



Canadian Association of University Teachers
Association canadienne des professeures et professeurs d'université

Organizing for Equity: Skills for Activists

CAUT Equity Conference

21-22 February 2020 / Delta Ottawa Hotel 101 Lyon Street

Conference Overview

The CAUT 2020 Equity Conference is an opportunity to strengthen change-making skills and build networks of support with activists from across Canada. The event is open to all members of the academic community, equity-identified and allies, to explore what is being done, and how more can be done, to advance equity on campus.

Agenda

Friday, 21 February

08:00 – 09:00 **Registration**

09:00 – 09:15 **Territorial acknowledgment**

09:15 – 9:30 **Introductions & Conference Overview**

9:30 – 10:30 **Session One – Celebrating Progress**

A panel of academic staff from across Canada share lessons from successes their associations have had in advancing the struggle for just and equitable workplaces.

10:30 – 11:00 **Refreshment Break**

11:00 – 12:00 **Session Two - Drawing on our Strengths**

Academic staff have generated an enormous pool of knowledge in moving equity forward. In this session conference participants meet in small groups to share and report back their experience and expertise in building more equitable workplaces.

12:00 – 13:00 **Lunch** *(provided)*

13:00 – 14:00 **Session Three – Yes, We Can Do This**

A panel of labour/human rights specialists field questions from conference participants on specific equity issues, providing information on concrete ways to advance the struggle. All participants will have the opportunity to submit questions as part of the conference registration process. Questions will also come directly from the floor.

14:00 – 15:30 Session Four – Tools of the Trade – Round 1

Academic staff associations offer rare advantages to moving equity forward – organizational infrastructure, stable funding, and direct recourse to dispute resolution and contract negotiation mechanisms. To ensure everyone can access these advantages, sessions four and five offer concurrent breakouts on the basics of:

- Collective bargaining for equity
- Grievance arbitration for equity
- Campaigns - Engaging and mobilizing academic staff for equity
- Communicating equity effectively

15:30 – 16:00 Refreshment Break

16:00 – 17:30 Session Five – Tools of the Trade – Round 2

- Collective bargaining for equity
- Grievance arbitration for equity
- Campaigns - Engaging and mobilizing academic staff for equity
- Communicating equity effectively

17:30 – 19:00 Reception

Saturday, 22 February

09:00 – 9:15 Introduction to the Day

Day two of the conference is a hands on, skill-building exercise in which conference participants, working from two hypothetical scenarios, build the components of an equity campaign.

09:15 – 10:00 Session Six – Activist Skills

Five quick, skills-focused presentations for the day ahead:

- Communicating through the media – staying on message
- Creating visual material – deploying the elements of design
- Bargaining – building the collective agreement
- Grieving – enforcing your rights

10:00 – 10:30 Session Seven – Scenario, Message and Strategy

Conference participants are divided into two groups, each reviewing a separate scenario highlighting an equity challenge to academic staff, and then work together to develop the key message and overarching campaign strategy to confront the problem. This message and strategy will inform the day's work.

10:30 – 11:00 Break – Refreshments

11:00 – 12:00 Session Eight – The Projects

Empowered by a key message and winning strategy, participants divide into groups and work on separate projects to confront the scenario's equity challenge.

- Project One – Review the collective agreement language relevant to the scenario, identify its shortcomings, prepare a campaign to improve it.
- Project Two – Based on the existing language, write a grievance and formulate an approach to move it forward.
- Project Three – Prepare material (poster, flyer, button, etc.) to educate members and the broader community on the association's campaign.
- Project Four – Prepare a press release and hold a press conference to publicize the struggle.

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch (provided)

13:00 – 14:00 Session Eight – The Projects, continued

Groups continue work on the projects.

14:00 – 14:30 Break – Refreshments

14:30 – 15:30 Session Nine – Presentations

Each group presents its work and all participants discuss and learn from each other's accomplishments.

15:30 – 16:00 Conclusion and Adjournment

Participants review the workshop, summarizing key issues, experiences and future directions.