

Dear Department of East Asian Studies,

We hope you are keeping safe and healthy during these challenging times. We wish to extend our gratitude to the department for its ongoing support to us as students and workers in mitigating the impacts of the pandemic.

With our Collective Agreement set to expire on December 31, 2020, Unit 1 of CUPE 3902 has begun its bargaining process with the University of Toronto. On Monday, November 30, 2020, the contract student educators (Teaching Assistants, Course Instructors, Invigilators) of the Department of East Asian Studies (EAS) held its first meeting for the 2020/2021 Unit 1 bargaining session. At this meeting, we passed a motion to send this letter to the Department of East Asian Studies in order to enjoin Faculty and administrators to endorse our bargaining platform (see enclosed).

CUPE 3902's main priorities for this round of bargaining are to improve workload standards, foster inclusion and anti-oppression at U of T, increase compensation and job security, and promote (mental) health and safety. We urge the Department to stand by its graduate students in their struggle for a fair, safe, and just workplace at the University of Toronto.

In particular, we ask for a response detailing the Department's official position on the bargaining platform. The Department's endorsement of the goals and provisions of the bargaining platform will greatly benefit the union's position in advocating for graduate students and Unit 1 employees. Furthermore, if there are aspects of the platform the department is unable to support, we are open to discussion and recommendations. As always, we are happy to keep lines of communication open and to further discuss specific initiatives.

The graduate student educators of the Department of East Asian Studies greatly appreciate the past support we have received from the EAS faculty. Unfortunately, the uphill battle we now face comes with additional challenges. The austerity measures of the recent Bill 124 will severely constrain our ability to collectively bargain for concrete gains that would begin to effectively address the chronic socio-economic precarity affecting many of us. In light of this, it is now more than ever that we will need to count on your support and solidarity.

We greatly appreciate your time and effort in reviewing this letter and attached platform. Should you need any further clarification, please do not hesitate to let us know. We believe that the Department of East Asian Studies can lead by example by advocating for an equitable university.

In solidarity,

The Contract Student Educators of the Department of East Asian Studies and
The East Asian Studies Graduate Student Union (EASGSU)