

INTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

November 15, 2022
2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

GCR (UC 2001) and Zoom Meeting

Attendance: Chair: Sherry Herchak for Roshni Antony (AVP, Human Resources); David Barnett (Provost & VP Academic); Yamandeep Malhi for Lahama Naeem (LUSU); Jason Freeburn (LUTA); Pat Larin (SchII); Jack Drewes (IUOE); Rahul Parameswaran (GSA); Alexis Paulusma (COPE); Siavash Hosseini (CUPE); Dave Andreason (OPSEU)

Regrets: Kathy Pozihun (VP Administration & Finance); Gautam Das (LUFA); Heather Spivak (Unifor); Greg Croft (USW);

Recorder: Kylie Williams (Human Resources)

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Jason Freeburn that the agenda been approved.

Seconded by Dave Andreason. All in favour.

Carried

2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting of September 20, 2022

Moved by Yaman Malhi that the minutes be approved.

Seconded by Rahul Parameswaran. All in favour.

Carried

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. 2022/2023 Budget Presentation – David Barnett

David provided the committee with a presentation on the 2022/2023 budget. The University Board of Governors requires the University to maintain a balanced budget which reflects our commitment to financial stability and goals laid out in the Strategic and Academic plans. Opportunities for revenue growth are limited due the provincial and global context we operate in remaining complex due to COVID-19. There has been an increase in expenditures primarily due to the inflationary provisions in the collective agreements. The budgetary controls implemented over the last two years have mitigated the shortfalls resulting from the pandemic, some of which will continue into 2022/2023, as necessary.

In 2021/2022 actual enrollment was below the budgeted enrolment which means the University did not achieve the required tuition revenue to manage budgeted expenditures. In addition, investment income is down considerably due to the global geopolitical environment.

In 2022/23 Lakehead has not yet achieved the targeted enrollment numbers. The core operating grant (based on a moving average window) is tied to enrollment. On the current trajectory Lakehead will fall out of this corridor in 2022/2023. As a result, Lakehead has observed a shortfall currently estimated at 2.4 million dollars from the projected budget.

Last year the performance-based funding grant was decoupled to support institutions during the pandemic. That period has come to an end, so the goal of continuous improvement is at the forefront.

Dave asked about the capacity at the Orillia campus vs. the Thunder Bay campus. David confirmed that the Heritage building does have some capacity challenges with the Faculty of Education, but there are no issues at the other buildings. The Thunder Bay campus does not have any issues with capacity. If anything, perhaps scheduling challenges.

Dave asked what the financial situation may look like if we do fall out of the corridor and lose that funding? David discussed the importance of increasing the number of domestic students that register for the Winter term. If we fall out of the corridor, then Lakehead would be in a much weaker position to negotiate enrollment funding for SMA 4 and will lose funding. He added that a loss of a few hundred thousand is quite significant for us.

Jason asked if the separation of NOSM has had any impact to our budget. David confirmed that Lakehead did negotiate with NOSM for some of the services and leasing of property which help to offset costs, to a degree. However, in the long term we may see losses from previously shared expenses such as Library journal subscriptions and similar expenses that were able to leverage the previous relationship.

5. Questions for Senior Administration

There were no additional questions for Senior Administration.

6. Roundtable

Dave Andreason (OPSEU) – Dave communicated OPSEU's appreciation of the employee engagement events such as family day and staff BBQ. He expressed the concern that those employees who have been on campus throughout the pandemic have been overlooked. He saw a missed opportunity to show those employees some appreciation.

Jack Drewes (IUOE) – Jack outlined that IUOE has 3 Electricians and 7 Mechanics. Currently there are 3 Mechanics off work. The shortage of staff puts the University in a precarious situation.

Rahul Parameswaran (GSA) – Rahul expressed his concern that undergraduate international student fees are unregulated. In addition, graduate students are also spending out of pocket to present their research with few opportunities for scholarships. David

confirmed that the PhD tuition has remained stable since being lowered the last few years and a fairly good supplemental package is available for Graduate Assistants. He requested a meeting with GSA to discuss these concerns in more detail.

Yamandeep Malhi (LUSU) – No update.

Patrick Larin (Schedule II) – No update

Jason Freeburn (LUTA) – No update.

Siavash Hosseini (CUPE) – No update.

Alexis Paulusma (COPE) – No update.

David Barnett (Provost & VP Academic) – No update.

Sherry Herchak (Human Resources) – No update.

7. Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

8. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:33 p.m.