

Standing up for Quality Education

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FLEMING FACULTY UNION

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Week Four: Steadfast and Strong

Giant jumbo front page props and thanks to picket captains ! Your motivation and dedication is fantastic.



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Class name is Local352

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“The average wage of the roughly 70 percent of college faculty members on partial and part-time contracts at Ontario colleges is about \$30,000 annually....it isn’t lost on OPSEU negotiators that from 1996 to 2012, Ontario college presidents received an average annual salary increase of an extraordinary 12.44 percent—six times the annual rate of inflation. And if that wasn’t enough, in January of this year, Ontario college presidents were back at the trough asking for another pay hike, this time an unprecedented 32 percent annual average increase, taking the highest salaries in the sector to \$494,000—ahead even of some of Ontario’s university president salaries from the largest and top-ranking schools.”

This is an excerpt from one of the most powerful articles about our strike written by a faculty member and posted on the Walrus website. [Click here to read this inspiring article](#) and to share it widely on social media.

Riddle: You have a cow. You buy a bull. You have calves. Sell them, repeat process, retire. That’s old school butcher-baker-candlestick- maker capitalism. How does it work in 2017? Business faculty know this stuff so must answer this in mime 😊



Thank you!

This is what solidarity looks like. Joanne Tully found Amber (from Fleming) and Mason Fraser (Seneca Flight School) delivering hot soup to the line at Brealey on their day off from picketing! Joining them at the crockpot is Kari Draker-Fortis. Thank you for boosting spirits with your incredible generosity!

A faculty member at Conestoga has written an inspiring piece about how our strike is a [“Pay it forward moment.”](#) It would have been easy for full-time faculty to say “good enough” to the monetary offer but this “is a cause bigger than yourself.”

We are grateful to those who went on strike in 1984 for the SWF that we benefit from today (talk to someone who was around before the SWF and you will learn how bad it was before we had this formula). “It exists only because the faculty in 1984 took a stand, sacrificing their own income for the greater good. It is now our turn to do so. Like the faculty of 1984, we need to sacrifice both time and income to do what is right. This is a ‘pay it forward’ moment” (during the 1989 strike, management tried to get rid of the SWF. We stood strong).

Riddle Answer: You may have two cows. You sell five to your publicly listed company, using letters of credit opened by your sister-in-law at the bank, then you flip an equity/debt swap for collateral in an initial public offering so you get all nine cows back, with tax exemptions for seventeen cows. The milk of the nineteen cows is transferred via a Swiss bank secretly owned by a cheese mogul cabinet minister through his Caymans Islands unlisted company back to your unlisted company. Sell a cow to the cabinet minister’s cousin, a lobbyist who owns a media empire, leaving you a thousand cows. No balance sheet is kept. The public buys your bull.

The majority of faculty are part timers who show up for 4 months and then may disappear.

At the same time, there are 59% more managers than 10 years ago and every single one of them is full time.

Why don’t we have the same ratio of full-time to part-time managers as we have faculty?

This could provide just-in-time delivery of management during the busy management season. It offers flexibility.

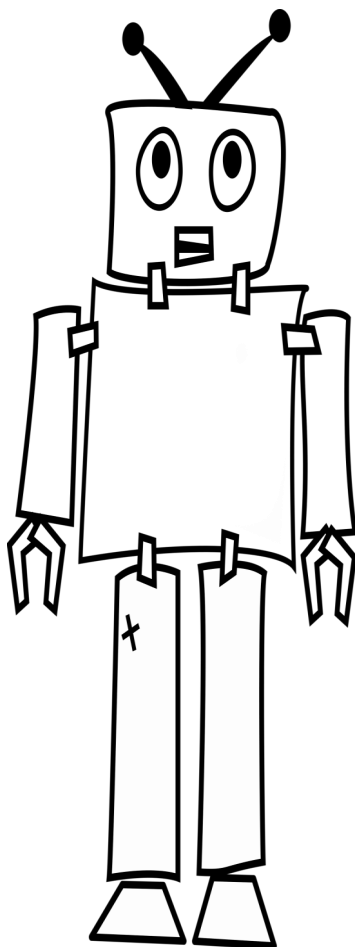
We could pilot a hybrid management model where administrative functions are housed online and the rest of the work is farmed out to manager technicians.

This pilot would need to be managed of course, but when it was done, presto: flexibility.

Get rid of the manager.

It sounds a bit funny, but this is exactly what happens with faculty.

If we need administrative continuity, don’t we need it in the classroom?



Don Sinclair: “The challenge there is uh that employers uh don’t negotiate complement. And so essentially you’d be casting in stone forever um a staffing model that 10, 15, 20 years - uh we don’t even know with uh A.I. coming on what the gig economy looks like”

— Don Sinclair, head of CEC

Have you heard the remarkable [CBC interview with RM Kennedy and Don Sinclair](#) where he ponders artificial intelligence ?

A brother at another local notes that “the ‘philosophy’ (to use a grand word for a paltry thing) that Mr. Sinclair espouses is nothing new. He is a fetishist of machinery, as most managers are. He does not so much see us as bots: he sees himself as a bot. Note the artificial language and set phrases in the interview. The contrast between what RM is trying to say and what he is saying is absolute. Don Sinclair has no concept of education and no interest in it. He is solely concerned to deliver mass training at the lowest possible cost. His ideal is a kind of technical purity free of human interference. If human beings cannot be dispensed with, they must be controlled and reduced as completely as possible to the condition of things. Until his AI messiah arrives, he’ll do his best to approximate machine purity with inferior human material.”

Sound apocalyptic? Welcome to tomorrow. In fact, yesterday. A few years ago, the Hewlett Foundation sponsored a contest offering \$100,000 for a program automating essay grading. There were [2,500 entrants!](#) Somebody won. Inside Higher Ed gushes that it’s “[A Wing for the Robo Readers](#).” See also Audrey Watters’ “[Robots and Education](#).”

The New York Time’s “[Facing a Robo-Grader? Just Keep Obfuscating Mellifluously](#)” notes that the e-Rater can’t recognize truth and doesn’t care if you said the war of 1812 was in 1974. It rewards cheesie high school essay excess. The e-Rater does not like short sentences and “Gargantuan words are indemnified because e-Rater interprets them as a sign of lexical complexity. The substance of an argument doesn’t matter as long as it looks to the computer as if it’s nicely argued.”

And, I suppose from Sinclair’s point of view, e-Rater bots won’t go on strike to advocate for better learning conditions for students.

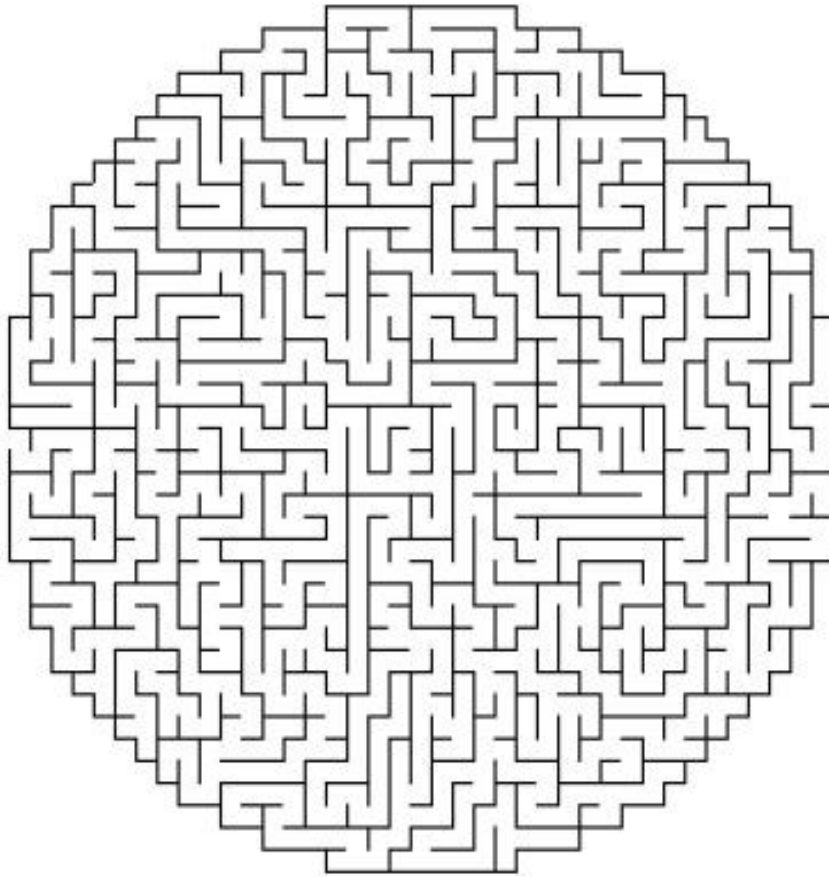
The cagey reputation manager Council hired has a light digital footprint: discretion assured ([really](#)). Check out this [article by a journalism student](#).



Thank you! Law and Justice students fight for justice on the line!

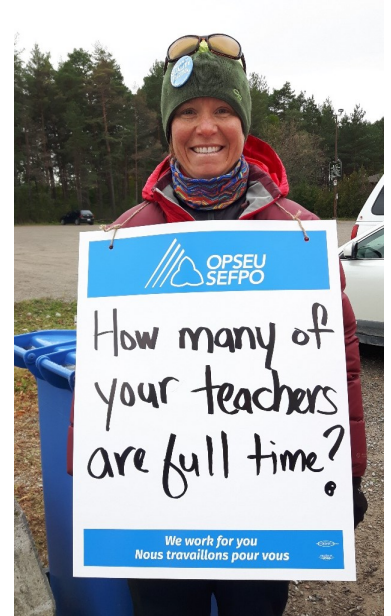
Games and Distractions

“It’s Amazing We Are Back at the Table” (thanks, George Seto)



A great letter to the editor from a student in Ottawa:

“How can quality education be delivered if the professors and instructors aren’t properly paid? Are we to assume that the faculty is simply there because of a passion for teaching? I believe education is an investment by society in the future. So that the bright young minds of today will have the knowledge and skills required to be able to work together to solve the crises of tomorrow, the problems and trails of the 21st century. However, it seems to me, as we enter the third week of the strike, that the Ontario government disagrees with my ideas on education. The fact that we see colleges hiring short-term, seasonal contract teachers is evidence of that.”



Send pix, articles to local352website@flemingcollege.ca

Joanne grooves multi-toque solidarity in Toronto

