

**Public Speaking and Parliamentary Procedures**  
**CLC Winter School – Harrison Hot Springs**  
**January 31 – February 5, 2016**

I took this course to gain the confidence to allow me to speak in front of people: at Union meetings, bargaining or in general conversations with people I don't know well. In addition, I wanted to gain the knowledge and experience of proper meeting protocols which I would enable me to be more active in our local.

I arrived in Harrison on Sunday afternoon in time to register and mingle with fellow activists. On Monday morning I was proud to be elected by fellow Trade Unionists as student council representative for our class for the week. This meant that I was speaking in front of the class each day.

We spent Monday and Tuesday learning the roles of a chairperson during meetings, how to be an effective chairperson, participated in scenarios with 'problem members', and explored Bourinot's Rules and Robert's Rules and the differences between the two. I gained so much more out of this part of the course than I thought I would.

Wednesday and Thursday we gave 1 minute speeches. A few people were called on to do impromptu 3 minute speeches as well (yes, I was one of the chosen few). We had two speeches to develop in groups and present to the class on specific topics.

NDP leaders John Horgan, Judy Darcy, Harry Bains, and Raj Chouhan all came in to speak to our class followed by a brief question and answer period. What stood out to me was that none of them had taken public speaking courses, but were thrown into it throughout their careers and spoke fearlessly.

Thank you for the opportunity to grow as an individual and as a union activist! I am looking forward to putting my name forward for the bargaining committee and trying to establish a position on the executive.

In solidarity,

*Karina Sheardown*