

Answers to frequently asked questions from parents and students

Regarding negotiations with CUPE 3906, Unit 1

1. If the union decides to go on strike, will McMaster remain open?

Yes. McMaster University will remain open should the union decide to strike. Classes will continue as scheduled, although some class locations may change. Some tutorials and labs may be affected and students will be notified of these changes with as much advanced notice as possible.

2. Who would be on strike?

CUPE 3906, Unit 1 represents part-time Teaching Assistants and some Research Assistants (who hold a research assistantship in lieu of a teaching assistantship). Teaching Assistants work an average of 10 hours per week or less to a maximum of 260 hours over two academic terms within an academic year. All other University employees including faculty members, lecturers and other staff will remain on the job should CUPE 3906, Unit 1 decide to strike.

3. Will the union picket the campus?

If the union decides to strike, you should expect picket lines at some of the entry points to campus and anticipate some delays while entering or leaving campus and take these delays into consideration when planning your schedule. Students who live on campus will not have to cross pickets to get to classes or other University buildings. When entering and exiting campus always remain respectful to picketers and avoid confrontation.

The Union is permitted to picket but with certain restrictions. Picketers are legally permitted to:

- Carry signs stating the nature of the dispute
- Speak to people entering the property about their concerns
- Ask persons entering the property to join the picket line.

Picketers are not legally entitled to:

- Blockade entrances to the University
- Use force, threats or threatening gestures
- Construct physical barriers to block access to the University
- Trespass or interfere with employees who wish to work

4. Is the union permitted to have picket lines on University property?

No. There will be no picketing permitted on University property.

5. Will the University lock out TAs and RAs?

No. McMaster will not lock out TAs and RAs. A work stoppage will only happen if the union calls a strike.

6. What happens if I miss a class because I can't get onto campus due to pickets?

Should the union decide to strike, you should give yourself additional time to get to and from campus. If you experience unreasonable delay entering campus you should contact Parking and Security services who will be on site if picket lines are formed. You should remain calm and avoid any confrontation while interacting with picketers.

7. Will the strike impact examination schedules or deadlines for other tests and assignments?

Should the union decide to strike classes will continue to be held as scheduled. Widespread changes to exam schedules and other deadlines are not anticipated. Your instructor will inform you of any changes to assignment deadlines or schedules for your specific course.

8. How can I keep updated on this situation?

The University will provide updates and important information via The Daily News website <http://dailynews.mcmaster.ca>.

Websites have also been developed with information specifically for parents and students and they can be reached here: http://mcmaster.ca/opr/students_parents/index.html

Parents and students can follow the situation on Twitter at : <http://twitter.com/McMasterUpdates>

Students should monitor their McMaster email accounts for updates.

9. Will there be delays in getting marked assignments, tests or exams returned?

If the union decides to strike, there may be some delays in getting assignments and tests marked. Course instructors will let you know when you should expect to receive marked assignments and tests.

10. What will happen if tutorials or labs are cancelled?

If labs or tutorials are cancelled, instructors will try to re-schedule them. If that is not possible, any grades associated with that work will be transferred to other components of the course.

If a classroom location is changed, the course instructor will inform the students with as much advanced notice as possible.