



INTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

May 20, 2025
2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

GCR (UC 2001) and Zoom Meeting

Attendance: Chair: Kathy Pozihun (VP Administration & Finance); Dave Andreason (OPSEU); Gautam Das (LUFA); Jason Freeburn (LUTA); David Richards (Provost & VP Academic); Aliss Chavarri (LUSU President); Patrick Larin (SchII); Dr. Gillian Siddall (President);

Guests:

Regrets: Alexis Paulusma (COPE); Roshni Antony (AVP, Human Resources); Ryan Bouchard (USW); Jack Drewes (IUOE); Dustin Piche (Unifor); Erfan Azimi Bizaki (GSA)

Recorder: Katherine Mends (Human Resources)

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Gillian that the agenda was approved.

Seconded by Jason. All in favour. Carried

2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting of April 15, 2025

Moved by Dave that the minutes be approved.

Seconded by David. All in favour. Carried

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

Gautam noted that staff have raised several questions regarding the pension changes and that many employees are struggling to understand how to manage the transition. Kathy confirmed that, going forward, the University will be able to identify which employees have not submitted their pension forms.

Jason inquired whether a specific date has been set for all employees paperwork to be submitted by. Kathy responded that while processes are in place, it remains the



responsibility of each employee to seek out their own personal financial advice.

Patrick added that once the pension wind-up begins, all employees will be processed at the same time.

4. Mitigation of LTD Claims - Dave Andreason

Dave referenced a previous meeting with Human Resources, noting that many Long-Term Disability (LTD) claims are related to mental health concerns and stress leave. He emphasized that improved two-way communication could often help address the root causes of these issues.

David inquired whether there is an opportunity to align these concerns with the University's wellness strategy, particularly in relation to the causes of stress among employees.

Gautam added that a significant source of stress for faculty members is isolation. He highlighted the availability of counselling services and encouraged greater use of these resources. He also noted the value of employees working on campus to help mitigate feelings of isolation.

5. Questions for Senior Administration

Jason inquired about government funding for new STEM spaces. Kathy reported that \$325,000.00 has been allocated to Lakehead University, noting that all universities with STEM programs received an allocation.

Jason asked for an update on the VP Academic position. Gillian confirmed that the new appointee will begin on July 1st.

Jason requested an update on the University's budget. Kathy stated that the proposed operating budget has received endorsement from Senate and will be presented to the Board.

6. Round Table Discussion

Gautam Das (LUFA) - No updates



Dave Andreason (OPSEU) - No updates

Dr. Gillian Siddall (President) - Dr. Siddall welcomed the new LUSU president

Aliss Chavarri (LUSU President) - Aliss reported that The Study and The Outpost will remain open throughout the summer.

Patrick Larin (SCHII) - Patrick shared that he has received a few questions from members following the recent pension presentations. No other updates.

David Richards (Provost & VP Academic) - Convocation is upcoming

Jason Freeburn (LUTA) - Jason noted that there is a significant amount of field work currently underway for LUTA members, with accommodations already booked for the fall. Jason added that there have been numerous inquiries regarding the pension plans.

Kathy Pozihun (VP Administration & Finance) - Kathy commented that the recent town hall was well received.

7. Other Business

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.