

INTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**October 19, 2021
2:30 to 3:30 p.m.**

Zoom Meeting

Attendance: Chair: Roshni Antony (AVP, Human Resources); David Barnett (Provost & VP Academic); Kathy Pozihun (VP Administration & Finance); Rob Bell for Alexis Paulusma (COPE); Jason Freeburn (LUTA); Dave Andreason (OPSEU); Gautam Das (LUFA); Pat Larin (SchII); Brandon Rhéal Amyot, for Lahama Naeem (LUSU); Jack Drewes (IUOE); Paul Vergara (CUPE); Rahul Parameswaran (GSA); Heather Spivak (Unifor)

Regrets: Bernie Chasse (USW); Sherry Herchak (Human Resources)

Recorder: Kylie Williams (Human Resources)

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Jason Freeburn that the agenda been approved.

Seconded by Gautam Das. All in favour.

Carried

2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting of September 21, 2021

Moved by Gautam Das that the minutes be approved.

Seconded by Kathy Pozihun. All in favour.

Carried

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

An update was requested on the absence of sanitizing wipes in the ATAC building, specifically ATAC 1001. Kathy will follow up again, but she indicated that Physical Plant is coordinating the installation of dispensers for the wipes throughout the month of October. Jason confirmed that wipes have been provided in other classrooms discussed at the last meeting.

It was asked if there was a response from CAAT following the University's submission of data. Kathy confirmed that the University has not received a proposal back and she would ask the Manager of Pension Services to follow up.

4. Lakehead COVID-19 Update

Kathy reported that work continues with the implementation of Lakehead's mandatory vaccination policy. In early October, over 85% had provided proof of vaccination. Administration is working with Human Resources to communicate with those who have not provided proof of vaccination. The project has been very labour intensive, and she thanked everyone involved. It was mentioned that the provinces vaccination certificate is now available online. Everyone was encouraged to complete that also.

It was asked if the Provincial vaccine certificate could be used in place of Lakehead's vaccine passport. It was confirmed that the provincial vaccine certificate could be uploaded to App Armor as proof of vaccination. This separate proof of vaccination is required for all internal members accessing the campus. It is very important as Lakehead has mandated reporting requirements to satisfy. David mentioned that administration may consider accepting the provincial vaccine certificate as proof for visitors. Any events hosted on campus require the host or organizer to take responsibility for verifying the vaccination status of external people.

5. Questions for Senior Administration

Gautam raised an issue with the delay in processing Graduate Assistant appointments which has impacted registration for the fall term. This included tuition fees needing to be paid upfront during the delay, rather than having their GA earnings go towards tuition. David replied that this issue is being addressed at the Faculty of Graduate Studies Council. The delays were rooted in the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The next steps will be to ensure the problem is fixed and does not occur again.

Jason asked if there would be information on next year's budget available. Kathy confirmed that the 2021 audited financial statements were approved by the Board of Governors in October and are now posted on the website. She was happy to report that the budget balanced despite enduring the most uncertain year in recollection. The balanced budget was thanks to very aggressive mitigation strategies and temporary relief provided by the government. It was also mentioned that the financial statements show our endowment funds as exceptionally strong. This was due to the markets being very strong in the month of April when they were assessed. Budget development for 2022/23 has started and Kathy will present information to the committee at the next meeting.

Rahul asked about the discrepancy in tuition fees for domestic vs. international students. To offset this the Graduate Students Association is looking into creating an entrance scholarship. He will connect with David and James Aldridge in LU International to discuss this further.

6. Roundtable

Rob Bell (COPE) – Rob informed the committee that most COPE members are working in a hybrid model. There have been a few retirees since September. There is also a member not working due to Lakehead's mandatory COVID vaccination policy.

Pat Larin (SchII) – Schedule II members remain busy with the fall term. Some employees have returned to working on campus and others are still working from home.

Jack Drewes (IUOE) – IUOE members working on the change over from cooling to heating.

Dave Andreason (OPSEU) – TSC continues to work towards transitioning people back to campus which has been challenging for the department.

Heather Spivak (Unifor) – Heather informed the committee that two members are retiring at the end of October. The union is also meeting with Clint to obtain more information on pension and CPP decoupling.

Paul Vergara (CUPE) – The union continues to have concerns over the process of offering and hiring Graduate Assistants. There are still some who have not yet received their payments. CUPE is working with administration on this issue.

Gautam Das (LUFA) – Gautam asked about the temperature issue members have noted inside the Braun Building. Jack confirmed that a steam line is broken in a hard to access location. Contractors have been engaged and the issue will be resolved before winter.

Rahul (GSA) – No update.

Brandon Rhéal Amyot (LUSU) – LUSU staff are back on campus using a hybrid model, part time in person and part time online. Work continues with the Vice Provost (Students) & Registrar and the Office of Human Rights & Equity to address those students who are not in compliance with the University's mandatory vaccination policy.

Jason Freeburn (LUTA) – Jason relayed that Technical Staff are engaged in the fall term. He also mentioned that LUTA is working with HR to outline a course of action to obtain the information their members need.

Roshni Antony (Human Resources) – Roshni advised that the HR Partner in Orillia has resigned. In her absence, the HR Managers in Thunder Bay and Chris Gouett in Orillia will cover.

David Barnett (Provost & VP Academic) – No update, but David thanked everyone for their efforts and contributions over the course of the pandemic.

7. Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

8. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.