



Dear Member:

Thank you very much for keeping abreast of the volume of information you have received from both sides. This has been a difficult – and different – round of bargaining. It's been difficult because, for the first time, we find ourselves negotiating under the revised Colleges Collective Bargaining Act (2008). And it's different because the employer has imposed its own terms and conditions on our employment. In fact, theorists in labour relations see an employer's imposition as a line in the sand that is used to remove union safeguards.

This round of bargaining is not really about this demand or that demand. It is more fundamental. It is about whether or not you will maintain the right to participate in the collective bargaining process. It is about whether we can negotiate improvements to the terms and conditions of our employment.

Imagine what it would be like if we were forced to rely on unilaterally-imposed conditions, and how our work life would deteriorate. You already know of the working conditions for sessionals and part-timers: they lack preparation time, evaluation time, fair pay, benefits and, most of all, job security.

Or you could compare yourself to those teaching in private colleges, such as triOS, DeVry or Canadian Business College. Speak with one of their instructors and ask them whether jobs are available and under what terms and conditions they work. We would lose enormously by finding ourselves working in a non-unionized, private college. Their faculty want jobs at a community college because only unionized positions enjoy job security, permanent jobs, and terms and conditions that respect their work and faculty workers.

Because the employer's imposed terms and conditions are contained in a document that resembles our expired agreement many of you might conclude this is not too bad, especially when considering the plight of our second career students. What they have given you is not static. The employer can change the collective agreement's terms and content as easily as they presently do with college policies.

On Nov. 18, 2009, the employer imposed terms and conditions on your work. We must stop them. On Jan. 13th we have an opportunity to get control back. On Jan. 13, vote YES. A yes vote will tell the employer that you are resolved to have a say in your future. A yes vote demonstrates you are resolved to hold onto the union – a union that has fought hard for the quality of post-secondary education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paddy Musson".

Paddy Musson, Chair, CAAT (Academic) Divisional Executive