

LUFA News

Winter 2023

LUFA GENERAL MEETING

Friday, February 24, 2023, 10:00 am

<https://lakeheadu.zoom.us/j/91784099435>

Meeting ID: 917 8409 9435

Passcode: 451141



President's Report

Gautam Das, gdas@lakeheadu.ca

Many thanks for your active participation in LUFA meetings and LUFA Committees. Special thanks to all volunteers serving on LUFA Executive, Committees, the Negotiating Team, the Action Team, and to our grievance officers. Without their hard work and dedication LUFA would not be able to provide timely, high-quality professional services to its members. I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to attend the Winter 2023 General Meeting on February 24 at 10:00 am.

*Please note that your Service in LUFA Committees and your active participation in the activities of the LUFA are considered part of Administrative Responsibilities (**Article 16.04**) and Service to the Profession and the Community (**Article 16.05**), respectively.*

LUFA continues to advocate for, engage with, and fight for members' rights and working conditions, pension reform, reflecting Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at all levels of University Governance, Board of Governors and Senate By-laws amendment, and Transparency and Collegiality at all levels of University Governance – Please read **LUFA Deputation to the LU Board of Governors.**

One of the issues we discussed on several occasions is that the pandemic burnout makes our lives more challenging than ever! We need to think of a longer-term strategy to improve the situation, which is possible only through a transparent and collegial environment at all levels of University Governance. We need to be part of the University's strategies! I will encourage you to attend the Senate, Board of Governors and LUFA meetings and visit the **LUFA website** to find regular updates.

Further, on February 2, 2023, Lynn Martin, Qing-Lai Dang, and I visited Orillia and Barrie Campuses. We were happy to see members' enthusiasm to discuss issues related to the University Governance, PTR process, **negotiations**, and **grievances**. I encourage you to visit the LUFA website to learn more about **LUFA Policies**.

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In the following paragraphs, I summarise some of the information you may find beneficial.

Pre-Senate Meetings: LUFA is regularly holding Pre-Senate meetings. They are an important way through which LUFA members can contribute to building a better academic community and improving the learning environment at Lakehead University. As noted in **Article 10.03 (D)**, LUFA's role is to **negotiate amendments to the collective agreement necessitated by Senate Approved changes to Academic Governance**. Attending the Pre-Senate meetings allows LUFA members to access critical information to help them make informed decisions. Please note that LUFA plays a crucial role in ensuring the long-term integrity and solvency of the University. We must be together to preserve and protect collegial governance, academic freedom and tenure.

In the previous pre-senate meetings, we discussed the most critical issue: the imbalance in Senate Committee's composition. Over the past several years, there were many revisions to the Senate By-Laws, which ultimately weakened the fundamental principle of Bicameral Governance! The Senate Organization Committee is conducting the regular 5-year Senate By-law review as part of its mandate. The Committee received feedback from the university community and will bring suggested changes/amendments at future Senate meetings. In addition, the Committee is seeking your input on the composition of the Senate Executive Committee. I request you to review the Senate **By-Laws** and the **Lakehead University Act 1965** (Article 14) to understand the Lakehead University Governance Structure. Also, if you have questions, please discuss them with senators and members of the Senate committees and consult past LUFA Communique on Pre-Senate meetings. I also encourage you to read the article posted on the LUFA website to understand why it is crucial to restore **Collegial Governance** in our university.

Negotiation. Our Chief Negotiator reviewed our negotiation priorities for this round during the Coffee and Conversation VII on January 27, 2023, and in an information session at Barrie and Orillia campuses on February 2, 2023. Negotiations will begin on May 1, 2023. LUFA has retained the services of David Wright, Labour Lawyer as the spokesperson. The Board of Governors retained the services of Michael Kennedy, a Labour Lawyer. I encourage you to join the General Meeting and the upcoming Coffee and Conversation sessions to learn more about the priorities identified by the membership and bring forth any issues to the attention of the LUFA Executive and Negotiation Team.

The new **Collective Agreement (September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023)** is now online. LUFA also printed a limited number of copies, so don't hesitate to contact the LUFA office if you would like a copy.

Coffee and Conversation – LUFA has organized eight sessions since September 2022. These meetings provide a forum for the discussion of:

- (i) the current bargaining environment and issues;

- (ii) how internal and external factors can influence our ability to maintain our bargaining rights;
- (iii) matters related to compensation such as benefits, salaries, pension, and
- (iv) any other issues you want to bring to the attention of the LUFA Executive and bargaining team.

Issues raised by members in the previous meetings: (i) Salary and Compensation; (ii) Recognition of Diverse Scholarships; (iii) Pension Contributions; (iv) University Governance and Collegiality – University's reliance on lawyers and consultants, and too many Associate VPs; (v) Contract Faculty members – Job security, sick leave; (vi) Faculty Renewal and (vii) elimination of SFT.

LUFA Executive appointed Anna Kone Pefoyo, Raynald Lemelin, Ruizhong Wei, Serajul Islam, Madeline Donnelly, Qing-Lai Dang (Non-Voting) and Geoffrey Hudson (Non-Voting) to the **Action Committee**. Anna Kone Pefoyo attends OCUFA's meetings regularly, and you will hear from her soon. I encourage you to contact Anna if you are interested in serving on any **sub-committee**. The Committee will develop a "**Message Box**" containing details on the negotiation issues identified by you as top priorities.

Pension Reform – LUFA members joined the CAAT Pension Plan on January 1, 2023. Please read the information you received from CAAT carefully. I encourage you to attend LUFA sessions and the Pension Board Meetings to learn more about the current issues! I have mentioned before that the sacrifice of current LUFA members will make Lakehead University more attractive to join in the future! But more needs to be done to ensure that members can have a dignified life after they retire from Lakehead University; we should not need to work till 71 years of age!

In the past several years LUFA Pension Committee and the Executive have done a great deal of research on Pension Reform! The discussion in the last several Coffee and Conversation sessions and the recent survey shows that members favour increasing the Pension Contribution to 8.05% from 6.5%. Currently, LUFA members contribute 6.5%, and LU BoGs contribute 8.05%. **Please note that LUFA members' contribution is the lowest at Lakehead University.**

In addition, pension is one of the issues which needs a thorough understanding – I encourage you to visit the LUFA website (<https://lufa.org/agreements/pension-information/>), where you will find a wealth of information vital to our knowledge of the Pension Reform issues. For more information, I encourage everyone to read the past pension committee report in the newsletters and LUFA Communiqué. As more information becomes available, LUFA will continue to update you. Please also read Eckler Review on Lakehead University Professional Pension Plan.

OCUFA News: On December 7, 2022, The Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) released - "**Ontario faculty support call for public inquiry into Laurentian**

debacle", which led to unprecedented program cuts and faculty and staff job losses.

"A public inquiry is necessary to ensure that the disaster that took place at Laurentian never happens again in Ontario," said Sue Wurtele, OCUFA President. "Ontarians deserve an independent examination of what happened and for the university administration and Ontario government to be held accountable for their actions."

I will encourage you to read the following documents:

- Communication between the Ministry and the Laurentian University.
 - [Confidential Exhibit EEE](#)
 - [Confidential Exhibit FFF](#)
- [Full Special Report on Laurentian University](#)
- [Report at a Glance](#)
- [News Release](#)

CAUT News: On February 2, 2023, LUFA joined with other Faculty Associations to support CAUT's advocacy to change the CCAA. Please see below the communication:

"This week marks the second anniversary of Laurentian University filing for insolvency protection under the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA). Two years later, the consequences of this unprecedented move by the institution's senior administration continue to be felt by those who have lost their jobs and benefits, and by students and the broader community who relied on the 69 programs that were cut.

While the Liberal government promised to exclude public post-secondary institutions from the CCAA, we are still waiting for this change. We need the federal government to protect our universities and colleges from being treated as private corporations under the CCAA.

The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) is lobbying for legislative changes to ensure no other public post-secondary institution can file for insolvency under the CCAA. There is proposed legislation in both the House of Commons and the Senate that would remove public universities and colleges from the CCAA:

Private Member's Bill C-309, An Act to amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act and the Companies' Creditors Arrangements Act (public institutions)

Senate Bill S-215, An Act respecting measures in relation to the financial stability of post-secondary institutions.

Neither bill will likely be passed into law without government support. As Parliament resumes, we need to ensure the Liberal government makes good on its promise to amend the CCAA.

In her Special Report on Laurentian University, the Auditor General of Ontario concluded that the senior administration's decision to pursue insolvency rather than accept government assistance was unnecessary,

inappropriate, and ultimately destructive for the institution. The Liberal government must take action to amend the CCAA to protect our public post-secondary institutions".

Further updates and information are available via **LUFA Communiqué**, NEWS Bulletin, and the **LUFA website**. I encourage you to consult them as often as you are able. Please get in touch with me or any other LUFA Executive members if you have any questions or concerns.

In solidarity,

Gautam Das

Chief Negotiator Report

Lynn Martin, lmartin@lakeheadu.ca

The results of the membership priorities survey were presented at the last Coffee and Conversation session – we thank all members who took the time to vote and to attend the session! We will continue to engage via the Coffee and Conversation sessions over the course of the winter and spring – please consider attending as many sessions as you can. It is so important for the Negotiating team to hear directly from the membership as it prepares for the coming round of negotiations. Your Negotiating team includes:

- David Wright (spokesperson)
- Lynn Martin, Health Sciences (Chief Negotiator)
- Debra Gold, Library
- Fay Williams, Interdisciplinary Studies (Orillia)
- Rachel Warburton, English
- Ravi Gokani, Social Work
- Ben Hubbard, LUFA

Chief Grievance Officer Report

Qing-Lai Dang, qdang@lakeheadu.ca

I attended the CAUT Forum for Senior Grievance Offers in Ottawa. The theme of the forum is academic freedom. As a faculty member, your rights of academic freedom are protected for our academic activities, such as teaching, intramural and extramural speeches. You can criticize the administration and/or university policies without risking being penalized. However, there are limitations. Therefore, you need to exercise your rights cautiously and responsibly. You can check the CAUT Policy Statement on Academic Freedom (at CAUT.ca) for more information.

The amendment (Bill 26) to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act (the "Act") and the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005, will come into force on July 01, 2023. The amendment has added a new section to the Act setting out rules respecting sexual misconduct toward students by employees of publicly-assisted universities or colleges of applied arts and technology (and private career colleges), and to address related matters. The provisions in Bill 26 override any provisions in collective agreements or employment contracts. If you are interested in getting a copy of Bill 26, please contact LUFA office.

The following is a list of LUFA grievance offers for your unit and their contact information. If you LUFA assistance regarding complaints or grievances, please to contact them.

Your unit	Your grievance officers
Business Administration	Tianxuan Miao and Jason Blahuta
Education	Scott Pound and Jason Blahuta
Engineering	Jason Blahuta and Tianxuan Miao
Health & Behavioral Sci.	Juan Pernia and Naqi Sayed (
Law	Scott Pound and Naqi Sayed
Natural Resources Management	Tianxuan Miao and Naqi Sayed
Anthropology, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Sci., Economics, Geography, Geology, Mathematics, Physics	Naqi Sayed and Scott Pound
English, History, Indigenous Learning, Languages, Music, Outdoor Rec, Philosophy, Political Sci, Sociology, Visual Arts, Women Studies	Sherry Wang and Juan Pernia
Orillia Campus Barrie Campus	Jennifer Jarman, Sherry Wang, and Florin Pendea

Contact information:

1. Qinglai Dang, Natural Resources Management, 807 343 8010 extension 8238
Email: qinglaidangLufa@yahoo.com
2. Naqi Sayed, Business Administration, 807 343 8010 extension 8385
Email: naqi.sayed@hotmail.com
3. Tianxuan Miao, Mathematics, 807 346 7722
Email: tianxuanmiao@yahoo.com
4. Jason Blahuta, Philosophy, 807-343-8010 extension 8937
Email: jason_blahuta@shaw.ca
5. Scott Pound, English, 807-343-8010 extension 8298, cell 631-793
Email: Scott.Pound@gmail.com
6. Jennifer Jarman, Interdisciplinary Studies, Orillia, 705-330-4008, ext.2631

Cell 705-955-1521
Email: lufajj1@gmail.com

7. Sherry Wang, Business Admin, 705-730-0642 (home)
Email: wxq41@yahoo.ca
8. Juan Pernia, Civil Engineering, 807-766-7173
Email: jpernia@lakeheadu.ca
9. Florin Pendea, Orillia, 705-330-4010 ext. 2653
Email: ifpendea@lakeheadu.ca

Benefits Committee Report

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

The Joint Benefits Committee had several meetings in Fall 2022. The Committee has obtained the estimates from Green Shield Canada for benefit coverage of dental implants and orthodontics. The LUFA representatives have also requested alternatives for long term disability benefits.

The LUFA Benefits Committee has discussed the estimates and shared them with the LUFA Negotiating Committee for consideration. We have also reviewed the 2023 membership survey results and will prepare recommendations on our benefits in the forthcoming bargaining.

Benefits Committee

Shikui Wu, Chair (Business Administration)
Robert Omeljaniuk (Biology)
Ruizhong Wei (Computer Science, Orillia)
Joey Farrell (Emeritus)
Lynn Martin (Health Sciences, ex-officio member)

Contract Lecturer Committee Report

Taina Maki Chahal, Chair, tchahal@lakeheadu.ca

In a few months, we are once again entering bargaining and seeking meaningful change for Contract Faculty Members, Continuing Lecturers, and Continuing Contract Lecturers. As we will be free of the 1% annual salary increase constraint of Bill 124, a salary increase to offset inflation is a minimum. But our remuneration has historically been low, so our paychecks need to catch up for years of losing value! We need equity, not wage disparity. A salary increase to match inflation will only have us running on the spot.

As we soon will have a new incoming President, a new path opens to have the work of contract lecturers recognized for the value that we bring to departments and the university. What does that recognition look like in relation to fairness for contract lecturers? Continuing Lecturers and Continuing Contract Lecturers, what can LUFA do to negotiate on your behalf? CLMs Level 1, 2, and 3 who do service work for departments, who sit on university committees, who do supervisory work, shouldn't that work be paid? It is not in our contracts. We are not paid for it. Should we bring this

concern forward for bargaining? Level 1 CLMs, what specific requests do you wish to bring forward? Are professional expenses or health benefits something on your mind? Level 2 CLMs, how can your work situation be improved? Your steady teaching via regular contracts shows that the university needs your labour to function. Level 3 CLMs, what if after x years of continuously teaching the same 6 HCEs a year, your position was rolled over into a 3 year contract?

We need to get creative on shifting precarious work to stability and moving precarious contracts to permanent contracts. What ideas do you have? Please send us your ideas in the upcoming **Contract Lecturer Survey**. Look for it in your inbox (sent Feb. 21, open until March 7). On OCUFA's Contract Faculty **Social Media Day of Action**, Feb. 28, get active on social media with your tweet, post, video, or message about contract faculty using #solidarityisourstrength. Say it loud: contract faculty deserve job security, access to benefits, and fair compensation!

In solidarity,
Taina Maki Chahal, Chair

Emeritus Committee Report

Glenna Knutson, Chair, gknutson@lakeheadu.ca

The LUFA Emeritus Committee has met monthly since the last LUFA General Meeting. In addition, members of the Committee met with LUFA President Gautam Das and Chief Negotiator Lynn Martin on January 24 to discuss negotiation issues relevant to Emeritus members.

On January 24, the Emeritus Committee approved a motion related to a proposed LUFA Bylaws change and forwarded that motion to the LUFA Executive; the motion was approved by the Executive on February 6 and is now before the General Membership for decision.

The Committee continues to discuss a number of other issues. The members of the Emeritus Committee are: Joey Farrell, Glenna Knutson, Nancy Luckai, Karen Maddox, Brian Phillips and Jim Stafford.

Orillia Committee Report

Alice den Otter, Chair, adenotte@lakeheadu.ca

The Orillia Committee met on Wednesday, February 1. Everyone is looking forward to seeing LUFA representatives (Qing Lai Dang, Gautam Das, and Lynn Martin) in Orillia (and Barrie) on Friday, February 3. In our meeting, three issues were raised:

1. During negotiations, attention needs to be paid to salary floors and ceilings, which should be rising whenever any salary increases are added (including CDI). If ceilings stay the same, then a person at the ceiling will be unable to receive CDI or an increase in salary because the added amount will be above the ceiling.

2. Orillia faculty members are struggling with a lack of resources for teaching assistance. Since CRIM, INTD, and

MDST programs do not have graduate programs, there have been few GAs over the years. But this year even marker money has been cut, enabling minuscule savings to the university, at the expense of some faculty members with large classes and also at the expense of their students who do not receive the same level of attention and skill development without marker support. Can LUFA negotiate some kind of a promise from the university that they will enable adequate teaching assistance to enable faculty to do their jobs?

3. The university computers and servers at Orillia are now 12 years old and no longer able to hold necessary software let alone security updates, which affects both teaching and research capacities on the part of our faculty members. Is there anything LUFA can do to advocate for improved infrastructure?

Librarian Committee Report

Sara Janes, sjanes1@lakeheadu.ca

Since Debra Gold is a member of the negotiations team this year, Sara Janes has taken the role of Acting Chair. A meeting of LUFA librarians will be held the week of February 20th prior to the LUFA general meeting.

Pension Committee Report

Karl Skogstad, Chair, kaskogst@lakeheadu.ca

Your Pension Committee has met on several occasions this academic year to discuss various issues surrounding the pension.

As you will recall, our most recent collective agreement saw us switch our future pension contributions away from the Lakehead Board of Governors' plan to the plan administered by CAAT. At this point, you should have received in the mail some forms from CAAT that you should complete. If you have not received these forms, please reach out to the Human Resources Department.

Feedback from members has indicated that there remain two unresolved issues surrounding the pension. The first is the level of contribution to the plan, and the second is with regards to the past contributions that remain in the plan administered by the Board of Governors.

With regards to the first issue, the employer is currently contributing 8.05% to the plan while members contribute 6.5%. Contributions are constrained by two requirements. The first is that the sum of these contributions cannot exceed 18%, and the second is that the employer contribution must be equal to or greater than the employee contribution. The Committee is currently exploring ways in which contributions to the plan can be increased.

With regards to the second issue, there are many complicating legal and financial realities that surround making any changes to these past contributions. Ultimately, any change with regards to these funds will require approval of the Board of Governors. The

Committee is currently investigating what options may be feasible and the financial realities of pursuing these options.

Your Pension Committee Representatives are:

Livio Di Matteo	Economics
Camillo Lento	Business
Robert Mawhinney	Chemistry
Naqj Sayed	Business
Karl Skogstad (Chair)	Economics
Jim Stafford	Emeritus
Michael Stevenson	History

LUFA Executive Committee 2022/23

President	Gautam Das
Vice-President	Liping Liu
Secretary	Florin Pendea
Treasurer	Sherry Wang
Past President	-----
Members at Large	Kamil Zaniewski
Chief Grievance Officer	Qing Lai Dang
Chief Negotiator	Lynn Martin
CAUT Rep.	Gautam Das
CAUT Defence Fund Rep.	Livio Di Matteo
OCUFA Rep.	Gautam Das
OCUFA Collective Bargaining	Lynn Martin
Status of Women Rep.	Wendy St Laurent- Coutts
Benefits Committee Chair	Shikui Wu
Contract Lecturer Chairs	Taina Maki
Emeritus Committee Chair	Glenna Knutson
Equity, Diversity & Status of Women Committee Chair	Juan Pernia
External Relations Committee Chair	Doug Ivison
Librarian Committee Chair	Sara Janes
Nominating Committee Chair	Jason Blahuta
Orillia Committee Chair	Alice den Otter
Pension Committee Chair	Karl Skogstad
Physical Environment Committee Chair	Hui Zhang
Research Committee Chair	Lida Fan

Contact

Ben Hubbard, LUFA

lufa@lakeheadu.ca