



ISA Unit 6 FAQs

Here are answers to some FAQs. If you have other questions that are not covered here, please feel free to email your current Steward, Brad Loghrin, at b.loghrin@gmail.com or your Vice-President, Janine Rivière, at vp4@cupe3902.org

Q. Who are members of CUPE 3902, Unit 6?

Unit 6 includes all instructors hired in the International Foundation Program and Summer Academy at the University of Toronto.

Q: Who or what is CUPE 3902?

CUPE 3902 (Canadian Union of Public Employees) is a Local which includes employees from 7 different Units at the University of Toronto. It includes all contract educators who are enrolled at the University (e.g., Tas, Course Instructors, etc.) Unit 1); contract academic workers at Victoria College (Unit 2); non-student sessional lecturers, sessional instruction assistants, and writing instructors (Unit 3); contract academic workers at St. Michael's College (Unit 4); post-doctoral fellows (Unit 5), IFP and ISA instructors at New College (Unit 6); and OISE graduate assistants (Unit 7). CUPE 3902 is part of the CUPE national Union collective which has over 700,000 members.

Q. Where can I find more information about CUPE 3902, Local meetings, staff contacts and my benefits?

A: Other than asking your Union representatives, you should register for the CUPE 3902 Member Portal and sign your union card to access all member resources and information here: <https://memberlink.unionware.com/CUPE3902/>

Look here for instructions: <https://www.cupe3902.org/2022/05/sign-your-union-card/>

Once you have done this, you will have access to important information (e.g, a copy of the Collective Agreement, forms), be able to attend workshops and meetings, get news, and find useful contact information.

Q: I've been out of touch. What was the process that led to our first Collective Agreement?

A: In February 2019, some IFP and ISA instructors began to explore organizing your workplace into a bargaining unit, which would allow you to negotiate improvements to your working conditions. After many meetings and discussions with IFP and ISA instructors over the Spring

and Summer, you voted unanimously to unionize through CUPE 3902, which represents about 10,000 contract educators at UofT.

Following a bureaucratic process that was lengthened by the pandemic, you elected a bargaining team that met with the Employer from June 2021-January 2022 to negotiate a first-time collective agreement, which was unanimously ratified by members on Jan. 10.

Since January, your Union and elected leaders have been working with the Employer to implement the new CA.

As this is the first agreement for this group of workers, there are many kinks to iron out. If you have any concerns about your work, don't hesitate to bring it to your elected Stewards and/or Vice-President 4 or union Staff. They are there to support you!

Q: What did the ISA win in the bargaining agreement?

A: Members responded to a poll in 2020, and the two highest priorities chosen by the summer teachers were a wage increase and job security. Because of the Provincial Bill 124, unfortunately we were limited to only a 1% wage increase per year for three years. This may not seem like much, but when Bill 124 ends or after three years, we should be able to make larger wage increases to make up for the Bill's restrictions.

Before we joined CUPE 3902, we could be hired or not at the whim of whoever was running the program. Now, if you worked in ISA before the pandemic, you can apply to any summer teaching position you are qualified for.

ISA members also gained access to a University of Toronto Library card, access to a grievance process and an and an "advancement" promotion process that will give hiring preference to those who complete it. ISA members can also be considered for IFP jobs, are protected under a policy of no discrimination, work and sexual harassment, and a five-step system of progressive discipline.

Q: These gains are nice, but can't we improve our working conditions further or get more benefits?

A: The best way to make strong gains and improvements for ISA instructors is to get involved and keep informed. Through the Local, you can work collectively to protect yourself and your colleagues from arbitrary and discriminatory hiring practices, to negotiate better benefits and wages, to hold the Employer to the provisions of the Collective Agreement, and to challenge unfair or unsafe practices in the workplace.

Reading emails from your colleagues representing you in the Local, attending meetings, and - most important -- bringing your concerns to your elected representatives (Stewards, Vice-President 4) so they can work with you to resolve problems early are the best ways to effect positive change in the ISA.

Q: This sounds great -- how can I get involved more directly?

You can also get involved by volunteering for various positions in the Local -- each year you'll elect two Stewards for Unit 6, a Health and Safety Committee member, Trustees who audit the Local's finances, several positions on the Executive Committee, and more besides.

We have various caucuses you can join or lead (Queer Caucus, Women's Caucus, International Workers' Caucus, the Mental Health Caucus, Racialized Workers' Caucus, and more).

You're also free to apply to the Local for funding for projects that further the goals of the Union, e.g., organizing anti-oppressive pedagogies workshops, campaigns in support of equity-seeking groups, etc.

Q: Why do we have to pay Union dues? How much are the dues?

A: The Local is run by workers like you and is not paid for by the Employer. Union dues are a way of pooling resources to maintain the protection of the group to bargain for fair wages, benefits, safer working conditions, and representation. CUPE 3902 uses funds to help members and to make donations to community services that members elect to support. Dues are a standard 2.45% of your total pay and are taken out of member's pay monthly.

Q. What happens when my supervisor makes a request that seems like it's not part of my job?

Talk to your steward first. They can guide you to the section of the Collective Agreement that holds the answers to what you are required and not required to do. Your steward can also point you to other Union Officers who can assess your situation and help you to determine the best practice to be followed. Stewards and Officers can't make decisions for you, but they can support you, guide you to resources, and help you assert your rights. In these cases you can contact your Steward, Staff Representative (sr2@cupe3902.org or grievance.inquires@cupe3902.org) for advice.

Q: My boss asked all employees to come in fifteen minutes early to prepare. Do I get paid?

A: If you get asked to come in early to do work, the employer must pay you. You do not have to volunteer to do work or favours outside of your contract or collective agreement. Employers might make little asks, that they feel should not be a problem for you. It may not be a problem for you, but you do not have to submit to anything above and beyond your job without

compensation. If this happens, please contact your Steward (b.loghrin@gmail.com) or Vice-President vp4@cupe3902.org

Q: My co-worker/supervisor/student said or did something that makes me feel uncomfortable or unsafe. How can I make the person stop?

A: Your Steward is your first line of defence in the workplace. Tell them what happened. Together, you can determine the way forward. Sometimes it may be asking the instigator to stop, having the instigator disciplined, filing a grievance, or a range of actions to make you and your co-workers safer and more comfortable in your workplace. Your situation will be confidential and the only ones who will be aware of what you are going through will be authorized by you before they are brought in. Your physical and emotional protection are just as important as your privacy. These situations can be difficult to deal with and negotiate so proceed with care and contact your Staff Representative Daniel Brielmaier for advice at: sr2@cupe3902.org or grievance.inquiries@cupe3902.org

Q: “What is “Advancement” and how do I apply for it to become an ISA Instructor II?

A: One important gain of the new Unit 6 CA is that ISA teachers can apply to advance and get hiring preference. To be eligible to advance you need to have taught 6 ISA courses in at least 4 of the last 6 academic years and have completed at least two performance evaluations, including classroom observations. It’s important to get these official observations done asap!

We will hold workshops on the advancement process for interested members as folks become eligible to apply. Here is an outline of the process:

To advance, once you meet the above criteria, you will first need to first send an email to the New College designated authority, currently Ron Van Der Kraats, r.vanderkraats@utoronto.ca indicating you wish to advance before April 1st for advancement of the following academic year.

Following this, you will need to compile the following:

1. An updated curriculum vitae/resume listing all your teaching experience
2. A teaching dossier with outlines for all ISA courses taught, sample assignments, assessments, teaching activities, etc.
3. A statement outlining how your resume and teaching dossier demonstrates your teaching excellence

Next, an advancement committee made up of New College staff, (and in later years, advanced members of Unit 6), will be struck and they will contact you to arrange two teaching observations. Following this, the advancement committee will review your resume, dossier, observations and decide whether to advance you. Once advanced, teachers will advance to ISA Instructor II and will be given hiring preference for courses in the following academic session.