

**INTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**March 21, 2023  
2:30 to 3:30 p.m.**

***GCR (UC 2001) and Zoom Meeting***

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**Attendance:** Chair: Roshni Antony (AVP, Human Resources); David Barnett (Provost & VP Academic); Kathy Pozihun (VP Administration & Finance); Gautam Das (LUFA); Pat Larin (SchII); Jack Drewes (IUOE); Dave Andreason (OPSEU); Yamandeep Malhi for Lahama Naeem (LUSU); Alexis Paulusma (COPE); Heather Spivak (Unifor); Jason Freeburn (LUTA)

**Regrets:** Greg Croft (USW); Rahul Parameswaran (GSA); Siavash Hosseini (CUPE)

**Recorder:** Kylie Williams (Human Resources)

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**1. Approval of the Agenda**

**Moved** by Dave Andreason that the agenda been approved.

**Seconded** by Jack Drewes. All in favour.

**Carried**

**2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting of February 21, 2023**

**Moved** by Jason Freeburn that the minutes be approved.

**Seconded** by Jack Drewes. All in favour.

**Carried**

**3. Business Arising from the Minutes**

Regarding Andrew Brigham's update on migrating services to the cloud. Kathy confirmed that the migration weekend was mostly a success thanks to the enormous amount of work done by a large number of people. There is still a lot of work to be done.

It was mentioned that training on the new systems would be helpful. Departments are working on material to help users with the new processes in their area. Kathy suggested reaching out to the department directly if assistance was required in the interim.

**4. Questions for Senior Administration**

Gautam asked for more information on Lakehead's agreements with Georgian College and NOSM to better understand what services are available to members of each institution.

Kathy recommended contacting the area responsible for the specific service directly to learn more. Student Central for student services, as an example.

Jack asked for an update on the non-union vote on the CAAT pension. Roshni confirmed that the response from the survey resulted in a positive result regarding the move to CAAT for future service. This will take effect July 1, 2023.

## 5. Roundtable

**Alexis Paulusma (COPE)** – COPE will be commencing negotiations in May. Like other unions COPE plans to negotiate the move towards CAAT.

**Heather Spivak (Unifor)** – No update

**Jack Drewes (IUOE)** – Jack asked the committee to consider looking into progressive retirement. Having a strategy in place to allow full-time positions to drop down to part-time and mentor new employees, will facilitate the retention of institutional knowledge that could be passed on.

**Gautam Das (LUFA)** – Gautam expressed his appreciation for Mike den Haan's presentation to IRC in February and asked for one point of clarification regarding student fees. He recommended an update on Economic development, but the consensus was the topic would be better for the senate academic committee.

**Jason Freeburn (LUTA)** – LUTA is pleased with the decision to move to CAAT pension for future service, but they are not losing sight of working to wind up the old pension plans. Technical Staff are busy with end of the winter term activities.

**Dave Andreason (OPSEU)** – Dave reported work has been hectic in TSC, especially for the ERP group involved with the weekend migration to the cloud and Helpdesk who have been assisting students and employees with the transition.

**Patrick Larin (Schedule II)** – Schedule II is looking forward to moving to the CAAT pension for future service.

**Kathy Pozihun (VP, Administration & Finance)** – Kathy is aware that the wind-up of the Lakehead Pension plans will be an issue on everyone's mind. For that to happen approval would be needed from CRA and FSRA. She cautioned that it would take a great deal of time due to regulations in place and due diligence required. Members of the committee offered their support in this endeavor.

2023/2024 budget development continues, and the University is working hard to finalize enrollment projections. Despite ongoing efforts, enrollment still has not rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. An operating deficit of 5-8 million dollars is currently projected for the next fiscal year.

The province has confirmed they will continue a tuition freeze for domestic students. The government will also be launching a blue-ribbon panel of experts to provide advice and recommendations for keeping the postsecondary education sector viable and focused on student experience.

**David Barnett (Provost & VP Academic)** –David announced that in person convocation ceremonies will occur this year at the Thunder Bay Auditorium and Rotary Place in Orillia. Events on campus in conjunction with convocation are also being planned. Research and Innovation week occurred since the last IRC meeting. This was a great opportunity for

Faculty, Students, and Postdoctoral Fellows to showcase what they are working on. Work continues with enrollment. There are still opportunities to realize some of our targets.

**Yamandeep Malhi (LUSU)** – Recently LUSU hosted a St. Patrick’s Day party at the outpost which was well attended. March 22nd, there will be a multicultural food festival held in the Agora (11AM-3PM) and will include a photo booth and music. Yaman also announced that in a few days LUSU executive voting will occur.

**Roshni Antony (Human Resources)** – Roshni advised that Human Resources is currently in negotiations with USW. Negotiations will commence with LUFA and COPE in May and June, then with CUPE in the summer. She also informed the committee that work is underway on establishing TalkLife Workplace, a peer support forum. There is currently a forum available to students, TalkCampus. TalkLife Workplace will be available specifically for employees. More info will be available in the coming months.

## 6. Other Business

Jack asked if there was someone from Orillia that could join the Internal Relations Committee. Roshni advised there are employee groups on this committee with members at both campuses. While generally it is the person in the executive position appointed to the committee, she asked these groups to think about potential options.

Heather asked for an update on the Employee Service Recognition Reception. Roshni confirmed that they are looking at hosting it in May. The planning has commenced, and notification will be provided once the date is scheduled. Roshni added that responses for representation on the staff award selection committee are still needed from IRC members.

Dave asked if there was a way for employees to bring forward cost saving strategies that could be expedited by moving through fewer levels of management. Kathy was supportive of having a means for employees to bring forward suggestions or comments.

The topic of moving to a reduced work week was brought forward to improve employee experience and retention. Kathy relayed there has been a lot of discussion on this subject for the variety of positions at LU. Every department and each position is unique. Lakehead is open to alternate work arrangements but emphasized that student experience is the priority.

## 7. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:32 p.m.