

Frequently Asked Questions: Strikes, research and scholarly activity

Will I have to cease all scholarly activity during a strike?

In the event of a strike, the APUO executive will ask its members to withdraw their labour from the employer, meaning teaching, supervision and administrative duties.

The APUO executive urges members to postpone or re-arrange research-related travel commitments wherever possible, especially in the first two weeks of a strike or lockout; strong visible support by members early on is crucial to the short duration of a strike or lockout.

The APUO executive is committed to minimizing disruptions to members' research and the scholarly sacrifices they will have to make in the event of a strike. We encourage members to remove their research from campus where possible. We realize that for many members, just moving files out of the office and using other libraries in town allows people to continue research off-campus. Members in other disciplines do not have homes equipped with chemical fume hoods or subatomic particle accelerators. Under no circumstances, however, is a strike to be considered a means to get teaching and administrative release in order to devote more time to research.

In the event of a strike, employees requiring access to facilities shall indicate their access requirements with justification in writing to the Association (apuo@apuo.ca) in advance of or at the time of any strike. These employees shall be issued Picket Line passes but will be expected to perform strike duty.

I know that I cannot teach, but can I get into my office or lab during a strike?

In general, no. Participating in a strike means removing yourself physically from campus. Most members can continue research off-campus. The APUO will issue strike passes to those members who require access to labs or live experiments as noted above.

Will I have access to UOttawa email?

We do not know if the administration will deny access to email and campus servers during a strike. Even if the administration allows access to campus email, the APUO will not use the UOttawa email system during a strike. Before a strike begins, send your alternative email address and phone number by visiting <http://fluidsurveys.com/s/apuo1/>.

If I am a department or program chair do I have to go on strike?

Yes, all members of APUO are expected to honour the strike.

Will I be expected, or able, to carry on with my clinical work with patients during a strike or lockout?

If your clinical work is part of your employment with UOttawa you are expected to withhold your work during a strike.

If I go to a conference during a strike, can I get a travel grant or be reimbursed expenses after we return to work?

That depends on the source of the funding for the travel grant. In general, the APUO is committed to recovering research expenses incurred by members during the course of a strike or lock out. Consult the APUO Strike Finance Committee for clarification of your situation.

If we incur expenses for research during the strike, will the administration be likely to reimburse us for these expenses after we return to work?

This will be negotiated as part of the return to work protocol at the end of a strike.

My research funds support the work of research employees, but they are not part of the APUO. If I am on strike will the university continue paying their wages?

The university is legally obliged to continue paying research employees that are not APUO members, including student researchers, unless their individual contracts allow the university to lay them off in the event of a strike by their faculty supervisor.

How will losing time teaching and research during a strike affect my chances for promotion, renewal or permanency? What about lost wages during a strike?

The APUO has tabled a strike protocol that will extend deadlines for internal grants, renewal, promotion and leaves. Recovery of lost wages during a strike will be part of a return to work protocol.

While on strike, may I supervise honours or graduate students, set exams for my students, write letters of recommendation, or do other things that do not involve classroom instruction?

It is impossible to answer every query that comes up in this regard, but common sense can help in addressing such questions. If teaching stops, so does supervision of students. Ask yourself if the service for the student can be postponed without causing great damage.

For example, a letter recommending a student for graduate school or a scholarship has to be submitted by the deadline. Writing it does not mean you have to appear on campus. In this case, failing to write the letter would cause the student serious hardship. On the other hand, if you are supervising an honours or graduate thesis/research, it would probably not be a major hardship if you did not meet for a week or two, or if you set aside supervision of course and curricular activity for a couple of weeks. Can the work be delayed for a short period? Is it absolutely necessary while you are on strike? Asking yourself questions like this should give you the right answer.