

TIMETABLE SURVEY & POTENTIAL EXPANSION OF TEACHING HOURS

Dear PSAC 901 Members,

Many of you recently received a survey from the University Timetable Committee regarding a potential expansion of the normal teaching day into weekday evenings and/or weekends. We are writing to ensure you are aware of the broader implications and to encourage you to participate in the survey.

The University has indicated that this is a consultation process and that the Committee is exploring options to address classroom pressures. However, if implemented, expanding teaching into evenings and weekends could have significant consequences for Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Teaching Fellows (TFs), including increased disruption to work-life balance, negative impacts on mental health and wellbeing, greater scheduling instability and unpredictability, complications for members with caregiving responsibilities, blurred boundaries between academic work and personal time, and potential pressure to accept evening/weekend work to secure employment

Our members are already working at or beyond capacity. Teaching Assistants and Teaching Fellows routinely manage heavy instructional loads, research obligations, and precarious contract timelines under conditions of sustained institutional strain. Expanding the teaching week into evenings and weekends risks normalizing extended and irregular work hours rather than addressing the underlying structural issues driving classroom pressure, including insufficient space, hiring constraints, and long-standing resource shortages. The solution to administrative bottlenecks cannot be to offload additional temporal burdens onto precarious academic workers.

The employer's assertion that there are currently "no collective agreement implications" is misleading. Any change that alters scheduling expectations, availability requirements, or the practical conditions under which work is performed directly engages the Collective Agreement. Article 3 defines "Business Day" as days other than weekends, statutory holidays, and days when the University is officially closed. While this definition does not prohibit weekend work outright, it governs critical procedural timelines and institutional obligations, including grievance processes, contract issuance, discipline, and leave entitlements. These protections are structured around the assumption of a standard business week.

Requiring TAs and TFs to perform core instructional duties on weekends, when many administrative offices and support structures are closed, creates a structural asymmetry between work obligations and access to employment protections. Members could be required to teach at times when the institutional mechanisms necessary to process grievances, clarify contractual issues, or address workplace conflicts are unavailable. This imbalance raises serious concerns about whether management rights would be exercised in a manner that is reasonable, fair, and equitable, as required under Article 4.02.

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We strongly encourage all members to complete the survey and to clearly indicate opposition to expanding teaching into evenings and weekends. It is essential that the administration hear directly from TAs and TFs about the material consequences such a shift would have on our working conditions, academic quality, and well-being.

If you have concerns or would like to share additional feedback, please contact us.

In Solidarity,

PSAC 901