

INTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**August 17, 2021
2:30 to 3:30 p.m.**

Zoom Meeting

Attendance: Chair: Sherry Herchak, (Human Resources); David Barnett (Provost & VP Academic); Roshni Antony (AVP, Human Resources); Alexis Paulusma (COPE); Jason Freeburn (LUTA); Dave Andreason (OPSEU); Gautam Das (LUFA); Pat Larin (SchII); Rahul Parameswaran (GSA); Lahama Naeem (LUSU)

Regrets: Kathy Pozihun (VP Administration & Finance); Bernie Chasse (USW); Jack Drewes (IUOE); Paul Vergara (CUPE); Heather Spivak (Unifor)

Recorder: Kylie Williams (Human Resources)

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Lahama Naeem that the agenda been approved.

Seconded by Jason Freeburn. All in favour.

Carried

2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting of July 20, 2021

Moved by Dave Andreason that the minutes be approved.

Seconded by Jason Freeburn. All in favour.

Carried

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

The committee welcomed new members Rahul Parameswaran, President of the Graduate Students Association and Roshni Antony, Associate Vice President, Human Resources.

4. Lakehead COVID-19 Update

David and the committee discussed the Presidents recent announcement of Lakehead's vaccination policy requiring anyone accessing the property to have received their first COVID-19 vaccine dose by September 7th and be fully vaccinated no later than October 7th. This has been developed in collaboration with the government, the Ministry of Ontario Colleges and Universities (MCOU), Thunder Bay and Simcoe district health units. By taking this position Lakehead is joining alongside other Ontario Universities in making vaccines mandatory on campus. David stressed this policy is critical to the return to campus plan to

help ensure that student learning is not disrupted due to outbreaks. The University, with the support of LUSU and LUFA, is working on the details of implementation. Accommodations will be made for those who cannot be vaccinated due to medical or religious reasons. David indicated there would be communication to the University community in the following weeks and additional guidelines from MCOU are pending.

Dave asked how the vaccination policy would be enforced. David indicated that using the Mobile Safety App could be amended to include an attestation declaration. Roshni added that other Universities are looking for proof and others only an attestation.

False declarations could be considered violations of the employee and student code of conduct. Roshni clarified that exceptions to mandatory vaccinations would be made on a case-by-case basis considering the reason for refusal.

Lahama inquired what contact tracing would occur for student classrooms come the fall. David confirmed that the University could provide a class roster when the local health unit investigates a positive test but attendance will not be taken.

5. Questions for Senior Administration

Jason asked for an update surrounding pension plan discussions with the Internal Relations Committee at the July meeting. David confirmed that discussions regarding pension are ongoing and hoped Kathy could speak to the details at the next meeting. Gautam acknowledged that pension changes are very difficult and not easy to accomplish. It was his opinion that each union representative should ensure that the members understand this subject. Each group has representation on the pension plan boards. David added that administration is looking to address this issue together. One of the most important accomplishments with pension has the decoupling CPP from the employer portion of the pension contributions for non-union and LUFA members. This raises the overall contributions being made to the pension plans. Right now, that is the biggest thing that can make a difference in improving the situation.

Lahama asked what the accommodation plans are for those students asking about the mandatory vaccination stance of the University. It was confirmed that Student Central will be collecting questions and concerns brought forward by students.

6. Roundtable

Pat Larin (SchII) – Schedule II members are busy with the move back to campus. Some have already returned and other will be phasing back through mid-October.

Gautam Das (LUFA) – No update.

Jason Freeburn (LUTA) – Jason relayed that Technical Staff are busy preparing for the fall term with the majority of Technicians now back to working on campus. He also mentioned the group is awaiting questions to be answered by Human Resources.

Dave Andreason (OPSEU) – Dave informed the committee that OPSEU has all hands-on deck preparing for the fall semester. Hybrid teaching kits are being prepared and

distribution with training sessions for instructors is anticipated to commence the week of August 23rd.

Lahama Naeem (LUSU) – LUSU staff are transitioning back to campus. Services will be up and running in a hybrid model, part time in person and part time online.

Roshni Antony (Human Resources) – Roshni informed the committee she will be on campus starting August 31st and will set up a one-on-one meeting with union and group members shortly after that.

Rahul Parameswaran (GSA) – Rahul indicated that the GSA would be hosting an online meet and greet this Friday and their members are making the move back to campus.

David Barnett (Provost & VP Academic) – David welcomed Roshni and thanked everyone for their patience as the University works towards the return to campus.

Alexis Paulusma (COPE) – No update.

7. Other Business

There was no other business to discuss but appreciation for the hard work of the COVID transition team was expressed. Members were also advised to refer to the FAQ page on the website as it will continue to be updated as the situation evolves.

8. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:26 p.m.