



FAQs for Renison Students: How do RAAS Issues Affect Students

November 22, 2023

To address concerns Renison students may have about ongoing negotiations between the Renison Association of Academic Staff (RAAS) and the university administration, we're providing FAQs outlining the impact of faculty bargaining issues on students and their learning.

What is RAAS bargaining for?

- RAAS, comprising Renison's 41 regular faculty members, is negotiating after our contract expired in April 2023.
- Despite 10 months of bargaining, the university has not adequately addressed faculty concerns regarding job security for lecturers, workloads, and improved learning conditions.

Why should Renison students care about RAAS's negotiations?

- RAAS seeks to maintain and enhance the overall quality of education at Renison, encompassing factors like class size, program development, teaching excellence, mentorship, and student and faculty support.
- Proposed changes by the university administration could compromise the quality of your education by cutting funding for teaching assistants, reducing vital supports for faculty research, and creating more discontinuity in teaching faculty, greater reliance on short-term contract faculty, and a higher student-faculty ratio.

Do I need to be worried about a possible strike or lockout?

- At this point, there is no immediate cause for concern. RAAS and the Renison administration have agreed to continue to work towards a collective agreement, with the assistance of a neutral third party to facilitate negotiations.
- While a strike vote has been taken with 95% in favor, it doesn't guarantee a strike. A strike can be averted if we can achieve agreement on our key negotiation issues. Significant progress was made in our most recent negotiation session, and the two sides have agreed to continue talking and not trigger the 17-day countdown to a strike or lockout deadline.
- While we believe that a strike is unnecessary and unlikely, RAAS will continue to prepare for that eventuality, until a deal is made, in case we need it in order to reach a fair deal with our Employer.



Would a strike affect classes?

- Yes, a strike would impact classes taught by tenured, tenure-track, lecturer, or definite term faculty.
- We feel, however, that a strike is a measure we should not need to use to convince our Employer to offer us a fair deal. We would only use it as a last resort.
- Strikes at universities are rare and are usually short-lived.
- RAAS aims to avoid a strike and may seek support from students and community members if negotiations do not progress. Stay updated on RAAS's [website](#) and follow us on X @RenisonAAS for future updates and actions to help prevent a strike.

Further information

- For more information on what a “Strike Mandate Vote” really means, see our “[RAAS Strike Mandate Vote Frequently Asked Questions \(PDF\)](#)”
- For information about how Renison’s administration would handle student concerns in the event of a strike, please contact Renison President Dr. Wendy Fletcher (wendy.fletcher@uwaterloo.ca).
- For more information on RAAS’s negotiation positions or how you can support us in averting a strike, please contact RAAS President Dr. Robert Case (rob.case@uwaterloo.ca).