

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE
ADMINISTRATION OF THE AGREEMENT
(JCOAA)

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD

October 24, 2017

390 York Lanes

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Association: Robert Tordoff (Co-Chair), Nick Mulé, Richard Wellen, Sheila Embleton, Sonja Killoran-McKibbin

Employer: Leanne De Filippis (Co-Chair), Alice Pitt, Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt, Ananya Mukherjee-Reed, Noura Shaw

Chair: Rob Tordoff

Guest: Teresa DuCroix

Regrets: Alidad Amirfazli, Paula Wilson

Minutes

Minutes of the January – May and September 2017 meetings have been approved by the parties. The June and October (2nd) 2017 minutes remain outstanding.

Teaching Load Documents

The Employer is following up on two items:

1. The March 15th, 2017 teaching load document; and
2. Whether all units in the Faculty of Science have been asked by the Dean's Office to review their workload documents.

The Association stated that its concern extends beyond the Department of Chemistry and indicated that if it is true that all the other units are also revisiting and revising their workload documents, it finds it unconvincing that this exercise is being conducted in a purely collegial manner with no impetus or direction from the Dean's Office. The Association further identified that there is no record of a course release in the March 15 teaching load reports, so in the Association's view, the document represents an alteration in the normal load.

The Association also stated that it has been approached by Chairs from other Faculties about this exercise and that the concern is not limited to the Faculty of Science.

The Employer indicated that it would follow up.

Home Internet

The Employer shared an electronic copy of the communication regarding reimbursement for faculty members of home internet usage with the Association (see attached). The Employer also referenced the following points from the communication:

1. Retroactive reimbursement for home internet charges to January 1, 2017;
2. Up to 50% reimbursement based on faculty member making a reasonable allocation of home internet use for personal and professional responsibilities and claiming only that portion relating to professional responsibilities;
3. that claims for January 1, 2017 to September 30, 2017 be submitted before December 31, 2017; and
4. Claims thereafter be submitted no more frequently than quarterly.

The Association identified that the parties agreed that members could claim over 50% in exceptional circumstances. The Employer addressed the concept of exceptional circumstances by reference to the deviation section in the procedure, and noted that any deviations from the procedure must be approved by the Dean/Principal/AVP, with a written rationale.

The Employer also noted there is provision with respect to timelines in the general procedures for reimbursement of expenses and for PER it is fifteen (15) months.

Prescription Drug Coverage

The parties met on October 19th, 2017 to review and discuss the drug card administration. T. Ducharme, Associate Director, Pension and Benefits and D. Coward, AVP, HR were also in attendance. T. Ducharme and D. Coward will follow up with the committee members in response to items raised as a result of the discussion.

One of the issues identified was whether faculty members who prefer brand name drugs be dispensed could do so without the prescription from the physician indicating “no generic substitutions”. The Association stated that at the time the decision was made to move to a drug card, it was assured that there would be no changes in the operation of the plan. The Employer agreed that there was discussion between the parties about no changes being made save for the requirement for prescription drugs to indicate no generic substitution but indicated it is exploring means of responding to the concerns.

Academic Freedom in Grant Applications

The Association stated that it wished for clarification regarding the circumstances under which alterations are made by the Dean's office. The Association noted that although this only happened to one individual in one Faculty that it felt that this is an indication of a practice.

The Employer noted that this was a one-time occurrence and, as such, should not be seen as an indication of practice. The Employer also stated that in the case in question, the Dean apologized for the error and specifically noted that what had occurred is not normal practice.

The committee members discussed what might be a reasonable action taken if an error was spotted on a grant application by the Dean's Office, shortly before a deadline. The parties agreed that faculty members should be notified in advance. Discussion ensued as to what might be reasonable in a case where the Employer could not get a hold of the faculty member before the submission deadline.

One of the Association's caucus members stated that it is conceivable that an error could be discovered in a grant application very close to a deadline and stated that if the decision is between fixing the error and not submitting the application, that the error should be fixed but the faculty member be notified immediately.

The same caucus member noted that in the case in question, the perceived error was a budgetary issue and because of the change that was made to the grant by the Dean's Office, the amount granted to the faculty member was less than what had been originally requested. In the end, the Dean's Office noted that the change was made in error and the faculty member was made whole.

The Association agreed that it would understand if a change was made to a grant application if there were clear errors. However, it would not agree to a practice of Deans' Offices making substantive changes to grant applications of individual faculty members. The Association further noted that it considers the alteration of the amount of a grant as a substantive change. The Employer confirmed that there is no practice of altering grant applications. One representative of the Employer identified that Research Officers should consult with members if errors are identified but if such consultation was not possible, the item of concern should stay in the application and the granting agency could address it.

CRC Equity Program and Changes to JCAA Training and Reporting

The Association thanked the Employer for sharing the AA training schedule. The Employer noted that there will be an opportunity to have the Co-Chairs' committee review the draft plan.

The Association stated that it would like some of its representatives to participate in the

training to see whether there are issues that it might wish to address. The Employer agreed to the Association's request.

Equity Reporting Data, Self-ID Survey and Gender Gap Analysis

The Employer informed the Association that it is working on the equity report and that it will be shared with the Association on November 1, 2017.

The Employer noted that an email reminder regarding the self-id survey had gone out. The committee is looking at sending a reminder to the community about the survey as well. The Association queried what the response rate is at currently, and the Employer noted that it would follow up.

The Employer informed the Association that OIPA is reviewing the data relating to the gender gap analysis and will follow up with the JCOAA before the end of the fall term.

Indigenous Hiring Incentive Program

The Employer stated that it would send the report via email and noted that the "call" this year was embedded in the regular "call".

CV Call Exercise

The Association outlined a number of concerns regarding the CV call. It noted that although concerns were raised last year, it appears that the precise language that was at issue last time has been used again.

The Association and the Employer agree that faculty members are *not required* to highlight changes in their CVs or to produce executive summaries, but may be invited to do so by the Dean / Principal. The Association also raised concerns about the Dean's review and feedback identified in the call and pointed to the agreement of the parties that this exercise is not a performance review. The Association also noted concerns with the short deadline provided for the CV submission and suggested that it might be helpful to regularize the calendar date for the CV Call and to standardize the language in which it is made.

Notwithstanding the above, the parties agreed that if faculty members want to highlight the changes in their CVs or to provide executive summaries, they could do so on a voluntary basis.

The Employer agreed that it would be beneficial to have agreement on a timeline and letter and stated that it would follow up on the concerns raised.

GA and RA Rates for Research Budgets

The Employer provided a memo indicating GA rates but the Association queries whether it reflected rates for the incoming year. The Employer will follow up on the following:

1. GA rates and how changes to GA and the timing of making such changes affects faculty members;
2. To whom the memo was distributed and the dates when it was published and posted; and
3. The graduate student funding model in Lassonde with special reference to RA rates and graduate fellowship funding.

Joint Health and Safety Committees (T. DuCroix, Director, Health, Safety and Employee Well-Being)

A report on the results of the Joint Health and Safety Committee review was shared with the committee. T. DuCroix walked the committee through the report, with a focus on the analysis, findings and recommendations sections.

T. DuCroix noted that the Employer has the vision of working together with all stakeholders and of creating a future together. The Employer will be forming a change team and requested that the Association provide the name of an individual it wishes to act as its representative. The goal is to move from a union based committee structure to one that is 'area' and 'hazard' based, which would be based around individual buildings. This would require representation from different employee groups on the various committees.

The Association raised concerns about the implications of the shift for shared spaces and the challenges of identifying who would be responsible for Health and Safety costs. T. DuCroix indicated that the issue would not be any worse under the new structure than in the current structure. The Association raised concerns about how the new model would address Health and Safety issues, such as mental health concerns and harassment, that aren't based on physical structures but that may be most relevant to particular employee groups. T. DuCroix acknowledged that there would be challenges with the new structure and there may need to be opportunities to address specific union concerns or workplace-based considerations.

Transit Update

The opening date for the York University subway station will be December 17, 2017. After this date TTC buses will be routed through the Pioneer Village subway station. The remaining transit companies will remain on campus, until further notice. The shuttle for the station on the Barrie GO train line will also continue for the time being.

Notwithstanding this, the future goal is to have no transit services in the commons. The vision is to use the commons area for the York community. The Association raised a concern about the traffic and pedestrian flows on Vanier Lane (north of Kaneff and the York Lanes parking garage), and how dangerous it can be especially in the dark.