

2024-2025 College Faculty Bargaining FAQ

1. What do terms mean, like a strike, collective agreement, mediation, conciliation, etc.? Find out in our list of common terms!
 - a. CAAT-A: College of Applied Art and Technology – Academic (includes Faculty, Counsellors, and Librarians)
 - b. Arbitration: a person or panel listens to both sides in the negotiation and issues a decision which both parties must follow
 - c. Bad Faith: When a party in a negotiation does not bargain with the intention of coming to an agreement
 - d. Bargaining Agent: a union that represents employees in the collective bargaining process (in this case, it is OPSEU)
 - e. Bargaining Unit: the members represented in the bargaining process (CAAT-A members)
 - f. Collective Agreement: a contract between an employer and union that outlines the employees' terms and conditions of their employment
 - g. Conciliation: a process that aids in resolving a labour dispute and is required before a legal strike or lock-out.
 - h. Good Faith: a concept that requires both parties to bargain with the intention of reaching an agreement.
 - i. Last Offer Vote: a vote on an offer of settlement provided directly by the employer to the bargaining unit without the union's support. The Minister of Labour must direct the vote at the employer's request and may only be done once during a round of collective bargaining.
 - j. Labour Action: Labour action includes several different types of actions such as work-to-rule, partial walk-out, rotating strike, all the way up to a full walk out.
 - k. No-board Report: A no-board report recognizes that the parties are at an impasse and that a conciliator could not help. 16 days after a no-board report is issued, the previous collective agreement is no longer binding. Should the Union get a strike mandate, they will be in a legal strike position 17 days after a no-board report is issued. For example, if the date on the notice was October 1, the employees may legally strike, and the employer may legally lock out on October 18

2. What is a strike?
 - a. Strikes are peaceful protests by employees seeking better working conditions or other changes to their collective agreement. The objective of a strike is to put pressure on the employer in collective bargaining. A strike is often labour groups most powerful and useful tool. They can be a day or for an extended period of time.
 - b. It is safe to cross the picket line to come onto college property if a strike occurs. People entering may be stopped by faculty as they try to explain the reasons they are striking.

3. What is a lock-out?
 - a. A lock-out is when an employer (the Colleges) locks the doors of the business or prevents the employees from working, causing a work stoppage. The CEC has previously

stated in 2021 they would not lock-out CAAT-A members, and we expect this to be the same this year.

4. What is a work-to-rule?
 - a. Work-to-rule means employees perform their job slowly or follow the law as closely as possible to stall productivity.
5. What is the first possible day for a strike, lock-out, or other labour action?
 - a. The first possible date for a strike, lock-out, or other labour action is Thursday, January 9th, 2025
6. How could a strike, lock-out, or other labour action impact the Winter 2025 semester?
 - a. There is the potential that the Winter 2025 semester could be interrupted or extended. There is no guarantee that labour action (strikes, lock-outs, etc.) will happen, and we cannot predict the impact/ however, if the semester is impacted, CSI will do everything possible to ensure that all students have the opportunity to complete the semester.
7. How likely is a lock-out?
 - a. In 2021, when the CEC and OPSEU were bargaining for their Collective Agreement and negotiations broke down, the CEC stated, "We will never lock-out faculty." We don't expect this to change for 2024.
 - b. <https://www.collegeemployercouncil.ca/en/news/management-update-november-18-2021>
8. What has to happen for a strike to occur?
 - a. Negotiations must have failed, and the Minister of Labour must issue a No-Board report; this occurred on December 18, 2024.
 - b. The union must have a strike vote, and the results of the vote must be over 50% in favour of a strike; this occurred on October 18, 2024.
 - c. The union must provide 5 days' notice before they may commence a strike; this occurred on January 3, 2025.
9. How long could a strike last?
 - a. There is not a set time limit for a strike. They usually continue until a new Collective Agreement is negotiated. There has never been a strike at Ontario Colleges that has lasted longer than 5 weeks.
10. If a strike happens, what should I do?
 - a. Leave extra time for travelling to the college as picket lines will be set up at campus entrances and limit traffic flow.
 - b. You should consider arriving early to avoid picket lines.
 - c. If taking transit and required to be on campus, be aware that transit buses will be dropping off students outside of the campus to respect the picket lines.
 - d. Continue to access eConestoga for your courses, it will still be available for student access.
 - e. Do not try to contact your faculty through Conestoga emails or eConestoga. They will not be accessing eConestoga or their email.
 - f. Be respectful of the picketers; they have the right to strike.

11. If a strike happens, what services will still be available from Conestoga College
 - a. As of January 6, 2025, Conestoga College has stated “All classes and services continue as normal at this time. In the event of a strike, further information regarding changes to college operations will be provided to students and employees and posted on the college website.”
 - b. In 2021, most College services (CSI Services, Rec Centre, Library, Health Services, etc.) continued to operate, except for Counselling. If Counselling services are needed, please use [Good2Talk](#), [Dialogue](#), [CICMH Counselling Resources](#), or a community resource.

12. If a strike happens and Counselling Services are unavailable, where can I receive mental health support?
 - a. Mental Health Resources:
 - i. <https://good2talk.ca/ontario/>
 - ii. https://studentcare.ca/rte/en/IHaveAPlan_CSI_Dialogue_Dialogue
 - iii. <https://campusmentalhealth.ca/in-crisis/>

13. What should I expect if there is a strike, and I cross the picket line to access campus?
 - a. You should expect there to be delays to access campus. Faculty will normally speak to you briefly about why they are striking. Be respectful, do not force your way through a picket line, and remember this is their legal right.

14. If there is a strike, will I need to continue working on my coursework?
 - a. In the event of a full work stoppage, exams, tests and assignments are likely to be postponed until after the strike is resolved. You should continue to have access to course materials through eConestoga; it’s strongly encouraged you take advantage of college resources and services to continue your studies independently and prepare for the resumption of classes.
 - b. As of January 6, 2025, Conestoga College has stated “All classes and services continue as normal at this time. In the event of a strike, further information regarding changes to college operations will be provided to students and employees and posted on the college website.” CSI will also update this page with appropriate information.

15. If a strike happens, can I work more hours off-campus as an international student?
 - a. A strike is not considered a scheduled/regulated break, so your work eligibility will not change. You cannot increase your working hours. If you are currently in a full- me semester, you can only work 24 hours per week during the strike (assuming you hold and follow the conditions outlined in a valid study permit that allows you to work off-campus).

16. If a strike happens, will it impact my International Student visa?
 - a. The strike will not impact your visa. You should continue to pursue your studies using the resources you have available. If you need to extend your study permit, contact the International Office and speak with an Advisor.
 - b. internationaladvisor@conestogac.on.ca

17. What is the role of the government in the bargaining process?

- a. Government representatives are not directly part of the bargaining process. Bargaining is between the College Employer Council and OPSEU (CAAT-A member's union). The government can provide a mediator to attempt to reach an agreement. In extraordinary circumstances, the government has previously introduced legislation to end a strike.

18. How could OSAP be affected by a strike?

- a. It is not likely for OSAP to be impacted. In the unlikely event that labour action interferes with the government's ability to confirm enrolment with the colleges, there could be delays in receiving funding.

19. How could my apprenticeship training be affected by a strike?
 - a. You should contact Conestoga College to determine whether or not the training will be provided and what action you should take. The ministry will be working to minimize the disruption to your training. If your training is cancelled, or for specific questions related to your apprenticeship file, please contact your employment and training consultant. For more general inquiries, please contact the Employment Ontario Contact Centre at 1-800-387- 5656.

20. How could my Second Career status be affected by a strike?
 - a. If training is interrupted for an indefinite period (i.e. strike), Employment Ontario will work with clients on a case-by-case basis to support their training needs.
 - b. For information on the continuation of your basic living allowance from the Second Career program, if a strike happens, please contact your employment and training consultant or call the Employment Ontario Contact Centre at 1-800-387-5656.

21. Where can I find more information?
 - a. Conestoga College: @ConestogaC on Twitter, <http://www.conestogac.on.ca>
 - b. OPSEU CAAT-A Faculty: @CAATfaculty on Twitter, <https://opseu.org/sector/caat-academic>
 - c. College Employer Council (CEC): @CECouncil on Twitter, <https://www.collegeemployercouncil.ca/>