LUFA News

Fall 2019

LUFA GENERAL MEETING

Friday November 22nd, 9:30 am

ATAC 5036 and OA 3007 (via video conference)

President's Report

Gautam Das, gdas@lakeheadu.ca

It is a great honour to serve you as the president of our Association. Many thanks for your support and participation in LUFA's activities. We have to work together to overcome several challenges we will face in the coming months and years. Also, I want to thank members for serving on various LUFA committees. It would be difficult to achieve any of our goals without your time commitments. I am requesting you to attend the LUFA General Meeting that will be held on Friday, November 22, 2019. You will have an opportunity to receive an update of LUFA's ongoing activities.

Please see below LUFA's ongoing activities:

Coffee and Conversations: LUFA hosted open sessions for all LUFA members (Full-Time Academic Staff, Librarians, Continuing Lecturer Members, and Contract Lecturers) called "Coffee and Conversations" on June 17, July 10, and August 1, 13 and 26, 2019. The purpose of those sessions was to engage the membership about their experience with the Current Collective Agreement and to discuss factors that are likely to impact the next round of bargaining. Those sessions also provided a forum for the discussion of pensions, salaries, and employment benefits. Some issues brought forward by our members were resolved at the Joint Committee Meetings. Qing-Lai Dang, Chief Grievance Officer, Ken Hartviksen, Chief Negotiator and I conducted those sessions. We are planning to offer similar sessions in Orillia in early December.

[Please see Chief Negotiator's report for further information]

Strategic Mandate Agreement 3 (SMA3): LUFA hosted an information session on Strategic Mandate Agreement 3 and the potential implications on LUFA members. SMA3 will cover a period of five years, and it is linked to funding known as Performance-based funding. The metrics proposed for SMA3 are categorized based on two priority areas for the Ontario government: (i) Skills and Job outcomes, and (ii) Economic and Community impact. There are two reporting metrics related to Faculty Compensation and Workload but will not be tied to performance/outcomes-based funding.



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It is still not clear what the reporting mechanisms will be. Unlike SMA1 and SMA2, the president of the university, Dr. McPherson, hosted "SMA Faculty Forum" on November 1, 2019, to provide information on SMA3. The engagement of faculty in the forum was a success for LUFA's advocacy. Although many questions were unanswered, this is a great start. SMA3 will have a lasting impact on Lakehead University, so I am requesting members and senators to be more engaged in the process. LUFA will host another information session on SMA3 in December 2019.

OCUFA Advocacy Day: Ken Hartviksen and I attended 2019 Advocacy day in Queen's park. Faculty members from universities and colleges across the province met MPPs, and the key messages were:

(i) Commit to faculty renewal and fairness for contract faculty - Commit to a comprehensive vision for faculty renewal, which includes delivering fairness for contract faculty, supporting new full-time tenure-stream hiring, and ensuring that retiring faculty members are replaced with full-time tenure-stream positions.

(ii) Protect public funding to support quality education -Support meaningful investment in Ontario's postsecondary education system and increased core funding for universities to match the per-student average for the rest of Canada.

(iii) Commit to a university funding model that works -Reverse the drastic expansion of the newly introduced performance funding model that would tie 60 percent of institutional funding to metrics, and require consultation with faculty in the Strategic Mandate Agreement negotiations that set institutional priorities.

We were able to covey the importance of faculty renewal, stable university funding, benefits of a vibrant post-secondary education system in Ontario, and the potential effect of performance-based funding on northern universities to the MPPs. They agreed to write letters to the Minister and the Premier. Further, this year, I was elected as a member-at-large and am serving on the OCUFA executive. I see this as an opportunity to raise awareness of the difficulties northern universities face compared to the rest of the universities and colleges in the province.

Orientation for LUFA Executive and Standing Committee Members (August 13, 2019): The orientation included an overview of the LUFA standing committees, LUFA By-Laws, and parliamentary procedure (Robert's Rules of Order).

Pension: A special Pension Information session was hosted on April 2, 2019, to inform membership what needs to be done before the removal of the "LESS CPP" language would be effective. Please read the report from the **chair of the pension committee** for recent updates. We will host further sessions in early next year.

Student Evaluation of Teaching: LUFA hosted two discussion sessions (December 18, 2018, and April 16, 2019). LUFA Executive formed an Ad Hoc committee called "LUFA Teaching Effectiveness Ad Hoc Committee". The purpose of the committee was to develop credible alternatives to Student's Evaluations of Teaching (SETs) that may be used by Members for PTR and Annual Reporting to the Dean in accordance with the Collective Agreement. Although the committee submitted their report, the LUFA executive did not get a chance to discuss. I will bring the information to the future meeting.

Please feel free to contact Ms. Angle Kozak or me for any comments or concerns.

Chief Negotiator's Report Ken Hartviksen, ken.hartviksen@lakeheadu.ca

In June, LUFA's Chief Negotiator, Dr. Glenna Knutson retired completing a long academic career and serving Lakehead University and the LUFA membership for many years as LUFA President and LUFA Chief Negotiator. We all thank Glenna for her service and dedication and wish her the very best in her post-employment endeavours.

The following is a brief summary of activities undertaken by your new Chief Negotiator since the last LUFA Annual General Meeting.

Membership Consultation

To begin the process of preparations for negotiations, five 'Coffee and Conversation' meetings were held on June 19, July 10 and August 1, 13 and 26.

On August 20 I had the opportunity to meet with Teaching Focussed members of faculty to learn about their experience since their appointment and to hear concerns about conditions of work, and the imminent Renewal and Tenure processes.

On November 13 I will have the opportunity to meet with Contract Lecturer members.

I look forward to visiting the Orillia campus in the near future to engage our members at that location.

Notice of Intent to Bargain

The window to provide the Board of Governors with notice of our Intent to Bargain shall open on June 2, 2020.

Preparations for Bargaining

The preparation plan for bargaining will include the following steps:

 Membership engagement meetings (Summer and Fall, 2019)

- Negotiating Team formation, orientation and preparation (Fall 2019 and early Winter 2020)
- Membership survey (Winter semester, 2020)
- Notice of Intent to Bargain (June 2020)
- Preliminary meeting with the Board to discuss bargaining protocol (June, 2020)
- Bargaining (June, July, August, 2020)
- Contract expiry August 31, 2010

Activities and Events Since the LUFA Annual Meeting

- May 3 Consultations with MTCU and Treasury Board Secretariat on 'Public Sector Wage Restraint' (what eventually became Bill C124)
- June 5 Ontario Government Introduced Bill C124
- June 24 Consultations with MTCU and Treasury Board on Bill C100 with a focus on development of proposed regulations to allow the Minister to reduce faculty salaries of faculty members who draw a salary at the same time as they receive a pension, under the guise of 'faculty renewal'
- July, July, August Coffee and Conversation meetings with Faculty
- August 13 LUFA Committee Orientation
- August 26 Orientation session for new members of faculty
- September 5 met with KBRS Consulting regarding the search process for the VP Academic
- September 19 Joint Committee for Administering the Agreement
- October 11 OCUFA Collective Bargaining Committee meeting
- November 7 Advocacy Day at Queen's Park

November 8 - OCUFA University Finance Workshop

Weekly conference calls are held with Provincial Chief Negotiators lead by the OCUFA Chair of Collective Bargaining.

Bargaining Outlook for Ontario Universities in 2020

Lakehead has the latest contract expiry date in 2020, August 31. This means contract negotiations across the Province will be well underway before Lakehead starts to bargain. The impact of Bill C124 on negotiations in the province, exceptions to the legislation as well as appropriate bargaining strategies will be much more clearly defined by June of 2020.

OCUFA Advocacy Day at Queen's Park

On Wednesday November 6, OCUFA hosted university Advocacy Day at Queen's Park. Gautam and I formed a three person team that included Geoff Hudson from NOSM. We met with individual MPPs from ridings in Northern Ontario. These included:

Judith Monteith-Farrell – NDP MPP representing Thunder Bay-Atikokan

Jamie West – NDP MPP representing the Sudbury riding Michael Mantha – NDP MPP representing Algoma-Manitoulin Sol Mamakwa – NDP MPP representing Kiiwetinoong Guy Bourgouin – NDP MPP representing Mushkegowuk-James Bay and

France Gelinas – NDP MPP representing Nickel Belt

During our 30 minute, one-on-one discussions with MPPs in their offices, we focussed on three key issues:

- 1. Under funding of the Ontario University system and particular vulnerability of Northern Institutions to tuition cuts, and cuts to OSAP
- 2. Performance based funding, and
- 3. Faculty renewal

MPPs were given facts and asked to write letters of support on these topics to the Premier and to the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

We also had a brief opportunity to speak to the NDP House Leader Giles Bisson in the early morning opening remarks session.

The Minister of Colleges and Universities Ross Romano was not available and sent a staff person to deliver a greeting from his office to start the day of university advocacy.

<u>Summary</u>

It has been a busy few months responding to the government, activating LUFA committees and engaging the membership. This investment will pay dividends through the collective bargaining process. I look forward the continued support and encouragement of the LUFA membership.



Contract Lecturer Committee Report

Laurie Forbes, Co-Chair, laurie.forbes@lakeheadu.ca

John Fell, Co-Chair, john.fell@lakeheadu.ca

As usual, the Fall is a particularly time for active the CL/CL Committee. Durina Fair Employment Week, we staffed information tables both in Thunder Bay and in Orillia, at which we gave out cookies tagged with phrases describing the plight of many contract academics: "no benefits," "no job security," "no pension." On this occasion we connected with various people from the University community ranging from administrators to instructors who teach on campus yet, as the situation stands, do not qualify for membership in LUFA.

On November 13, we will be hosting an AGM the main purpose of which will be to solicit feedback priorities regarding for the upcoming round of negotiations. Chief Negotiator Ken Hartviksen will be in attendance.

Librarian Committee Report Debra Gold, Chair, debra.gold@lakeheadu.ca

Copyright and Images

As you know, when using an image in your publication, it is essential to permission from obtain the copyright owner. This may require remuneration for the copyright owner. An alternative is to use copyright-free images.

Recently there has been some discussion about faculty members receiving demands for payment when using images.

However, In many of these cases, these were actually copyright-free images.

If you ever have any questions about images, fair dealing or other copyright issues, please contact the Library.

Pension Committee Report

Glenn Colton, Chair, acolton@lakeheadu.ca

The LUFA Pension Committee has held two Fall meetings to date (on September 18 and October 29, 2019). The committee established its priorities for 2019-20, as follows: 1) to monitor the performance and operations of the Professional Pension Plan of Lakehead University, 2) to monitor the development of the Ontario University Pension Plan, and 3) to continue to engage the membership in awareness of the pension plan and in the importance of retirement planning generally.

As of the end of September, our pension plan had produced a rate of return of 9.60% on a yearto-date basis. While the YTD performance of the plan is encouraging, the committee continues to monitor the operational structure of the plan closely. In particular, the committee discussed the need, scope and direction for a possible independent external review of the current plan (noting that the last such review was conducted in 2006). Such a review, if undertaken, could assess plan's ability to deliver the adequate benefits for IUFA members.

The committee noted that a search for the inaugural Chair of the University Pension Plan of Ontario (UPP) is currently underway, and that the structure of the UPP will be determined by the end of 2019. The Committee continues to monitor developments in the UPP closely.

To further member engagement with respect to the pensions, the committee discussed the possibility of hosting information sessions for members in which quest would address speakers aspects of the plan and retirement planning in general. Further details on the first such session, tentatively planned for late Fall 2019, will be revealed in the coming weeks.

LUFA members are further reminded that plan members make additional may voluntary contributions to the plan in addition to the base amount (6.5% of regular earnings for LUFA members). Τo discuss additional contributions, or other aspects of members' individual pension accounts, please contact Clint Mason, Manager of Pension Services (crmason@lakeheadu.ca).

Please note as well that, as per the results of the referendum on removing the "less CPP" language from member contributions to the plan, this change will take effect as of January 2020.

The next meeting of the Pension Advisory Board takes place on Friday, December 6, 9:00am, in Bartley Conference Room A. The meeting will include presentations by our investment advisor, Proteus and Performance, fund managers Letko Brosseau and CGOV. Colleagues in Orillia can view the video presentations by conference. All LUFA members are welcome to attend. 4

OCUFA Report

Glenn Colton glenn.colton@lakeheadu.ca

The OCUFA Board of Directors met on Oct. 19-20 in Toronto. Recent government policy in Ontario, and its impact on universities, was once again a focal point for discussion, as the board strategized on ways to counteract recently implemented and proposed government policy initiatives detrimental to postsecondary education. It was noted that government cuts to OSAP funding are already impacting access to education for university students across the province.

The government's proposed wage cap legislation (Bill 124) was discussed at length. Preliminary indications suggest that, although the proposed legislation has not yet been passed, the looming threat of Bill 124 is already impacting member associations at the bargaining table. In response, OCUFA has advised member associations to enaaae in collective bargaining as usual, mindful of the fact that university faculty members are employed by their respective institutions (not the Government of Ontario). OCUFA continues to seek legal advice on Bill 124 and is exploring legal options for challenging the legislation, if passed.

OCUFA has expressed strong concerns over the government's revamped "performance" funding model, arguing that the 10 performance metrics chosen are arbitrary and, as currently defined, potentially damaging for universities and students. It was noted that the proposed metrics threaten to impact traditionally marginalized students disproportionately, and may result in less quality control and reduced institutional autonomy as government exercises more influence over which programs are offered.

OCUFA continues to support the Canadian Federation of Students -

Ontario in its resistance to cuts to OSAP funding and the provincial government's "student choice" initiative requiring institutions to provide an opt-out option for "non-essential services" such as student union dues and dues for student media outlets. Α presentation was given by student representatives from the Canadian Federation of Students -Ontario, notina the severe implications of the student choice initiative for student groups across the province and calling on faculty support (e.g. supporting student unions in their negotiations with universitv administrations. providing time for student representatives to speak to classes). A petition in support of the students was circulated and signed by board members in attendance.

In the face of significant headwinds provincially, OCUFA continues to advocate for its priority goals - delivering fairness for contract faculty and advocating for faculty renewal via new tenure-stream appointments while continuing to strengthen relationships with unions across the province to push back against government cuts and attacks on the post-secondary education sector.

For more information please visit: <u>https://ocufa.on.ca/</u>

The Status of Women and Eauity Award of Distinction celebrates the outstanding contributions of OCUFA members whose work has contributed meaningfully to the advancement of professors, academic librarians. and/or academic staff who are Indigenous, women, racialized, LGBTQ2S+, living with disabilities, and/or belong to other historically marginalized groups.

Additional information, guidelines, and application portal can be found at

https://ocufa.on.ca/awards/status -of-women-award-of-distinction/

The nomination deadline is November 22nd, 2019.

Chief Grievance Officer's Report _{Qing Lai Dang},

adang@lakeheadu.ca

The LUFA Grievance Committee has been continuing to work hard on resolving grievances. Most of the grievances have been resolved at Step I. We have served the University arbitration notices on two Step III grievances. However, we are continuing to attempt to them before the resolve hearing dates. We are very close to resolving one of them. I am confident that they both will be resolved without going into arbitration hearing.

I have noticed an increase in accommodation related grievances in the past year. We have been working with the university administration to improve LUFA members' experience in getting required accommodations.

To balance the work load among our grievance officers, the committee has assigned officers each two to academic unit. This is used as a guidance, not a rule. The following are the assignments officers' and contact information. If you have any auestions or want to work with a different officer, please feel free to contact me.

Grievance officer assignments

Status of	Women	Report
210102 01	VVUIDEII	NEDOL

Karen Poole, Chair,

kpoole@lakeheadu.ca

The OCUFA Status of Women and Equity Committee (SWEC) holds three meetings annually: October, January and May, I attended the October meeting in Toronto that was followed by an equity-training workshop. The highlight of the SWEC business meeting was presentation on mental health accommodation for faculty by Dr. Jennifer Poole, a faculty member from Ryerson University. If you are interested in resources related to mental health accommodation, the OCUFA website lists several under SWEC Resources.

The OCUFA SWEC group has undertaken the initiative to develop "Issue Briefings", and in May, three such briefings were posted on the OCUFA site: Funding for Indigenous Student Supports and Services; Sexual Violence on Campus; and, Ontario Government's "Student Choice Initiative".

Nominations are now open for the OCUFA's 2018 Status of Women and Equity Award of Distinction. This award celebrates the contributions of OCUFA members whose work has contributed meaningfully to the advancement of professors, academic librarians, and/or academic staff who are Indigenous, women, racialized, LGBTQ2S+, living with disabilities, and/or belong to other historically marginalized groups. The nomination deadline is November 22, 2019. More information about the award and nomination process found the can be at followina site: https://ocufa.on.ca/awards/status-of-women-award-ofdistinction/.

LUFA Benefits Committee Report

ShiKui Wu, Chair, shikui.wu@lakeheadu.ca

The LUFA Benefits Committee has identified its goals for year 2019-2020. The main goals are to plan and prepare for the forthcoming negotiation with regard to benefits, including:

- Inventory and organize list of LUFA Benefits
- Benchmark current benefits against others in the province to identify gaps and inadequacies
- Analyze the structure and flexibility of the benefits again benchmarked against others
- Examine benefit eligibility for the different groups of LUFA members including, full-time tenure stream; contract lecturers and emeritus members.
- Survey Members
 - Experience with the benefits plans administration
 - Experience with the insurance companies (i.e., Green Shield Canada and Sun Life Financial)

Faculty	Department	officer
Business		Tianxuan
		Miao
		Jason Blahuta
Education		Scott Pound
Luucation		Jason
		Blahuta
Engineering	Civil, Electrical,	Jason
	Mechanical,	Blahuta
	Software, Chemical	Tianxuan
		Miao
Health &	Health Sciences,	Juan Pernia
behavioural	Kinesiology,	Wely
sciences	Nursing, Psychology,	Floriano
T	Social Work	Scott Pound
Law		Naqi Sayed
Natural		Tianxuan
Resources		Miao
Management		Naqi Sayed
Science and	Anthropology,	Naqi Sayed
environmental	Biology, Chemistry,	Scott Pound
studies	Computer Sci.,	
	Economics,	
	Sustainability Sci,	
	Geography, Geology, Mathematics,	
	Physics,	
Social sciences	English, History,	Wely
and	Indigenous Learning,	Floriano
humanities	Interdisciplinary	Juan Pernia
	Studies, Languages,	
	Music, Outdoor Rec,	
	Philosophy, Political	
	Sci, Sociology,	
	Visual Arts, Women Studies	
Orillia	All departments on	Sree
campus	Orillia campus	Kurissery
	1	Jennifer
		Jarman

The committee has developed a plan and been working together to achieve these goals:

- Identified 6 major areas (health, dental, travel, leaves, insurance, and eligibility) that from the summer consultations, OCUFA updates and member experiences:
 - e.g., orthodontics and implants, Optimal Performance and Physical Therapy (OPPT) coverage vary for general members (\$500/year) and emeritus members (\$350/year), parental leaves with updated federal/provincial policies, group insurance for members in different age range and/or with different family situations, etc.
- Identified the 11 institutions in Ontario as comparators according to LUFA Collective Agreement (2016-2020): Brock, Carleton, Guelph, Laurentian, Laurier, Nipissing, Ottawa, Ryerson, Trent, UOIT, and Windsor
- Delegated the above 6 areas to committee members to benchmark against the 11 comparators
- Collected and shared OCUFA reports to identify factual information about benefits from the 11 comparators
- Currently reviewing the data from OCUFA reports and Faculty Association websites about the existing benefit plans and recent updates from those comparators
- Next steps:
 - compile and analyze the data to identify the gaps and flexibilities with a list of specific benefits
 - develop and prepare questions to survey LUFA members for preferences and priorities in the forthcoming negotiation
- Timeline:
 - December 31, 2019: complete benchmarking, analysis and report
 - January 31, 2020: develop and prepare questions for survey
 - February 15, 2020: have the survey ready
 - March 1, 2020: send survey out to members

The committee discussed several benefits issues, particularly Ryerson's experience with members not receiving dental benefits to which they were entitled. Ryerson found that denial of dental benefits occurred from a variety of causes such as coding errors by the dentist; insurance provider denying coverage due to those errors; faculty members not understanding or tracking insurance coverage and reimbursements.

The LUFA Benefits Committee encourages members to become aware of the potential for problems to occur in the administration of benefit coverage. We encourage members to monitor their experiences with the administration of health benefits and to report concerns to Human Resources and to keep the LUFA Benefits Committee informed.

Benefits Committee

Shikui Wu, Chair (Business Administration) Anthony Lariviere (Philosophy) Mohammad Nasir Uddin (Elec. Engineering, Barrie) Joey Farrell (Emeritus) Ken Hartviksen (Business Administration, ex-officio member)

CAUT Defence Fund Report

Livio DiMatteo, Rep., <u>livio.dimatteo@lakeheadu.ca</u>

The CAUT Defence Fund held its annual meeting of trustees and member unions on Saturday, October 5th in Toronto. The meetings were attended by nearly 100 trustees and delegates representing faculty associations from across the country. In terms of business transacted, the progress on faculty and member union negotiations underway at the time of the meetings was updated. It is generally anticipated to be a busy fall and winter on the negotiating front as several associations are currently either engaged in contract negotiations or preparing for them.

Western University Librarians were preparing for a strike deadline as there were numerous issues outstanding, including governance. It was noted that there has been a staffing decline with the number of WU librarian members down from 53 to 42 since the last negotiations. Nipissing University is also undergoing meetings with conciliation. Some progress has been made, but negotiations are still As well, the University of Northern British progressing. Columbia was in negotiations with faculty and a strike vote having been taken generating a large mandate of 84 percent. The UNBC labour negotiations were of significant concern as they involve employer moves to alter the PTR process as well as significant salary pressure. On the plus side, Brandon University has reported successful conclusion of negotiations and a four-year contract though salary increases are minimal due to current public sector salary limits in Manitoba. However, there negotiated increases in faculty hiring at Brandon.

The financial position of the Defence Fund is good with assets of over \$30 million in place, but the current fee structure will remain in place and the fund is slated to grow, which is a prudent strategy given the current situation in many provinces across Canada. An Actuarial Report that was commissioned on the fund has recommended that fund fees and asset enhancement continue their current trajectory to deal with the potential of future drawdowns given the more aggressive tone of many university administrations with respect to negotiations. Another issue of some importance was the decision taken to make an investment management change with up to 10 percent of fund assets to be placed in equities given the low-interest rate environment. The aim is to generate a higher return with this small segregated asset share to counteract the effects of inflation on the overall fund.

Another issue of note was dealing with a request by the University of Victoria Faculty Association. They requested assistance at the same rate and terms of the daily strike benefit for their members in the event any of their members suffered a loss in pay and benefits from choosing as a matter of conscience to not cross the picket line should another campus union currently in negotiations go on strike. Under BC Law, union members have the right not to cross a picket line though employers in such situations also have the right to withhold pay and benefits. This issue resulted in a spirited debate focused on the need to express solidarity with other faculty members who were going on strike (sessional/contract lecturers in CUPE at UVic are in negotiation) and the alternate view that the mandate for the CAUT Defence Fund is benefits for members who are directly engaged in a strike. The CUPE local at the University of Victoria has since announced that they have ratified their contract, so the UVicFA will not be needing any solidarity or picket pay. Nevertheless, some legal questions were raised regarding the vote outcome and they will be investigated in coming days.



LUFA Executive Committee 2019/2020

President, Gautam Das Vice-President, Glenn Colton Secretary, Florin Pendea Treasurer, Sherry Wang Past President, Glenna Knutson Members at Large Scott Pound Stephen Hecnar Chief Grievance Officer, Qing Lai Dang Chief Negotiator, Ken Hartviksen CAUT Rep, Gautam Das CAUT Defence Fund Rep, Livio DiMatteo OCUFA Rep, Glenn Colton OCUFA Collective Bargaining, Ken Hartviksen Status of Women Rep, Karen Poole Administrative Assistant, Angie Kozak

<u>Future General Meeting Dates</u> Thursday February 27th 2020, at 9:30 am Tuesday May 5th 2020, at 10:00 am