arrangements, Health & Safety issues, eLearn implementation, etc. Either union or management may bring up topics for discussion that may require clarification, action, or investigation. Recent meetings have been productive and collegial.

“...if a student approaches an employee with a complaint about another employee, the student should be encouraged to speak directly to the employee about whom he or she has the complaint.”

Professional Code of Ethics: Local 240 is interested in creating a Professional Code of Ethics for our members. **Such a code promotes respect for colleagues, students and the academic community in general.** It might also provide guidelines and examples of what should NOT occur. For example it might suggest that members should not make negative comments about students, colleagues, courses, or administration. A

Code of Ethics for the “Profession” is different than a Code of Conduct which directs the decisions of an “Organization”.

Student Complaint Procedure: Mohawk Corporate Policy AC 725

<http://www.mohawkcollege.ca/Assets/Policies/C725.pdf>

As outlined in the policy, **if a student approaches an employee with a complaint about another employee, the student should be encouraged to speak directly to the employee** about whom he or she has the complaint. If that is not prudent, the student should be directed to the Associate Dean. If more serious, the student may need to contact the Student Issues Coordinator, Diane Harrison at 905 575 2318 or at diane.harrison@mohawkcollege.ca

This policy is in keeping with the intent of a Professional Code of Ethics that would promote the respect of one’s colleagues. According to Diane Harrison, Student Issues Coordinator, “the intent of the Student Complaint Procedure is to be mindful and respectful of everyone’s interest in addressing complaints. The procedure itself is designed to lend transparency to complaints and to protect confidentiality of all parties concerned”.

These committees, codes and procedures are all part of a work environment that is supportive of all its employees and remind us to respect everyone’s inherent differences and to support their strengths.

Faculty Development – Upcoming Winter Workshops

By Roberta Burke, Faculty Development

Teaching for Success – Dec 22 & 23, 2010

Teaching for Success, the program for new day part-time and partial load day faculty is scheduled for December 22 and 23 at Fennell Campus. The program is a combination of workshops (learning styles, lesson planning, assessment) and information sessions (eLearn, library services, academic accommodations) to assist new teachers. So far, 45 new part-time teachers registered. To register or obtain more information on the program, please go to the PD Calendar. <http://www.mohawkcollege.ca/Explore/QualityResearch/CTL/programsWorkshops/calendar.html>



Teaching Pair/Squares — February 2, 2011

Nine faculty participated in Teaching Squares this fall– which is an opportunity to sit in another teacher’s class and observe teaching strategies and styles. The group debriefing was a rich conversation on issues that are common to all faculty. The next planning session is planned for February 2 at noon. For more information or to register, click on the PD Calendar, <http://www.mohawkcollege.ca/Explore/QualityResearch/CTL/programsWorkshops/calendar.html>

StrengthsQuest Educator Seminar — March 1 & 2, 2011 This 1.5-day seminar prepares instructors, advisors, and counselors to use the StrengthsQuest program in the classroom or as part of student activities. Participants will also learn strategies for integrating StrengthsQuest into small group settings.

Teaching/Learning/Connections Conference— May 4 & 5, 2011 (tentative)

The Centre for Teaching & Learning will get together in the new year to plan a combined Teaching/Learning/Connections conference. The tentative time is the first week of May. If you have suggestions for PD workshops, please email Roberta.burke@mohawkcollege.ca or peggy.french@mohawkcollege.ca

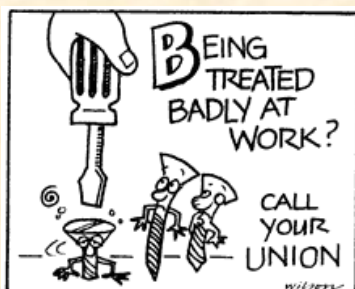
Grievance Report

By Roberta Burke, Chief Steward

Local Grievance: March 9, 2010

College failed to Post eLearn position as per Article 27.11

Arbitration: Jan 29, 2011



Article 2, Staffing: August 11, 2010

Grievor’s course load and wages were reduced from Partial Load to Part time after 23 years teaching in the program

Arbitration: Tentative March 16, 2011

Article 14 – Coordinator Allowance October 8, 2020

BsCN Faculty, filed grievance re status changed from Step 2 to Step 1 with increased workload

Settled: Nov 9, 2010 at WRA

Article 11.06: October 8, 2010

BsCN filed grievance re College not permitting her to work outside of nonteaching periods.

Step 2, Nov 30, 2010

Article 6: Nov 10, 2010

Technology faculty grieved that the College has failed to follow Human Rights Policy, C202A
Grievance withdrawn

Article 27: Dec 14, 2010

Apprenticeship, Improper Layoff

Grievance Withdrawn, December 21, 2010.

WILL THERE BE A TEST?

Kathy Usik, Electrotechnology Faculty

Apparently the "A" that Mohawk was given for the Fennell Campus renovations failed to take functionality into account. Now that we have "Starbucks on Steroids" that was the North Cafeteria, we are seriously in need of testing facilities.

We do not have a room large enough to seat all the students in first semester in my program for common testing. My first term test required the use of three different rooms in order for them to write at the same time. For this delivery we had 3 teachers for the course, so each testing room had an instructor as one invigilator, but the class rooms were so full that the integrity of the test was compromised.

Even if you can get a room, it may not be in a state acceptable for testing. For example, one room to which I was assigned had the furniture stacked against the walls. Had I not inspected the room prior to the test time I would have been left with no option but to rearrange the room myself.

The same problem occurs with on-line testing. In order to offer a secure test the students need to write in a computer lab or labs at the same time where the completion of the test can be monitored. These facilities are not available either.

One alternative suggested was to use the gym at the hospital across the road. Imagine the logistics of trying to work this out for 250+ first semester students...

Why would we spend all this money on renovations and then entertain the idea of sending the students off campus to write their tests?

I am even hearing rumours that students are being forced to miss their scheduled classes to write their term tests with those in other sections. That is clearly unacceptable!

The new eating areas do look lovely, but if there are no proper testing facilities, I think we've lost sight of what we are here for. One can only wonder how these problems will affect the College's KPI scores.

And as for Starbucks, I've heard students suggest that they can't afford to buy Starbucks even if they wanted to....

"It hurts when you call me professor": Macleans Magazine article corrects management spin on faculty work and compensation

Remember during negotiations when the College Management quoted faculty salaries as being over \$100 000? Their propaganda made no mention of the fact that those of us fortunate to be full-time are on a grid and are a long way from making that kind of money. Further, the majority of faculty at Mohawk are contract employees doing what, in employment terms, is called "precarious work". For their effort, they are paid little more than fast food wages.

"It hurts when you call me professor", by Sandy Farran (Macleans, Mar 22, 2007), provides a more realistic glimpse into the life of today's post-secondary teaching reality. It's a few years old, but since its publication, things have only gotten worse, whatever misinformation Management wants to put out there. Read more at http://www.macleans.ca/education/universities/article.jsp?content=20070322_121657_8072

December 20, 2010: Local 240 members support locked out United Steelworkers Local 1005 with a donation to their hardship fund.



Got an issue you want to Examine?

We welcome your contributions but reserve the right to edit for length and appropriateness. Please submit your article, email, letter or cartoon to us at the address below.



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION
CALM
OF LABOUR MEDIA

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