

LUFA News

Winter 2019

LUFA GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday February 13th, 2019 at 11:30 am

ATAC 5036 and OA 3041 (via video conference)



President's Report

Gautam Das, gdas@lakeheadu.ca

Happy New Year 2019. It is hard to believe that it's already February! You may be wondering what LUFA has done in the last several months. I will give you a summary of LUFA's activities in the subsequent paragraphs. First of all, I want to express my heartiest appreciation to all volunteers serving in LUFA standing Committees, and on the executive. It would be difficult to achieve any of our goals without your hard work and time commitments. Also, I am requesting all LUFA members to attend the General Meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, to support LUFA's initiatives. Your participation is essential, and by coming together we will be much stronger. I want to remind you that we have to build solidarity to meet the challenges in the coming months.

LUFA hosted a series of Information Sessions:

(1) **Pension** on June 27-28, November 14, 27, December 18, and January 4 – The topics of discussion were (a) the structure of the Lakehead University Professional Pension Plan, and (b) CPP enhancement and its effect on our future. [Please visit: <https://lufa.org/agreement/pension-information/>]

(2) **Research Integrity (Article 39)** on June 27-28, and January 4 (Orillia only): The topic of discussion was the "Procedures for Investigating Reports of Breaches of Research Integrity investigation" as outlined in the Collective Agreements. Note: LUFA members are governed by Article 39 of the Collective Agreements for any matters related to breaches of Research Integrity. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

(3) **Student Evaluation of Teaching** on December 18 - Research shows that the results of "Student Evaluation of Teaching" can be biased and are not real indicators of teaching effectiveness. It was found that the evaluation can vary on account of the size, type and nature of courses, as well as many other factors. Universities are increasingly putting emphases on teaching quality and student learning, but it is not clear to the members what the indicators of quality education are. LUFA received comments and suggestions from the participants, which will be compiled and distributed before the next session in March.

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(4) **LUFA Grievance Process** on January 4 (Orillia only) - The Chief Grievance officer discussed the grievance process. The session was well attended.

(5) **LUFA Liaison** member meeting on June 8: We discussed OCUFA's advocacy for Faculty Renewal, LU Strategic Mandate Agreement Consultations (SMA), Matrices and Target in SMA, and university funding.

(6) **Orientation for LUFA** Executive and Standing Committee Members on August 28: The orientation included an overview of the LUFA standing committees, LUFA By-Laws, and parliamentary procedure (Robert's Rules of Order).

Now I will inform you about some other essential items which may affect you:

List of Amendments to Research Integrity (Article 39): As per Article 39.01.02 - *The parties agree to meet and discuss any changes to the Framework at the joint Committee and to update Article 39 in the event such changes are required.*

To comply with the 2016 Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research, the following two items were added last year: **(a) Participation in Agency Review Processes** - *Participants in Agency review processes must comply with the Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy of the Federal Research Funding Organizations. Participants in Agency review processes confirm that they are not currently under investigation for an alleged breach of the RCR Framework or any other responsible conduct of research policies such as ethics, integrity or financial management policies. If participants find themselves under investigation, they must temporarily withdraw themselves from participation in any Agency review process until the investigation is complete and a determination is made by the Agency whether they can resume their participation;* and **(b) Receiving Allegations** - *A statement that it will consider an anonymous allegation if accompanied by sufficient information to enable the assessment of the allegation and the credibility of the facts and evidence on which the allegation is based, without the need for further information from the complainant.*

Research Plan (2019-2024): The Office of the Vice-President Research and Innovation is developing a Research Plan. The Research Planning Committee is hosting consultation sessions and seeking feedback. I am urging you to participate actively in those consultation sessions.

Pension: As I have mentioned earlier, LUFA has hosted a series of Pension Information Sessions on the long-term effect of the changes in the Government of Canada's new 'enhanced' CPP policies. The purpose of these sessions was to inform members of the impact of "Less CPP" language on their pensions and help them make informed retirement decisions [please visit: <https://lufa.org/agreement/pension-information/>]. The executive has decided to hold a referendum on the issue, to be held on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, to determine the will of the

membership. I am requesting that all LUFA members participate in the above Referendum [**Note:** For more information, please check your email, "Re: ***Reminder*** February 13, 2019 Member Referendum on Removal of "Less CPP" Language". Also, please see the report from the chair of the pension committee in the Newsletter.

CAUT Council: I attended this year's Parliament Hill Day. It was an excellent opportunity to talk about investing ["Invest in Education, Invest in our Future"] in PSE, and Copyright Act ["Copy Right Law, Make it work for Canadians"]. Also, I attended the CAUT Council with Glenn Colton. The council has approved a few significant policies:

Policy Statement on Performance Metrics – *Performance metrics include, but are not limited to, the application of quantitative analysis and statistics to publications such as books, journal articles, and conference proceedings to assess the impact and quality of research, including factors such as number and size of research grants or funding, citation counts, and ranking in journal publications. Performance metrics are subjective and often misleading. Academic work is best assessed through peer review and not by performance metrics. Reliance on performance metrics can violate academic freedom, interfere with collegial governance, hiring, tenure and promotion decisions, compensation, working conditions, and disciplinary actions. Measuring research output with an exclusive or excessive emphasis on performance metrics neglects the diversity and totality of scholarly activity.*

Performance metrics can especially disadvantage Aboriginal scholars, members of equity-seeking groups, those publishing in languages other than English, those who are on non-traditional career paths, as well as those who conduct unconventional research and/or use non-traditional research methods.

When performance metrics are provided by the academic staff member, such data should be subordinate to the peer review process in accordance with principles of academic freedom and collegial governance.

Policy Statement on Equity – *The goal of equity is to achieve inclusiveness and social and economic justice through recognition, respect, numerical representation, accountability, responsibility and the development of balanced, healthy, and harmonious working environments.*

CAUT recognizes the importance of Aboriginal perspectives that see equity as a continuing struggle to achieve and maintain balance between living things. Equity for Aboriginal (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) peoples requires recognition of their distinct Aboriginal and treaty rights, as well as historical injustices which have resulted from longstanding Canadian colonial practices.

When assessing scholarship for career decisions, recognition must be given to different and diverse experiences of marginalized groups. Diverse substantive contributions to knowledge must be welcomed in the university or college. Diversity demands representation of difference in terms of vision, values, cultural mores, lived experience, methodologies, and epistemologies in critical analysis.

The attainment of equity requires vigilant monitoring and action to address restrictions to the realization of full participation of all members of the academy. An inclusive university or college is one that is active in eliminating these restrictions and promotes collegial governance and the full democratic participation and academic freedom of all its members, both regular and contract academic staff. Such restrictions include systemic discrimination, employment and education inequities, lack of accommodation, and institutional structures, policies, and practices that perpetuate systemic discrimination and may enable a climate of hostility or other adverse effects.

Realizing equity is both an individual and a collective responsibility. CAUT commits to providing leadership in the work of combating systemic discrimination, removing barriers, and promoting inclusivity.

Academic staff associations should take a leadership role in the realization of equity by negotiating equity provisions in agreements and by promoting equity within the association and its governance structure. Success requires openness, transparency, and accountability in all aspects of institutional life including but not limited to anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, employment equity, accommodation, and salary equity.

Finally, I was a panelist at CAUT Forum for Presidents. The topic was the role of LUFA in "Advancing Equity" at Lakehead University.

Please feel free to contact Ms. Angie Kozak or me for further information.

Contract Lecturer Committee Report

Laurie Forbes, Co-Chair, laurie.forbes@lakeheadu.ca John Fell, Co-Chair, john.fell@lakeheadu.ca

We held our Fall Annual General Meeting in November. It was nice to connect with colleagues, have concerns voiced, and meet those new to teaching at Lakehead. We were able to clarify articles in the Collective Agreement pertaining to Contract Faculty. A PowerPoint presentation prepared by a member of the Contract Lecturers/Continuing Lectures Committee and outlining the articles that pertain to Contract Faculty was sent to all Contract Faculty.

The Committee has been conducting the annual Contract Lecturers/Continuing Lectures survey for a number of years and is currently preparing to circulate it to members in the hope of adding once again to the body of longitudinal data.

The Contract Lecturers/Continuing Lectures Committee requested LUFA look into the fact that Contract Faculty are never acknowledged at the yearly recognition awards.

“OCUFA makes recommendations for 2019 Ontario Budget” -

<https://ocufa.on.ca/blog-posts/ocufa-makes-recommendations-for-2019-ontario-budget/>

“February 11 is the Fairness for Contract Faculty Social Media Day of Action” -

<https://ocufa.on.ca/blog-posts/february-11-is-the-fairness-for-contract-faculty-social-media-day-of-action/>

Chief Grievance Officer's Report

Qing Lai Dang, qinglai.dang@lakeheadu.ca

I attended the CAUT Forum for Senior Grievance Officers before Christmas. The theme of the forum is Mental Health and the Workplace. According to the speakers at the forum, mental health issues are common at workplaces, including universities and colleges. Although the awareness of mental health issues has been increasing across the country in recent years, workers are still generally reluctant to discuss mental health issues or use them as reasons for leave or as defense in dealing with disciplines. Often mental health issues are related to stresses. If you feel that you might be experiencing a mental health issue, I encourage you to speak to a counsellor in the Employee and Family Assistance Program. The service is confidential and free of charge to you. You can make an appointment by calling (807) 623-7677 or toll-free (888) 423-5862. Detailed information on this program can be found at <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/hr/resources-for-staff/employee-and-family-assistance-program>.

I visited the Orillia campus at the beginning of January with LUFA President and the Chair of the LUFA Pension Committee. I would like to draw your attention to an issue that was raised during a discussion session: the development of online courses. Some faculty members (did not verify whether they are all LUFA members) have been asked and paid for developing online courses. However, the materials have subsequently been used for online teaching without the member's involvement or knowledge. If you are approached to do so, please read the content of the contract very carefully to make sure that you are not selling your job for the price of teaching or developing one course.

The grievance on the wrongful dismissal of a tenured faculty member, which occurred in July 2013, has finally been closed. There was a two-day arbitration hearing at the end of August 2018 for the arbitrator to determine the amount of remedy that the grievor is entitled to. The arbitrator issued the remedy award on November 22, 2018. Both LUFA and the University Administration have accepted the award and the remedy has been paid. We have no ongoing or pending arbitration at this time.

The LUFA Grievance Committee has been continuing to work on grievances arising from investigations and/or sanctions related to improper conduct or demeanor. Please read the employee code of conduct and pay attention to your language and demeanor when interacting with others.

Grievance committee

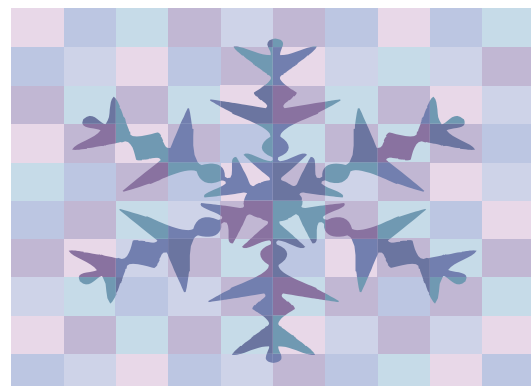
Qing-Lai Dang (Chief Grievance Officer, Natural Resource Management)
Glenna Knutson (Nursing)
Scott Pound (English)
Naqi Sayed (Business Administration)
Tianxuan Miao (Mathematics)
Jason Blahuta (Philosophy)
Wely Floriano (Chemistry)
Jennifer Jarman (Orillia)
Scree Kurissery (Orillia)

CAUT Defence Fund Report

Brad Wilson, Rep., brad.wilson@lakeheadu.ca

The CAUT Defence Fund (DF) has added 11 new member unions over the last year, mostly from BC and Alberta, growing to 65 member unions and approximately 33,300 members. Defence Fund Representatives like myself have two main responsibilities: to ensure the dues collected are used solely to meet the purposes of the DF, and to represent the views and interests of their own union. The Fund's current assets are just over \$30 million (up from \$26 million last year). The DF provides strike pay and financial support to unions during lockouts, strikes, or when governments interfere with a union's bargaining rights. Visit defencefund.caut.ca for more information about the Defence Fund and its members.

I continue to believe that belonging to the CAUT Defence Fund is a superb idea for our association and I will continue to advocate strongly for our union's participation. Please feel free to email me (bwilson@lakeheadu.ca) or call me at 343-8746 if you have any questions.



Pension Committee Report

Ken Hartviksen, Chair, ken.hartviksen@lakeheadu.ca

The membership of the 2018/19 LUFA Pension Committee is:

Ken Hartviksen	Business Administration, ex-officio (Chair)
Glenn Colton	Music, ex-officio (Secretary)
Wa Gao	Civil Engineering
Steve Hecnar	Biology
Jim Stafford	Emeritus
Wa Gao	Civil Engineering
Laure Paquette	Political Science
Ryan McVeigh	Sociology, Orillia

The LUFA Pension Committee has met twice since the last report to the LUFA Membership on November 9 2018. The Committee discussed the following topics:

- LUFA membership engagement process on the issue of the pension plan and the impact of the enhancement of the Canada Pension Plan
- The Ontario University Pension Plan or JSPP
- The actuarial valuation of the university professional pension plan
- Contribution rates and retirement expectations
- The annuity option available for retirees through the pension plan and the Normal Form Pension Factor
- Investment performance of the pension plan
- The Statement of Investment Policies and Practices (SIPP)

The following provides a little more detail on these topics.

Joint-Sponsored Pension Plan

The LUFA Pension Committee continues to monitor the University Pension Plan of Ontario (UPP) initiative led by the University of Toronto. This new, joint-sponsored pension plan has the endorsement of the Province of Ontario and involves U of T, Queen's University, the University of Guelph and the United Steelworkers.

The UPP is being designed as a defined-benefit pension plan where risks and contributions are equally shared by employers and members. Pension contribution rates that are being proposed initially are 9.2% for income below YMPE and 11.5% above YMPE (YMPE in 2018 was \$55,900 and is \$57,400 in 2019).

Other universities may be invited to join the UPP, however, such an invitation is unlikely before the year 2021.

If members wish to monitor the UPP initiative they can sign up for regular updates through the UPP website found at: <http://www.universitypension.ca/>

Actuarial Valuation of the Lakehead University Professional Pension Plan

The actuarial valuation of the professional pension plan was reported at the meeting of the University Professional Pension Plan Advisory Board on December 7, 2018. The valuation was based on the plans financial position as at December 31, 2017 and was conducted by the University actuary, Eckler.

Eckler conducts three different actuarial tests; each with its own unique set of assumptions. The Solvency Valuation is the test that is used to determine the need for extra solvency payments by the university. In 2015, the Solvency Deficiency in all retirement accounts was \$14 million giving the plan a funded ratio of 82%. In 2017 the Solvency Deficiency improved to \$6.2 million giving the plan a funded ratio of 90.7%. This actuarial report was filed with Canada Revenue Agency and with the Financial Services Commission of Ontario. As a result of this valuation, the solvency special payments that the university is required to make will fall to \$444,400 in each of 2019 and 2020. The university made solvency payments of \$1.1 million in 2016 and 2017 and contributed \$0.7 million in 2018.

Professional Plan Return

The LUFA Pension Committee continuously monitors the investment performance of the pension plan. 2018 was a challenging year in the financial markets. The S&P/TSX Composite index hit a low of 13,780 on December 24. Since that time, financial markets have regained considerable ground. At the time of writing, the S&P/TSX was over 15,400 points. Of course, the pension plan is invested conservatively with a long-term investment horizon which is appropriate for a pension plan. A significant proportion of the plan assets are in fixed income investments that often perform well when the equities market perform poorly.

December, 2018 returns were not available at the time of writing, but the cumulative return to the end of November 2018 was -0.6%. Rates of return on the pension fund are reported to all members on the Pension Services website. (<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/finance/pension>)

LUFA Executive Committee 2018-19

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	Glenna Knutson
CAUT Rep.	Gautam Das
CAUT Defence Fund Rep.	Brad Wilson
OCUFA Rep.	Glenn Colton
OCUFA Collective Bargaining	Glenna Knutson
Status of Women Rep.	Karen Poole
Benefit Committee Chair	Jennifer Farman
Contract Lecturer Chairs	Laurie Forbes
	John Fell
	David Kemp
Emeritus Committee Chair	
Equity, Diversity & Status of Women Committee Chair	Karen Poole
External Relations Committee Chair	Will Zhao
Librarian Committee Chair	Debra Gold
Nominating Committee Chair	Jason Blahuta
Orillia Committee Chair	Sree Kurisery
Pension Committee Chair	Ken Hartviksen
Physical Environment Committee Chair	Kamil Zaniewski
Research Committee Chair	Robert Omeljaniuk
Administrative Assistant	Angie Kozak