

RFA Executive Committee
MINUTES
 By Zoom Meeting
April 20, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

<i>Office</i>	<i>Officer</i>	<i>Yes/No/Regrets</i>
President	Ian Sakinofsky	Yes
Vice President Internal	Peter Danziger	Yes
Vice President External	Dave Mason	Yes
Treasurer	Anthony Francescucci	Yes
Secretary	David Naranjit	Regrets
Health & Safety Officer	Habiba Bougherara	Yes
Chair, Grievance	Jesmen Mendoza	Yes
Chair Negotiating	Brian Ceh	Yes
Chair, Professional Affairs	Rachel Berman	Yes
Chair, Equity Issues	Lila Pine	Yes
RFA Indigenous Repr.	Cyndy Baskin	Regrets
Member at Large	Corinne Hart	Yes
Member at Large	Donna Koller	Yes
Staff	André Foucault	Yes
Staff	Shiraz Valley	Yes
Staff	Agnes Paje	Yes

1. Order/Establishment of Quorum
 - Meeting began with quorum at 10.09AM
2. Approval of Agenda
 - Motion to adopt Agenda (Pine/Berman). Carried
3. Approval of Minutes
 - Motion to approve Minutes from April 06 (Ceh/Bougherara). Carried
4. Matters Arising/Old business
5. RFA Officer Reports
 - a. President's Report (Sakinofsky)

Provided report on VPFA update meeting (April 13 2021). Items raised included: PERF carry forward for July 2021 onward; Administration's need to be informed if faculty members are outside the country for a sustained period of time; whether or not there could be a compulsory return to campus in Fall 2021; implementation

of scheduling accommodations for faculty members with dependant care obligations; petty questioning at time of PERF reimbursement for travel expenses; continued deferral of course assignments for certain faculty; timing of TAGA allocations wrt to semester start dates; progress on modification to FCS process

Provided report on meeting with President Lachemi (April 19 2021). Items raised included: the situation at Laurentian; the impact of the cancellation of the Laurentian midwifery program and the role that might be played by Ryerson's midwifery program; vaccinations; the return to campus in September 2021; the consideration of a Ryerson medical school.

A Duty of Fair Representation complaint against the RFA has been submitted to the Ontario Labour Relations Board. The RFA's legal counsel is preparing a response.

c. Grievance Chair (Mendoza)

- Update on RFA Grievances #2020.03 - Denial of Benefits and Termination of Employment in the School of Social Work. A motion was proposed to accept the recommendation of the Grievance Committee to submit this grievance to arbitration. (Mendoza/Bougherara). Carried.
- Update on RFA Grievances #2020.10 - Failure to Maintain a Healthy and Safe Environment. A motion was proposed to accept the recommendation of the Grievance Committee to submit this grievance to arbitration. (Hart/Mendoza). Carried.
- Update on RFA Grievances #2020.15 - Failure to Assign Bargaining Unit Work. A report was provided of an April 14 meeting with the Administration at their request to discuss the grievance, where they simply reiterated their earlier position.

d. Vice-President Internal (Danziger)

Reported on the April 12 meeting of the Reps Council. It was heard from the Reps that individual Faculties appear to have made decisions to continue emergency remote instruction in the Fall'

The Reps Council and the Chairs and Directors Council are both scheduled to meet again in June following the Administration's announcement (not later than June 09 2021) on whether there will be in-person versus remote teaching in the Fall.

e. Vice-President External (Mason)

The following motion was proposed calling for the resignation of Minister of Training,

Colleges and Universities, Ross Romano and President of Laurentian University, President Robert Hache and his senior leadership team.

Whereas: The financial crisis facing Laurentian was created by the provincial government, which has chronically underfunded Ontario's universities, cut and frozen tuition fees without providing equivalent public funding. The provincial government and the senior leadership of President Robert Hache's administration at Laurentian have abandoned an important Northern Ontario university just when faculty, students and staff needed their support most.

Whereas: Minister Romano has repeatedly refused invitations to meet with representatives of OCUFA to discuss the situation at Laurentian and other challenges facing Ontario universities today.

Whereas: The Laurentian University administration chose to engage, with implicit approval from Minister Romano, in secretive, untransparent and inappropriate legal proceedings (using the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act - CCAA) that were imposed on faculty and staff without consultation.

Whereas: Laurentian faculty were also put in a position where they had little choice but to ratify changes to their collective agreement that will see salaries reduced, teaching loads increased, and forced furlough days. Due to use of the CCAA process, information about these changes was available to members less than 12 hours before they were required to vote to either accept concessions or risk having the university close completely.

Whereas: Amongst those who lost their jobs were 17 faculty members who chose retirement to ensure that as many of their colleagues as possible would keep their jobs.

BIRT: RFA, having lost confidence in the Minister's commitment to the university sector, as well as LU President Robert Hache's senior leadership team to lead the university through this crisis, calls for the resignation of the Minister of Colleges and Universities, Ross Romano, and President of Laurentian University, President Robert Hache, and his senior leadership team, in light of their catastrophic mishandling of the situation at LU.

Rationale:

On Monday, April 12 it was publicly revealed that 110 faculty members had lost their jobs and 69 programs (mostly in social sciences and humanities, leaving most STEM programs intact) have been cut at Laurentian University. These devastating cuts are the direct result of the negligence of both the Minister (who was aware of the financial challenges Laurentian was facing at least six months before they became public) and LUs senior administration. The Minister has chosen not to support Laurentian University and its students, faculty, or community. Minister Romano has demonstrated the same resistance to consultation, transparency, and accountability as the Laurentian U administration throughout this debacle. Romano has made numerous announcements regarding the postsecondary education sector without consulting faculty, academic librarians, staff, or students. The above constitute an egregious mishandling of the

situation at LU by both the Minister and senior administrators at the university.

Carried (Mason/Hart)

In addition, the following motion was also proposed:

BIRT that a letter be sent to Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) calling on CAUT to officially challenge the use of the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) particularly in the case of public institutions, and also to revoke the use of the Act at all.

Carried (Mason/Ceh)

f. Negotiations (Ceh)

An interest arbitration session was held on April 10. Following that session, the Arbitrator issued an interim Award containing a retirement incentive that is to be offered subject to approval by the Ontario Treasury Board. An RFA information session on the retirement incentive plan is to be held on May 07 following the RFA AGM.

A second interest arbitration session was held on April 18 2021

g. Health and Safety (Bougherara)

It was reported that Pitman Hall was experiencing a Covid outbreak with 11 cases identified.

i. Professional Affairs (Berman)

The Awards submissions will be reviewed and voted on at the Executive Meeting on April 27 2020.

j. Equity (Pine)

A forum is to be held on the name of the University - information will be circulated

Information has been provided by Asian faculty members who are experiencing harassment by students

6. Items for Discussion

a. Winter Grade Deadline

Concerns have been expressed by members that the May 07 grade deadline may be too oppressive for students and faculty due to Covid conditions. It was decided to raise this with the office of the VPFA and suggest an extension be granted and

failing that, that advice be offered to faculty members as to how to navigate missed deadlines

b. Use of FCS/SET/SFT in OCUFA Teaching Award Submissions

The Executive re-affirms its position and the motion that was passed at the March 09 Executive meeting asking OCUFA not to request or accept, SETs (Student Evaluations of Teaching) as a measure of a faculty member's teaching proficiency for purposes of any OCUFA award. OCUFA was to be informed of this and every effort is to be made to have this included as an agenda item at the next OCUFA Board meeting.

7. Adjournment (1:00 PM)