



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO EDUCATION WORKERS

300-208 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 3B4

TEL: 416.593.7057; FAX: 416.593.9866

info@cupe3902.org; www.cupe3902.org

Executive Committee

31 October 2018

Chair:
Jess Taylor

CUPE 3902 Statement on The Ministry of Training, Colleges and University's "Free Speech Policy" Requirements

Secretary-Treasurer:
Amy Conwell

On 30 August 2018, The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities announced that it would be requiring universities to put together a "free speech policy" by January 2019. Failure to create and maintain an active policy could result in the withdrawal of public grant funding. The requirements also proposed limitations on protest, especially when it interfered with events.

Vice Chair, Unit 1:
Jeremy Rothschild

Vice Chair, Unit 3:
Kristin Cavoukian

Vice Chair, Unit 5:
Glenna Kramer

Vice Chair, Colleges:
Merlin Charles

Freedom of Expression is alive and well on university campuses, as universities are institutions that foster academic debate, the exchange of ideas, and discussion without the implementation of heavy-handed policies. Requirements to develop a "free speech policy" rely on a fabricated "free speech crisis" employed by far-right groups, and challenge fundamental rights of Canadians: freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. We strongly believe this is a manufactured crisis, inflated by those who wish to see a particular kind of speech – hateful and discriminatory speech – occur without consequences for the speaker, such as vocal criticism and protest.

*Communications/
Recording Secretary:*
Fang Xi Lin (*pro tem*)

Internal Liaison Officer:
Hamish Russel

As education workers at the University of Toronto, the members of CUPE 3902 have long been at the forefront of the fight for quality higher education and the development of an environment where students and workers can share their opinions and beliefs.

External Liaison Officer:
Mahdi Zamani

Representing contract academic staff, many of whom are also graduate students, the Local has a direct stake in the current debate regarding freedom of speech on campus.

Grievance Officer:
Jamie Ashby

One of the freedoms universities are duty-bound to uphold is academic freedom – the freedom to teach and learn, to ask and answer questions, to debate, and to research, without fear of political reprisals. Crucially, it is also the freedom to criticize the university itself. This is already a much higher and more meaningful standard than the one Doug Ford's government wants to impose. The Progressive Conservative government appears to be advocating freedom of expression for offensive speakers, while stifling the freedom of expression of those who are offended. This is not only contrary to the spirit of freedom of expression, it is also profoundly cowardly, and a policy with this goal in mind has no place on Ontario university campuses.

Executive Director:
Wayne Dealy

Staff Representatives:
Rebecca Strung

Tiffany Balducci

Tamara Williams

CUPE 3902 stands with OUCC and any other union or universities that resist this infringement on the rights of academic workers and students. We encourage our members and everyone on The University of Toronto campuses to speak against policies that threaten our right to protest, assemble, and express ourselves.