

GHS motion concerning academic continuity
History Department Tri-Campus meeting Jan 31, 2018.

Whereas Unit 1 of CUPE 3902, the local that represents all graduate TAs and instructors, is currently in bargaining. And, while we all hope negotiations can be resolved without strike action, there is a chance that a strike might take place in the 2017-2018 school year.

Whereas University of Toronto graduate students continue to live below the poverty line; an issue that undermines the History Department's efforts to recruit graduate students and prevents many lower income people from pursuing graduate studies.

Whereas during the 2015 CUPE 3902 strike, the University of Toronto administration encouraged faculty across the university to change syllabi to eliminate TA work, an action that potentially jeopardizes courses' academic integrity and violated academic freedom in order to undermine the strike.

Whereas during the 2015 CUPE 3902 strike, the University of Toronto Faculty Association condemned the U of T "Policy on Academic Continuity" and communicated to its members that "academic freedom does indeed come before academic continuity, by some distance. The foundations of all we do in teaching and research rest on academic freedom. Only you can decide whether and what changes may be necessary in your courses. Choosing no change is just as legitimate and principled as choosing change. If you make that choice, UTFA will support your right to do so without hesitation,"[1] and that the policy of academic continuity reduces the quality of instruction in order to undermine legal strike action.

Be it resolved that, in the event that labour negotiations break down and Unit 1 of CUPE 3902 goes on strike, the faculty of the History Department at the University of Toronto collectively will avoid changing syllabi simply to eliminate TA work, and will inform all history instructors about the negative effect this practice has on strike-action and academic integrity.

Be it further resolved that the faculty of the History Department at the University of Toronto collectively condemn the inclusion of labour disputes as a cause for implementing the policy on academic continuity. The labour disputes clause is a tool that reduces the reputation and academic integrity of the University in order to undermine strike action.

[1]<https://www.utfa.org/content/cupe-strike-update-2>