



Teaching Support Staff Union

Marking For Education not Administration Frequently Asked Questions

June 17, 2015

Background

This document covers some frequently asked questions. If other questions arise, members should immediately contact:

TSSU office: 778-782-4735

TSSU Helpline: 604-652-6202

Email: tssu@tssu.ca

Can I be fired for withholding grades?

Under the BC Labour Code, TSSU members can not suffer any retribution, intimidation or any discipline for participating in an official job action. The Strike Committee has declared that all members must withhold grades, so all members are now protected by the law. In the past, a limited number of TSSU members experienced intimidation and coercion from bosses and managers. Please report any intimidation, coercion or bullying immediately to TSSU so we can put a stop to it.

Will I still be paid if we're withholding grades?

Since you are still completing your work, you must continue to be paid. In the event TSSU members choose to withdraw services (e.g. set up a picket line) then SFU Administration is allowed to deduct money from your pay.

Why are we doing this in the summer?

Unlike most universities, SFU has about 60% of a fall/spring course load running in the summer. TSSU members teach a larger percentage of the courses in the summer and so we still have substantial effect by refusing to enter grades. We have been without an agreement for over a year and TSSU's Strike Committee feels that pressure is necessary now to finally come to an agreement.

Why don't we just ask the Administration to be more reasonable?

The Contract and Strike Committee believe that a key impediment to negotiating a Collective Agreement is the lack of an authority figure on the SFU Administration's bargaining team. In addition, the concessions that SFU Administration has proposed for our smallest and most vulnerable group of members is simply unjust. On June 10th we delivered a letter to SFU, and asked them, as a show of good faith, to address these things, and then we could return to the bargaining table without escalating our strike. The Administration did not agree. This was surprising as we know SFU Administration wants to avoid disruption at their elaborate 50th anniversary celebrations. This escalation of strike action is specifically directed at achieving those commitments.



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What about marking that is supposed to be done online?

You must not enter grades into any electronic system that is available for access by employees of SFU who are not TSSU members. You may enter feedback (e.g. comments, hints, alternative ways to approach the problem, etc) onto an electronic system, but numeric and letter grades must not be entered. For unusual circumstances, please contact TSSU via the means listed above.

What about a set of assignments I received and commenced marking before June 20th?

If you received assignments before the start of grade withholding and commenced marking then you should continue to mark all of them as normal.

What if a student handed in a late assignment after June 19th but I've marked all of the other assignments?

This assignment was originally scheduled to be received by you after the beginning of withholding grades, however you have clearly determined that this late submission was based on special circumstances. Therefore, if the assignment in general was graded and provided, then the late assignment should be as well.

What if a student handed in an early assignment before June 20th but the assignment was due later after June 19th and I wasn't specifically instructed to mark the assignments before they were due?

This means you were scheduled to mark the assignments after withholding of grades started. You must withhold grades.

What if the midterm or assignment was completed previously but we're scheduled to group mark after June 19th

Since your marking was scheduled to begin after the start of withholding grades, you must withhold grades.

What if we're halfway through group-marking a midterm when grade withholding starts on June 20th?

Any marks recorded on the page can remain. The remainder the exam questions to be marked will be withheld, as a result the exam grade will also be withheld. See the "group marking" instructions for further information.

What if my class involves participation marks or "i-clickers" and I have concerns about withholding grades under those conditions?

Please contact tssu@tssu.ca for specific assistance with these problems or call 778-782-4735 or 604-652-6202.