

LUFA News

Fall 2023

LUFA GENERAL MEETING

Monday December 4th from 10:00 to Noon

Via Zoom

<https://lakeheadu.zoom.us/j/94751249213>

Meeting ID: 947 5124 9213

Passcode: 164733

President's Report

Gautam Das, gdas@lakeheadu.ca

The Fall General Meeting will be held on December 4, 2023. I want to take this opportunity to invite you to attend the meeting. Many thanks for your active participation in LUFA meetings and engaging in discussion. Please join me in thanking all volunteers serving on LUFA Executive, Committees, Negotiating Team, Action Team, and our grievance officers. Without their hard work and dedication, LUFA would be unable to provide timely, high-quality professional services to its members.

*Please note that your service on LUFA Committees and your active participation in the activities of the LUFA is 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, reflecting Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at all levels of University Governance, Board of Governors and Senate Bylaws amendment, and Transparency and Collegiality at all levels. I want to thank all participants in **LUFA's Governance Campaign, which has garnered widespread support from individuals across Canada. With the help of [CAUT](#) and [OCUFA](#), we have effectively disseminated the campaign's message nationwide. If you haven't done so yet, we kindly encourage you to demonstrate your support by sending a letter to our University President, VP Research, VP Academics, VP Finance, and Chair of the Board of Governors expressing full support for transparency and faculty involvement in decision-making processes at our institution.** I will encourage you to attend the Senate, Board of Governors and LUFA meetings and visit the [LUFA website](#) for regular updates.



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

Blue-Ribbon Panel Recommendations: In the past several years LUFA participated in various OCUFA's advocacy (e.g., Organized Thunder Bay and Orillia **Panel Discussion** with Ontario Candidates in collaboration with **LUSU**, feedback to **OCUFA** on Blue Ribbon Panel submission, advocacy at the Queen's Park for Northern Universities and many more) on **(a)** Meaningfully increase university operating grants; **(b)** Increase funding for research by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities; **(c)** Boost funding for northern grants in recognition of the important mandate of northern institutions and the particular challenges they face; **(d)** Discontinue performance-based funding for Ontario's universities; **(e)** Remove wage constraints legislated under Bill 124; **(f)** Reform Employment Standards Act language to include equal pay for work of equivalent value for workers, including contract faculty; **(g)** Increase university funding for faculty renewal so that retiring faculty are replaced; and **(h)** Boost OSAP funding and replace loans with grants to ensure an accessible postsecondary education system for all.

Here are some recommendations for Northern Universities [**Taken from OCUFA's BRIEFING NOTE**].

- **Lower Floor for Corridor Models:** *The panel suggests setting a lower floor for the corridor models of universities and colleges in the north for the next SMA (Strategic Mandate Agreement) cycle. This adjustment would allow reductions in enrollment of up to 10 percent for colleges and six percent for universities, instead of the current seven percent and three percent, respectively, before funding is negatively affected. IIRC, there would be a one-year grace period before institutional funding was lowered*

through this process. This recognizes the unique challenges and higher costs of operating institutions in the northern region.

- **Increase Special Purpose Grants:** *Another suggestion is to increase the special purpose grants for Northern, rural, and remote colleges, as well as the Northern Grant for Northern universities. These grants should be indexed to inflation or two percent, whichever is higher, to account for the higher costs of operating these institutions.*
- **Renegotiation of Corridor Midpoints:** *Institutions falling below their new floor in the first two years of an SMA cycle should be allowed to renegotiate corridor midpoints downward. The funds associated with the reduction could serve as a transition support for restructuring actions to improve financial sustainability before the next SMA cycle.*
- **Negotiations at the End of Each SMA Cycle:** *It is important to include the corridor in negotiations at the end of each SMA cycle to mitigate the effect of students from the north being recruited by institutions in the south. This is especially important considering the demographic differences identified for northern institutions. Negotiations could also provide an opportunity to reward institutions that have exceeded expectations for their corridor midpoint.*

Many other important recommendations may need attention [e.g., **Section 3: Enhance Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness**], which we will bring soon. We will wait now to see what the Government does with the report!

Negotiation: Many thanks for your contributions to negotiations, participation in the ratification process, and unwavering support throughout. The new Collective Agreement between the Board of Governors of Lakehead University and the Lakehead University Faculty Association (**September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2026**) will be available in Winter 2024. Please consult **LUFA Communiqué: Ratification-Vote – October 30 – 31, 2023, sent on Friday, October 27**. If you have any questions, please get in touch with the LUFA office by sending an email – lufa@lakeheadu.ca.

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**.

Over the past several years, there were many revisions to the Senate Bylaws, which ultimately weakened the fundamental principle of Bicameral Governance! LUFA has been advocating for changes to the Senate Bylaws on several issues, such as – **(i)** the Vice-Chair of the Senate, **(ii)** the nomination process of Faculty representatives on BoGs, **(iii)** increasing the number of faculty senators, **(iv)** ToR for senate committees, **(v)** LUFA representative on the Senate, and **(vi)** LUFA representative

on the Senate Executive Committee. The Senate Organization Committee is conducting the regular 5-year Senate Bylaw review as part of its mandate. The Committee members are currently considering LUFA's options on these issues. The Committee will bring suggested changes/amendments at future Senate meetings.

I urge you to review the Senate [Bylaws](#) 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 Communiqué 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](#).

Coffee and Conversation – LUFA has organized many sessions in the last several years. These meetings provide a forum for the discussion of (a) the current bargaining environment and issues, (b) how internal and external factors can influence our ability to maintain our bargaining rights, (c) matters related to compensation such as benefits, salaries, Pension, and (d) any other issues you want to bring to the attention of the LUFA Executive. Some of the issues raised by members in the previous meetings: (i) Salary and Compensation; (ii) Recognition of Diverse Scholarships; (iv) University Governance and Collegiality – University's reliance on **lawyers** and **consultants** and **too many Associate VPs**; (v) Contract Faculty members – Job security; (vi) Faculty Renewal and (vii) elimination of SFT. **The session will commence in the new year.**

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, President

Chief Negotiator Report

Lynn Martin, lmartin@lakeheadu.ca

As you know, the LUFA membership ratified the new 3-year Collective Agreement (September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2026) on October 31, 2023. Several gains were made, most notably in relation to the Pension: (1) member contributions will increase to match those of the Employer beginning on September 1, 2024; and (2) the Employer will work collaboratively with all applicable bargaining agents, employee groups and retirees to complete the process to wind up the Lakehead University Professional Plan and the Lakehead University Employee Pension Plan by August 31, 2025, or whatever date is practicable. Other gains include, but are not limited to:

- Across the board increases of 1.5%, 3.0% and 3.0%
- A one-time addition to base salary for Level I, II, and III Contract Lecturers (September 1, 2024)
- Increase of \$5,000 to the Anomaly Fund and of \$500 to individual adjustments (September 1, 2025)
- Addition of two professionals to Professional Services, as well as a \$100 increase in annual spending per professional
- Addition of hearing aid coverage
- Automatic benefit of any enhancement in Benefit Plans (A), (E), and (F) for retirees
- Maternity and Parental Leave for members who hold a limited term appointment under Article 19.01.04(B)
- Inclusion of examples related to Other Scholarly and Creative Activities

- Improved language related to Academic Freedom for Librarian members
- New mandate for a Joint Committee on Diverse Scholarship

Though not in the Collective Agreement, the Employer has agreed to new Search and Renewal (or Review) policies and procedures related to Deans/University Librarian and Academic Administrators that see increased representation of faculty, and faculty representatives elected by the LUFA membership.

The online and hardcopy versions of the 2023-24 Collective Agreement are currently being finalized and will hopefully be available early in the new year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of your Negotiating Team for their time, dedication, and effort throughout the process: Ravi Gokani, Debra Gold, Jennifer Jarman, Rachel Warburton, and Fay Williams. Additional thanks to Ben Hubbard and our spokesperson, David Wright.

I would also like to thank you, the membership, for your participation in the (many!) Coffee and Conversations and membership update sessions, as well as the strike vote and ratification process.

Pension Committee Report

Robert Mawhinney, Chair,
mawhinn@lakeheadu.ca

The pension committee met prior to the Pension Advisory Board (PAB) meeting to review documents and provide input to the LUFA PAB members. While our members have now moved to CAAT, many still have amounts in the Lakehead University Professional Pension Plan (LUPPP) and Lakehead University Employee Pension Plan (LUEPP), which is managed by Lakehead University, with the PAB acting as advisors to the Board of Governors.

At this meeting it was noted that there was no new money entering the plan, so going forward there will be a net outflow, which will require careful management. While the Committee did not recommend immediate action on windup at this moment, it is something that will need to be discussed from here on out and the PAB members are to ensure that it is a topic of discussion.

The other topic discussed was the Committee's terms of reference (ToR). Given the expertise and learning curve associated with this Committee, it is recommended that the ToR be updated with extended term lengths. Additionally, the Committee has offered to support Honouring Ken Hartviksen through a perpetual committee position, if the LUFA Executive and Ken's family so desire.

Given the recently negotiated collective agreements memorandum of Understanding on pensions, this Committee will be involved in the implementation.

Your Pension Committee
Robert Mawhinney - Chair, PAB member
Naqi Sayed - PAB member
Jim Stafford
Michael Stevenson
Camillo Lento
Doug Ivison
Hui Zhang

Emeritus Committee Report

Glenna Knutson, Chair
gknutson@lakeheadu.ca

The LUFA Emeritus Committee has met twice during the fall. The members of the Committee are: Glenna Knutson, Nancy Luckai, Karen Maddox, Brian Phillips, Jim Stafford, and Doug West.

The Committee followed closely the efforts made by the LUFA Collective Bargaining Committee on behalf of retired members, in

the recently-completed round of LUFA contract negotiations. We were gratified to see that the new collective agreement contained improvements that have a direct impact on retired members. First of all, language has been added to the Collective Agreement to ensure that retirees will be included in those receiving improvements in benefits: "36.01.07 *Retired members will automatically benefit from any enhancements to these plans. . . .*" Secondly, improvements to professional services will include *audiologist and kinesiologist services*, effective January 1, 2024. There is also an increase in the overall maximum for professional services per practitioner per year. These are important enhancements to allowable retiree benefits, notwithstanding the fact that such benefits are actually self-funded by the retirees themselves, rather than being paid by Lakehead University.

Report of the LUFA Delegate to the CURAC AGM, Karen Maddox

The College and University Associations of Canada (CURAC) conference and annual meeting was held at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) from May 31 to June 2, 2023. The CURAC website indicates that its primary aim is *to coordinate activities that promote communication among member organizations to share information, provide mutual assistance, and speak publicly on issues of common concern to its more than 15,000 members across Canada.*

Conference presentations made by USask faculty and associates highlighted the current work and research being done at USask. These presentations included a discussion of the changes made to curriculum delivery in response to the pandemic, current work in Saskatchewan and Canada in the area of Aboriginal Peoples' health, food developments focusing on plant proteins, research in the areas of rare earth minerals and nuclear

innovations, changes in medical education, as well as their current immunology and vaccine programs.

The forum provided an opportunity to hear of the reciprocal relationships between universities and their retiree associations across the country. Next year's conference will be held at the University of Waterloo.

Orillia Committee Report

Alice den Otter, Chair,
adenotte@lakeheadu.ca

The Lakehead Orillia Committee met on October 20, although it was impossible to find a time that would work for everyone. Four of the six members of the Committee were present and we also were joined by Dr. Uddin from the Barrie campus.

1. The Committee recommended that a Barrie membership slot be added to the Orillia Committee for the future.
2. The Committee also recommended that a tenured/tenure track Orillia/Barrie slot be required on the Negotiations Committee in the future.
3. While the Committee was hoping for successful mediation, we discussed logistics regarding strike action in both Barrie and Orillia in case such action would be needed. Fortunately a strike was averted.

Contract Lecturer/Continuing Lecturer Committee Report

Taina Maki Chahal, Chair,
tchahal@lakeheadu.ca

Struggle. Just as the word means, struggle is ongoing action against difficult forces and barriers. It's a journey, a tough one. Sometimes we think we see some light at the end of the tunnel, but turns out it was a mirage. Yet those who are struggling must not give up; they must continue their striving for equity and fairness. The struggle of contract faculty at Lakehead for equity in

salaries, to end job precarity and exploitation, and to access benefits, has been a long road. I've heard stories from back in the 1980s of sessionals at Lakehead seeking job security through longer fixed-term contracts; those proposals were rejected by the employer. In 2009 and 2016, job security was gained for 14 CLMs. Those folks are now about 6 and their position—Continuing Lecturer—is inaccessible to any other CLM.

Since then, the employer continues to build its cement wall against long-serving CLMs. The employer does not acknowledge our steadfast teaching contributions to the University, to our students. So, despite the hard work of LUFA, we did not gain any job security in the latest CA.

Our new 3-year CA does include steps toward helping CLs and CLMs. Salary increases across the board are 1.5%, 3% and 3%. In addition, the three tiers of CLMs each gained a one-time payment to be applied in 2024 to each .5 contract: Level 1, \$155; Level 2, \$160; Level 3, \$165. Also, the Health Care Spending Account (HCSA), which is a benefit of Level 2 and 3 CLMs, increased to \$1000 from \$800. Although none of the increases match inflation, the incremental gains are signs of hope and the hard work of LUFA.

I would also like to note that for Level 2 and 3 CLMs who contribute to the Pension, each CLM's contribution rises to 8.05% from 7.9% of regular earnings, and the employer's contribution increases from 8.05% from 6.5% of regular earnings.

What do the salary increases mean to a Level 1 CLM who has earned \$7611 per .5 course as per the previous CA? Here's the breakdown: 23/24: add \$114.17 (1.5%) to .5 contract = **\$7725.17**; 24/25: add \$155 (one-time payment) + \$236.41 (3%) = **\$8116.58**; and 24/25: add \$243.50 (3%) = **\$8360.08**. After three years, the salary increase for a Level 1 CLM is **\$749.08** per .5 course.

What is the situation of CF at other Ontario universities? In Sept, I attended the OCUFA Contract Faculty Committee meeting in Toronto. There is a high percentage of CF teaching at most Ontario universities. E.g. 50% of Queen's faculty are CF; 62% at OCAD. Some contract lecturers at Ontario universities are making gains, others are not. E.g. OCAD sessionals negotiated a \$1000 per contract increase. Wilfred Laurier lost 200 CL stipends. Some faculty associations have been successful in rolling over long-serving CF into more secure contracts that reflect their ongoing teaching; LUFA had looked at their CA language to see how perhaps we might apply something similar in negotiating job security for CLMs at Lakehead. That work we now carry forward.

We have three years to gather visionary and practical ideas toward improvements for CLMs and CLs. At a recent CAUT conference on Contract Academic Staff, it was noted that at the center of making significant gains for contract faculty was building solidarity between full-time faculty and contract faculty.

In solidarity!

Taina Maki Chahal, Chair



LUFA Executive Committee 2023/24

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 Vice-President
 Secretary
 Treasurer
 Past President
 Members at Large

Chief Grievance Officer
 Chief Negotiator
 CAUT Rep.
 CAUT Defence Fund Rep.
 OCUFA Rep.
 OCUFA Collective Bargaining
 Status of Women Rep.

Benefit Committee Chair
 Contract Lecturer Chairs
 Emeritus Committee Chair
 Equity, Diversity & Status of Women
 Committee Chair
 Communications Committee Chair
 Librarian Committee Chair
 Nominating Committee Chair
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 Pension Committee Chair
 Physical Environment Committee Chair
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Gautam Das
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 QingLai Dang
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 Glenna Knutson

Wendy St Laurent-
 Tony Puddephatt
 Sarah Janes
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 Alice den Otter
 Robert Mawhinney
 Patrick Cain
 Lida Fan