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# PROFS EN NÉGO

## A FRONTAL ASSAULT ON TEACHERS

*The list of demands with which we were presented by management last December was little more than a vague and rambling call for greater “give” and “flexibility” in our working conditions in this period of “scarce resources.” But we now know the true meaning behind these cloaked words: major setbacks in virtually every aspect of our job conditions. Indeed, each one of management’s demands is punctuated by the Couillard government’s now all-too-familiar refrain of “Doing better with less,” which more accurately translates as “Doing worse with nothing!”*

### A MAJOR BACKSLIDE

#### More precarity

These demands are highly unsettling and offer no solution to the problems facing the CEGEP system. In fact, to the contrary, they run the risk of weakening it even further, and this at a time when more than 40% of college professors are already without any job security. While precarity is one of the key problems we want to address, management is proposing to make it even more difficult for contingent professors to reach a full-time load by refusing to factor in courses taught in the continuing education sector. Not satisfied with just imperilling those already in a precarious situation, it is now going after tenured professors as well by trying to reopen all of the provisions relating to job security to renegotiate the terms and criteria for eligibility, even though the costs associated with job security are minimal.

For example, management wants to see the mobility of professors on availability extended not only to a wider geographical zone, but also to the various job categories within a college. This would mean that a professor on availability could technically be assigned to a support or vocational staff position, and vice versa.

#### Talk about contempt for our profession!

*But we now know the true meaning behind these cloaked words: major setbacks in virtually every aspect of our job conditions.*

## AN ENCROACHMENT ON TEACHING EXPERTISE

Management is also proposing changes that would allow it to meddle in the appointment process of college coordinating bodies and wants the collective agreement harmonized with the institutional policies of colleges, rather than the other way around. Concretely, this would have the effect of taking away responsibilities from program committees and departments—responsibilities currently held by professors—and putting them squarely in the hands of college administrations. This is a head-on attack against our professional autonomy. Management's rationale for these demands is that it may be called to account by the Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial (CEEC) on matters of quality

assurance. It will be recalled that one of our demands is the abolishment of the CEEC in favour of provincial coordination bodies (ASPPC demand 2.11).

## A HEAVIER WORKLOAD

Lastly, the CPNC wants to renegotiate the calculation of individual teaching load (CI), which can only lead to an increase in workload for professors. In the last negotiations, we succeeded in having the CI calculation modified to better reflect the many hours required for course preparation and the high number of students enrolled in classes. We cannot accept any such regression.



## MOBILIZATION BEARING FRUIT

Fortunately, CEGEP professors have been ready for action since the start of the collective bargaining process, and this mobilization has already begun to yield results. As much as we doubt in our counterparts' ability to engage in any real give-and-take in light of their obvious lack of a clear mandate to negotiate, our call to action certainly succeeded in getting things moving: upon learning of our intention to mobilize, management agreed to clarify its demands and the solutions it is proposing to address the problems on the table. The "Teachers United" events organized on March 25 and April 1 were particularly effective in raising awareness about the expiry of our collective agreements and in marshalling support for our bargaining committee. Visibility activities such as picketing, postering and special general meetings were held in all corners of Quebec.



With the CPNC's intentions now clearly out in the open, we need to maintain our engagement and unity as we ratchet up the pressure even further. The day of reflection on strike action in the public sector, organized by the Common Front, helped build an even broader base of solidarity that is sure to serve us well as we pursue our mobilization efforts this spring!