

June 2024—Volume 16, Issue 2

CUSSU Concordia University Support Staff Newsletter



CUSSU SESUC

Note from the President:

Dear Members;

I would like to **thank everyone** that attended the GA on April 30th and the SGA on May 23rd. They were both well attended.

As of **May 1st** our Concordia Health Plan will change making **mandatory** generic drug substitution. For more information you can go to [Health Plan](#) on Carrefour website.

Summer Hours are approaching sooner than we think: The Summer hour period will be from **June 14 to August 16, 2024** inclusively.

Banking of Summer Hours—Article 22.06:

Every year, for a period of ten (10) weeks, from mid-June to mid-August the length of the regular 35hour work week is reduced by three (3) hours without reduction in remuneration.

The reduction of hours is applied on Friday afternoons. The employee thus works consecutively for the first four (4) hours of their workday, without a meal period.

22.07 a) In the event that an employee is absent, credit will not be given for "banking" of time off for any such days.

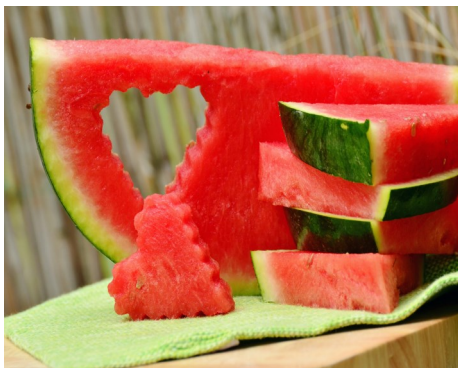
b) However, an employee can bank the summer hours if they are on vacation for an **entire week** during the period in which the summer hours are in effect. The banked hours must be expended by May 31st of the following year.

*entire week does not only mean Monday to Friday but can be applied if you take Wednesday to Tuesday of the following week, as long as it is five (5) consecutive days.

**** Note for those with part-time status;** the summer hours are **pro-rated**.

Please take the time this summer to relax and enjoy yourself with family and friends.

In solidarity,
Donna Fasciano
CUSSU, President



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Contributors to this issue

- Donna Fasciano
- Larissa Dutil
- Sandra Woywod-Pagé
- Thomas McGurk
- Faith Howard
- Bo-Kyung Kim
- Jennifer Muir



General Assembly—April 30, 2024—
Nomination results:

Executive Members:

- VP General: Jennifer Muir
- VP Grievance: David Babcock
- VP Information: Larissa Dutil
- Treasurer: Vidya Khan
- VP Health & Safety (1 year term): Faith Howard

Council Members:

- Helene Medeiros
- Stuart O’Driscoll
- Karen Holder
- Jill Kinaschuck
- Michel Erkie
- Thomas McGurk
- Beata Tararuj
- Daniel Amico
- Amanda Rosen
- Gabriella Pedicelli

A complete list of all the Executives, Council, and Audit Committee members can be found on the [CUSSU website](#).

Audit Committee Members:

- Deborah Simon
- Jian Jiao



Verifying Your My Time Module in Unity:

As of June 1st, every member should verify in your Time Off Balance to ensure that your Family Obligation, Personal Time, Time in Lieu (overtime that you carried over), vacation (what you are entitled to as of June 1st, remember to convert the days into hours), Vacation Carryover (what you carried over from 2022-2023) is accurate. If you find any discrepancy, please inform your supervisor. For more information on how and when to enter [your time on Unity click here](#).

Agreement in Principle - Highlights from the Special General Meeting

Here are the main items we negotiated during this round of negotiations:

- Use of a more inclusive language (they/them instead of her/him);
- Added an incivility clause;
- Included a mediation-arbitration process to grievances
- Added a new article about stipends
- Duties of a position of a grade inferior to their own, the stipend represents 3% of the minimum of the salary scale of the inferior grade
- Duties of a position of an equal grade as their own, the stipend represents 4% of the minimum of the salary scale of their current grade
- Duties of a position of 1 grade superior to their own, the stipend represents 5% of the minimum of the salary scale of the superior grade
- Duties of a position of 2 or more grades superior to their own, the stipend represents 8% of the minimum of the salary scale of the superior grade;
- With the permission of the supervisor both breaks can be added to the lunch hour;
- During the 10 weeks of summer hours with the permission of the supervisor an employee can work an additional hour each day during the week so that the entire Friday may be taken off without penalty;
- Bereavement leave is now 5 working days in the event of the death of a relative or family member
- Possibility to take a full-time study leave – article about unpaid leave will apply
- Letter of Agreement (LOA) being added that recognizes hybrid work as a working condition and that the University has to consult and meet the Union if they plan on changing or removing the hybrid work guidelines.
- Can work a 4 day week (hours cut to 28) with supervisor's approval
- Added a progressive retirement plan (55years + older and have 10+ years of seniority)
- Collective agreement in effect from June 1, 2023 to May 31, 2026

Salary increases:

- June 1, 2023 4.8% or GSP (Government Salary policy), whichever is greater
- June 1, 2024 3.2% or GSP (Government Salary policy), whichever is greater
- June 1, 2025 3% or GSP (Government Salary policy), whichever is greater

All of the changes only take effect once the new Collective Agreement is signed except for the salary increases, which will be paid to us retroactively as soon as they are approved at special Board of Governors and Senate meetings which we are hoping will take place before July. Once the Memorandum of Agreement is approved, payroll will be communicating with all employees about when we can expect our increases.





Join your fellow CUSSU members next Friday, June 14th for CUSSU's Annual Summer BBQ! All CUSSU members are welcome on the first **Summer Friday** of the season.

Where: Wienstein & Gavino's, 1434 Crescent Street

When: 1pm—4pm, Friday, June 14th, 2024

Who: YOU!

Get ready for fun and games, food and prizes!

We will be collecting funds for **DANS LA RUE**, with a 1/2 and 1/2 Raffle, so please don't forget to bring cash with you: **1 raffle ticket = \$3.00 / 2 raffle tickets = \$5.00 / 4 raffle tickets = \$10.00 / 8 raffle tickets = \$20.00**

Exploring Our Collective Agreement: Article 29 – Leave without Pay

by Sandra Woywod-Pagé

29.07 – An employee with the equivalent of two (2) years or more of full time service and who wishes to obtain a leave without pay must make a written request to her/his immediate supervisor. The University will not refuse such a leave without valid reason.

At first glance, this article may not seem very relevant or interesting. Why would anyone want to take time off while not being paid? There can be various reasons – some planned but others not. Unfortunately, life can be unpredictable and we may encounter situations that need time to be resolved. One thing we do not want to think about during these often-difficult periods is whether we still have a job at the end of the ordeal. Ideally, we never want to be in a position where we have to take advantage of this article but it is comforting to know that it is available.



In 2012, I got a phone call telling me that my mom had suffered from bleeding in the brain - in her case a subarachnoid hemorrhage (SAH) or commonly referred to as a burst aneurysm. In addition, my mom suffered a spasm, which is similar to a stroke. A blood vessel in the brain cramped resulting in an uninterrupted blood flow. Due to the lack of oxygen in the affected area, irreversible damage occurred. Within 48 hours of receiving the news, I arranged a 3-months leave with my Department and HR and flew to Germany to be at my mom's side. I ended up staying almost two months (three weeks of that time beside my mom's hospital bed reading and talking to her while she was in an artificial coma) until my mom was stable enough to be transferred from the intensive care unit to a specialized rehab clinic where she started her long path towards recovery.

While I was nervous at first about the job left behind, checking my emails and even handling some of the tasks, my supervisor told me "to stop worrying about this leave thing. Just make sure you apply for the Compassionate care benefits program. [...] Let the work worries aside, your mom needs as much positive energy as you can pass on to her." (Yes, I still have the email.) Although my mom has permanent impairments, mainly short-term memory issues and coordination as well as orientation difficulties, I am excited to say that she is able to live a happy and independent life. I am still my mom's legal guardian but that part will be left for another article to be explored.

- Speak to your Supervisor/Manager
- Contact HR (arrange payment options for your pension and insurance plan¹)
- Apply for EI Benefits (caregiving benefits²)
- Inform the Government of Canada, HR and your unit of your return to work



1 CA 29.07 – Unless there is an agreement or provision to the contrary, an employee on leave without pay does not benefit from the advantages provided in the present collective agreement. She/he continues to benefit from the pension and insurance plans should these plans so permit, on condition that she/he pays the entire cost.

2 EI Benefits – EI caregiving benefits provide financial assistance while you are away from work to care for or support a critically ill or injured person or someone needing end-of-life care. <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/caregiving.html>

Social Capital & Organized Labor : an essay by Thomas McGurk

Social capital, a term encompassing the networks of relationships, trust, and shared values that enable cooperation and collective action, is a crucial element in the intricate fabric of modern societies and economies. The decline of social capital since the 1950s has had profound implications, particularly in the spheres of organized labor, income inequality, and the erosion of the middle class. Unions, as a form of organized labor, have a rich historical legacy as a key source of social capital. They have empowered workers to assert their rights, negotiate improved working conditions, and tackle economic inequality.

In this context, the robust presence of a union movement is not just a response to challenges but a proactive strategy for rebuilding social capital in the workplace and addressing the systemic issues confronting workers in the 21st century. Union members play a pivotal role in fostering collaboration, solidarity, and a shared sense of purpose among employees. Unions are not just advocates for their members' interests but also champions of broader principles of economic justice and social equity with a significant societal impact.

Furthermore, unions are in sync with the growing recognition of the value of prosocial behavior and collaboration in fostering human success and societal progress. This aligns with the evolving understanding of humans as not solely driven by self-interest and competition but also by cooperation and empathy, as suggested by research in fields such as evolutionary biology, psychology, and anthropology.

Studies of hunter-gatherer societies, mathematical models in evolutionary game theory, insights from neuroscience, and experiments in experimental economics all point to the critical role of prosocial behavior and collaboration in facilitating human survival, societal development, and the cultivation of shared values. In essence, the success of our species has been predicated not solely on individual selfishness but on our capacity for cooperation, mutual aid, and collective problem-solving.

The union movement serves as a tangible manifestation of our innate propensity for collaboration and collective action. By organizing workers, promoting solidarity, and advocating for systemic change, unions contribute to the cultivation of social capital within workplaces and society at large, thereby fostering economic equality, social cohesion, and human flourishing.

The principles underlying the union movement—such as fairness, solidarity, and inclusivity—are not only compatible with but essential for the building of more equitable and inclusive social and economic systems. In an era marked by growing disparities in wealth and opportunity, the resurgence of unions offers a pathway toward greater justice, prosperity, and well-being for all members of society.

A strong, unified, and vibrant union movement represents a strategic imperative for addressing the challenges posed by the decline of social capital and the resurgence of income inequality. By promoting cooperation, collaboration, and the cultivation of shared values in the workplace, unions not only empower workers to advocate for their rights but also contribute to the broader project of building a more just, equitable, and sustainable society. In this sense, the presence of unions is not only in the best interest of individual workers but essential for the collective welfare and prosperity of society.

As we are about to find out more about the results of contract negotiations, CUSSU members will be in a unique position. We have a chance to move the needle. CUSSU members will have a powerful opportunity to express a collective will. This is an opportunity to impact not only our individual quality of life but also the culture. The stakes are high, but we are strong and resilient. The question will be more than whether the offer is a good deal; it is a question of trusting in our strength and resilience and rising to the challenge of the greater good.

CUSSU in the Kitchen

... 'cause everyone wants a revolution, but no one wants to do the dishes!

Banana & Maple Upside-down Toffee Cake (submitted by Faith Howard)



INGREDIENTS

100 g / 3.5 oz / ½ cup butter, softened
60 ml / 2 fl oz / ¼ cup maple syrup
100 g / 3.5 oz / ½ cup brown sugar
1 banana, mashed
3 eggs, beaten
170 g / 6 oz / 1 1/3 cups self-raising flour
3 bananas, peeled, halved, and sliced in half lengthwise
Whipped free cream, to serve (optional)

FOR THE TOFFEE

60 g / 2 oz / 4 Tbsp butter
30 g / 1 oz / 2 Tbsp brown sugar
60 ml / 2 fl oz / ¼ cup maple syrup
1 Tbsp lemon juice

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 180°C / 350°F.

To make the toffee: Place a 25cm/9 ¾ inch sauté pan [cast iron or other oven safe pan] over medium heat. Add the butter, brown sugar and maple syrup. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 4 minutes until toffee has thickened slightly. Remove from the heat and sprinkle with lemon juice.

To make the cake: Cream the butter in the bowl of a stand mixer. While still running, add the maple syrup and brown sugar. Add the mashed banana and eggs, bit by bit, then stir in the flour.

Arrange the sliced bananas in a fan shape in the pan with the toffee sauce. Spread the batter over the bananas and place in the center of a preheated oven for 35 minutes or until the cake feels set in the center.

Remove to a work surface, slide a knife around the sides of the pan, place a plate on top and turn it over (the pan must still be warm). If too much toffee remains, place the pan over medium heat with 1 tablespoonful of water and whisk until the toffee dissolves, then spoon over the cake. Slice into wedges and serve with whipped cream if desired.

HOW TO REACH US

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Executive Committee Members

Donna Fasciano - President

Jennifer Muir - VP General

David Babcock - VP Grievance

Bo-Kyung Kim - Secretary

Vidya Khan - Treasurer

Faith Howard - VP Health & Safety

Larissa Dutil - VP Information

Christabell Moyo - VP Women's Issues

Calendar

June 14 - First Summer Friday

June 14 - CUSSU Summer BBQ

June 24 - St. Jean Baptiste Holiday

July 1 - Canada Day Holiday

August 16 - Last Summer Friday

September 2 - Labor Day Holiday

September 3 - First Day of Classes Fall 2024

Have suggestions or Ideas for the newsletter?



News From Members

The CUSSU newsletter is packed with practical advice on various issues of interest to the support staff. We want to give you the opportunity to stay in touch with us, and to tell us what useful information you would like to see on the CUSSU website and CUSSU newsletter. **Newsletters are usually published four times per year**, and is sent to all members as a benefit of our membership.

If you have a problem and would like your fellow members to help, send your questions, suggestions or comments to cussu@concordia.ca. This email address is protected from spambots.

The Executive seeks to support and assist you, our members, by keeping you informed of any new developments in the University. **Your union delegates:**

Email us at cussu@concordia.ca

CUSSU Website: Please check out our CUSSU website at

www.CUSSU.net

Did you know CUSSU has a [Facebook](#) Page?



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