

TO: All St. Clair Students
FROM: Your Student Representative Council

REGARDING: The Impending Strike by College Faculty

Regrettably, unless last-minute negotiations can resolve the current impasse in contract talks, unionized college faculty members across Ontario - including at St. Clair - will be on strike as of Monday morning (October 16).

That means that all classes will be suspended until a new contract is agreed upon and the strike ceases.

Here are some of the things you need to know:

1. The work-stoppage does not, necessarily, mean that your academic year is in jeopardy. Multi-weeks-long strikes by faculty have occurred in the past; but, even in those cases, no students' academic years have been lost. Traditionally, upon the return to classes, curriculums are "condensed", a week or so may be added to the end of a semester, mandatory work/clinical placements are reconfigured, and all academic requirements are met in an amended fashion. In short ... Don't panic.
2. What can you do to prepare yourself for what may, eventually, be a more condensed and "intensive" academic year? ... Make a point of using the strike-time to self-educate yourself. Keep reading ahead in your textbooks and other learning materials, and test yourself with whatever assignments and chapter quizzes may be contained in those materials. Review the syllabuses of your courses to progress through what you should be studying. Do some of the prep work for the essays and assignments that are cited in those syllabuses. If you have alternative access to the specific computer software and/or equipment/machinery used in your program's labs/workshops, practice with it to develop your "hands-on" skills.
3. Remember: Classes are suspended, BUT THE COLLEGE'S BUILDINGS REMAIN OPEN, WITH MANY SERVICES AND FACILITIES STILL ACCESSIBLE - including the open computer labs, tutoring, the library, and some workshops and labs. Those will help you to successfully carry out the self-education mentioned in Number 2 (above).
4. Assorted other services and facilities will also remain open and accessible during the strike, although on more-limited-than-usual hours (generally, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.). These include the pool and SportsPlex if you wish to pursue your fitness regimen, a few food services, the Student Centres (main campus and downtown), and your Student Representative Council offices.
5. In terms of Numbers 3 and 4 (above) ... Obviously, if you are planning to access the still-available services and facilities by coming to one of the campuses, you will encounter picket lines comprised of striking faculty members. They are legally entitled to demonstrate, to chat with you, to offer you literature, and (in doing all of that) to BRIEFLY impede your entrance/exit to/from the grounds. Please be courteous and patient as you cross the picket lines. Whether you agree with the union's position or not, they are striking because they believe their position would improve the quality of college education in Ontario - and that, alone, merits your respectful behaviour when you encounter their picket lines.

6. If you customarily take a Transit Windsor bus to college, you should know that its vehicles/drivers will not cross picket lines, so there won't be any drop-offs/pick-ups at the bus-stops located within the grounds at main campus. Instead, Transit Windsor will have drop-offs/pick-ups near the main entrance on the Herb Gray Parkway and Cabana Road. You will, therefore, have to cross the picket lines on foot. Again, the strikers may approach you to chat or distribute literature, but we don't anticipate that they will try to impede you in any significant manner.

7. Whether you are entering/exiting the campuses by car or on foot, if you ever feel threatened, endangered or ill-treated, the college will have security guards positioned nearby. Call upon them for assistance. Do not take matters into your own hands by entering into any sort of confrontation with the picketers. Also, your Student Representative Council is prepared to assist you and advocate on your behalf in such circumstances. Contact us with your concerns at 519-972-2716.

8. We'll keep you up-to-date about the situation on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/stclairsrc/>), and via The Saint Scene on-line magazine (<http://stclair-src.org/news/>). You should also regularly check the college's strike info webpage (<http://www.stclaircollege.ca/facultyworkstoppage/>).

9. Again ... Stay calm, keep studying, and stay tuned. We all hope this situation will be brief in duration.