

From: Kelly Train <ktrain@ryerson.ca>

Sent: April 8, 2020 5:43 PM

To: cupe3904u1@ryerson.ca

Subject: COVID 19 and Ryerson's Employee and Family Assistance Program

Hi Everyone,

I wanted to recognize all the hard work that our Unit 1 members are doing in having to transition their teaching methodology and managing their students in light of the COVID 19 crisis. As a Unit 1 contract lecturer myself, I understand that much of this work has not only been the transition of our lecture style and teaching methodology but especially dealing with student stress and anxiety that the crisis has created. Our students also appreciate all the extra work we have done for their benefit. On behalf of the union, we want to thank you and reassure you that we are aware of all that you are doing. I want to extend additional thanks to our Unit 1 colleagues from the Nursing department who are not only teaching and supervising students in the hospitals during this crisis, but are also employed on the front lines of dealing with this crisis as health care workers in the hospitals risking their own health and safety for the benefit of everyone in the community.

I continue to raise all of these issues, especially the amount of work created by the transition of our lecture format and course management as well as dealing with an increased amount of student issues and stress, in every discussion I have with management during this crisis. I am continuing to have conversations on a regular basis with management as well as with our other campus coalition partners during this crisis. I am also continuing to have conversations with various Unit 1 department stewards during this crisis period.

I wanted to share some important information with regards to the Ryerson University **Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)**. In our last round of bargaining, the Unit 1 bargaining team was able to negotiate for all Unit 1 employees, whether or not they qualified for health benefits, to have access to Ryerson University's Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP). The Program provides professional, confidential support services and programs for employees and members of their immediate families. It offers counselling, information, tools and insights you need to address minor and major problems, so they do not become more serious. This Program is administered by **Morneau Shepell**, a private company contracted by Ryerson. Whatever you discuss and your call(s) to the Program and its counsellors is completely confidential. There is no stigma in accessing this program. We have been assured by Ryerson's HR department that the university will never know that you used these confidential services. Your mental health and well being is key to your overall health in these trying times. Social distancing is very difficult for us as contract lecturers whose jobs and lives are consumed by interacting with large numbers of students in lecture halls, classrooms, and office hours. Social distancing is counterintuitive to our work and can be taxing on our mental health.

Some of you have expressed feeling overwhelmed and stressed with the transition and other family issues you are facing in light of the COVID 19 crisis. I encourage you to contact the EFAP for support should you need it. Their contact information can be found on the Ryerson University Human Resources website under Employee and Family Assistance Program as well as below:

Your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for immediate, confidential help:

Toll-free:1-844-880-9142

Toll-free TTY Service: 1-887-338-0275

Online counselling at: www.shepellfgi.com/ecounselling

Online resources at: www.workhealthlife.com

On your mobile device EAP Mobile Device Application

Thank you also to everyone who shared with me various links to other articles written about Zoom and the issues and problems it presents as a lecture medium. In addition to the Daily Beast link that I sent previously, here are some other articles that various Unit 1 members have shared with me in response:

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/right-wing-tricksters-want-to-discredit-academia-by-recording-zoom-classes-during-coronavirus-outbreak?ref=scroll>

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/apr/02/zoom-technology-security-coronavirus-video-conferencing>

https://www.npr.org/2020/04/03/826129520/a-must-for-millions-zoom-has-a-dark-side-and-an-fbi-warning?utm_term=nprnews&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=npr&fbclid=IwAR0hbC-aNKxwsHej8VeB2PDw9XlcoDOIWnzdPnz-7eLwr3SQcXBSrnKs0ok

I hope that you and your family stay safe and well.

Kelly Train, PhD
Unit 1 Chief Steward
CUPE 3904
ktrain@ryerson.ca