

Faculty and the Fight for \$15 & Fairness

OCUFA
Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des Associations des Professeurs des Universités de l'Ontario



Our voices are being heard

In the spring of 2015, the Government of Ontario launched the Changing Workplaces Review – a comprehensive review of employment and labour law to address the rise of precarious work. Faculty associations made 13 presentations during the public consultations and OCUFA submitted a written response, which highlighted five key recommendations:

- 1 Equal pay and equal access to benefits for contract workers
- 2 Rules that promote job security
- 3 Reasonable scheduling
- 4 Rules that permit consolidation of bargaining units
- 5 Protect the right to organize

On June 1, 2017 the government tabled a set of employment and labour law reforms. It includes positive measures to ensure equal pay for part-time and casual workers, more reasonable scheduling, and better rules for joining unions in some sectors. It also includes a welcome plan to increase the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. Our work advocating for change is starting to pay off!

But there is still room for improvement. The next step is to participate in the legislative process, which will include committee hearings over the summer. For further analysis and updates about the proposed legislation visit www.ocufa.on.ca.

Fight for \$15 & Fairness

Faculty are not the only voice calling for change. We have joined with workers across the province in the Fight for \$15 & Fairness to call on the provincial government to take decisive action to address precarious work. The Fight for \$15 & Fairness is a broad campaign of workers from across sectors, made up of more than 50 local, provincial, and national organizations in over 40 communities in Ontario.

Faculty have a role to play

We have seen and experienced the growth of precarious work on our campuses, including for contract faculty. It is estimated that the number of courses taught by contract faculty has doubled over the last 15 years. Our universities should be model employers – and a recent poll showed that 94 per cent of Ontarians agree.

We also hear from our students about working part-time, minimum wage jobs to pay for their rising tuition fees. Students need decent work to support themselves now and after they graduate.

Professors are trusted leaders on campus and in our broader communities. We can use our voice to speak up for positive change and decent work for all.

Your faculty association can be a leader in advocating for decent work in Ontario!

What you can do:

Meet with your MPP

There is a short legislative window left to implement changes to employment and labour law before the 2018 election. It is important for our MPPs to hear from as many people as possible about our support for measures to address precarious work. We need to give them the confidence to go ahead with the positive proposed changes and fight for more to ensure decent work in our communities.

- ▶ ***OCUFA can help setup a meeting with your MPP and provide materials to inform the discussion.***

Host a Fight for \$15 & Fairness lunch or social

Start by reaching out to the student union(s) or the \$15 & Fairness club on campus. Pick a date and location that works for everyone well in advance. Identify speakers to talk about why \$15 & Fairness is important to them – students, contract faculty, and food service workers would all make great speakers! You might have more ideas. Invite other campus unions to get involved as well.

- ▶ ***OCUFA can provide logistical support, help you connect with the right groups on campus, and work with you to make the event a success.***

Write a letter or op-ed for your local paper

Why does Fairness for Contract Faculty matter on your campus? Why is the Fight for \$15 & Fairness important for your community? Faculty are well-placed to write about these important issues in local newspapers. Think about using the “back-to-school” time, Labour Day, or Fair Employment Week as a hook or occasion for sharing this important perspective.

- ▶ ***OCUFA can help identify appropriate newspapers and contact editors, as well as discuss frame, message, and content.***

And, don't forget!

Include Fairness for Contract Faculty and the Fight for \$15 & Fairness in your faculty association communications and newsletters. This helps keep these important issues on the agenda.

If you have any questions or are ready to get started, please contact Brynne Sinclair-Waters at bsinclair-waters@ocufa.on.ca.



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