

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE
ADMINISTRATION OF THE AGREEMENT
(JCOAA)

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD

December 12, 2014

390 York Lanes

1:00-3:00 p.m.

Association: Miriam Smith (Co-Chair), Alidad Amirfazli, Frances Latchford, Kean Birch, Richard Wellen, Sheila Embleton, Kristin Skinner

Employer: Barry Miller (Co-Chair), Alice Pitt, Harvey Skinner, Rhonda Lenton, John Belton

Chair: Barry Miller

Regrets: Andrea Harrington

Minutes

Review and acceptance of Agenda

Review of November 12, 2014 Minutes

The Minutes were approved subject to amendments *(to be forwarded by the Association)*

JCOAA

Pan Am Games

The Employer noted that it provided a presentation on the Pan Am Games (Pan Am/Parapan Am Games at York University Summer 2015) to the Association through the YUFA JCOAA Co-Chairs. The Employer indicated that as shown in the presentation, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Association asked for clarification of whether the details on a security perimeter are to be treated as confidential information. The Employer confirmed that details of the security perimeter and security corridors are considered confidential at this point given that planning and consultations are still underway. The Association asked whether the University had input regarding the location of the security perimeter, and the Employer indicated that it would follow up on the process by which the security perimeter was established.

The Employer reported that an operations committee for the Games will shift its focus to institutional/campus issues starting in January.

The Association asked whether consideration will be given to accessibility in determining alternate parking arrangements for employees whose regular lots will be affected during the Games. The Employer indicated that it will follow up.

E-Learning

The Employer reported that additional supplementary documents are being prepared to accompany the proposed licensing options and process for inclusion of courses in Faculty course repositories provided to the Association. It was agreed that this item would be discussed in the New Year after the additional documentation is provided.

From a preliminary review of the material, the Association expressed concern that it appears that faculty authors are not afforded an option by which consent would be required for each use of materials housed in the Faculty course repository (FCR). The Association also raised the question of whether there is a trend toward tying experiential learning initiatives and other course development initiatives to FCRs. The Employer indicated that it will follow up on the two issues.

Concur

The Employer updated the Association by informing them that a document will soon be completed that clarifies the claim approval steps with Concur and, additionally, will also contain a hyperlink to information on privacy issues, including a description of the process for a privacy impact assessment that was undertaken. The intent is for the information to serve as a helpful resource for faculty who desire further clarity on privacy issues relating to Concur. The Association queried whether a privacy impact assessment is a standard process undertaken by the University in the case of major initiatives such as Concur; the Employer noted that it is. The Association queried whether there could be input from the Association on privacy impact assessments that affect members of the Association and noted that it views itself as a stakeholder in this process.

Inclusivity and Diversity

The Employer indicated that it was preparing a memo to respond more broadly to the Taskforce Report recommendations and updated the Association on initiatives relating to the Taskforce Report recommendations that it is undertaking. The Employer reported that unit Affirmative Action Plans are currently accessible through YU Link and that a memo will be provided to Units to advise of the availability of the Plans. This initiative is intended to promote the sharing of best practices. The Employer noted its initiative to develop an institutional strategy in regard to aboriginal scholars and its plan to expand the Employment Equity Self-Identification Survey to include an LGBTQ question. The Association indicated that it was pleased to hear about the strategy regarding aboriginal scholars and that it would like to see a similar institutional approach across all equity seeking groups. The Association further indicated that welcomes the Employer's memo providing a written response to the Taskforce Report recommendations and indicated that it was encouraged by the discussion. The Association indicated that it remains hopeful that the Employer will ensure that further initiatives will expand beyond equity issues that crystallize at the point of hire and, more generally, address the retention and support of AA hires following appointment and other concerns that impact on all equity seeking groups. The Employer stated its expectation that there will be multiple avenues for further discussion.

JCAA Report

The Employer noted that the data in the revised annual JCAA report for 2013-14 encompasses the four AA categories and is broken down for units with 10 or more faculty.

Provostial Guidelines on Use of Online and Digital Materials

The Association reiterated its concern about the memo's encouragement of faculty to work directly with publishers on making materials accessible to students. The Employer informed the Association that their concerns were taken back for discussion by members of a work group on e-learning convened by the Associate Vice President Teaching and Learning. A question was raised about the basis for stated percentage limit on the assessment component of digital materials, and concern was expressed that the process by which faculty may seek exceptions to the guidelines be timely.

Research Release Program

The Association requested a report on the number of applicants for research releases under the Article 18.15 research release program and the number of recipients of the awards. The Association also requested a copy of each of the calls from the Deans in the participating Faculties announcing the exercise. The Employer indicated that it will follow up to provide the requested information.

AODA

The Employer informed the Association that the AODA Integrated Stand Brochure distributed in advance of the meeting is intended as an institutional resource to provide supportive information regarding the Integrated Standard under the AODA. The Association suggested that the Employer consider replacing the current photograph on the cover of the document, as it is not suggestive of accessibility, and noted that the brochure provides no information for YUFA members who themselves require accommodation. The Association requested the inclusion of a link to information on how its members can access accommodation and sufficient support from the Employer to assist members in facilitating the observance of the AODA.

Class taping as accommodation

The Employer will follow up with Counselling and Development Services on the content of accommodation letters and waivers relating to the taping of lectures.

LRP

Provost and Vice President Academic Rhonda Lenton attended for discussion of the LRP agenda items.

New Budgeting Model (SHARP)

The Provost reported that SHARP should be completed early in the new year. The Provost noted that a few outstanding issues remain and that 2013-14 numbers have still not been run. The Association indicated its desire for its FISC caucus to attend the LRP meeting when SHARP is reviewed, and the Employer indicated that it was fine with FISC caucus attendance and that there was a practice of inviting a wider number of participants than the JCOAA/LRP members for budget discussions.

Academic and Administrative Program Review

The Association expressed concerns about the effects of the AAPR process on equity seeking members, based on the concentration of programs in the lower left quadrant of the scatter graphs contained in the academic report. The Employer indicated that the positioning of “lower left” should not be interpreted to imply an inevitable outcome for programs. The positioning in the scatter graph may be an indication of identifiable issues (e.g., insufficient resourcing, declining enrollment, alignment with York’s academic plan) and can serve as an additional lens for discussion, collaboration, and problem solving. The Provost also noted that position on the scatter graph should not be interpreted as an absolute assessment but as an assessment of programs relevant to each other.

The Association noted that while the AAPR report serves as a tool or a lens, equity considerations provide another lens and it will be important for the process of developing the Institutional Strategic Directions Document to take equity into consideration. The Employer indicated that it would give thought to including equity as a factor for consideration in guidelines to the Faculties for the development of their responses. The Association noted that this would be a positive step and highlighted that it will be important to convey that considerations of equity are not at odds with York’s goals.

The Association expressed a concern that the results of the AAPR Academic Report show that smaller programs tend to be positioned in the lower left of the scatter graph, suggesting that the University desires fewer small programs. The concern was raised that a diminution in the number of smaller programs could lead to a reduction in the number of programs addressing equity issues. The Association expressed the concern that this would have a disproportionate impact on equity-seeking members, given the degree to which such members populate such programs. The Employer indicated that it is important to distinguish between high quality and innovative programs and programs that appear to have lost their way or purpose, some of which have no or very few majors. It is also important to distinguish between cases in which smaller program size indicates that the program is facing difficulties and cases in which smaller program size does not provide such an indication; certain small programs address particular niches. The Employer conveyed that there is no existing directive to eliminate small programs; academic planning is expected to drive decision making.

The Association identified 5 specific issues regarding the AAPR:

1. The Association queried whether the Employer had issued a memo to Deans that directed them to refrain from requesting confidentiality in discussions with chairs and directors regarding the AAPR and development of the Institutional Strategic Directions Document (ISDD). The Employer confirmed that at the Deans’ meeting next following the November JCOAA meeting, the Provost addressed the issue of confidentiality with the Deans, indicating that they should not be requesting confidentiality in their discussions with chairs and directors regarding the AAPR and ISDD. The Association indicated that it would be helpful to communicate that the process for development of unit and Faculty responses to feed into the ISDD should involve open and collegial discussions. The Provost indicated that a document was being prepared to provide guidance for Faculty responses that will convey an expectation that the development of responses will involve collegial input. The Association indicated that it will be helpful if the document could make specific reference to the expectation for “open discussion.”

2. The Association suggested that AARP be replaced with ISDD/AAPR as the topic heading in future LRP agendas. The Employer agreed with the suggestion to reflect that the AARP itself was concluded with issuance of the Task Force reports and that the focus now is on the development of responses to provide the basis for the ISDD.
3. The Association sought clarification on what components of the ISDD will require approval by the Senate. The Employer indicated that the ISDD will combine academic and administrative strategic recommendations and that the academic component of the ISDD will come forward to Senate for approval in principle. The Association queried whether the ISDD will set the strategic direction of the University. The Employer responded in the negative, indicating that the ISDD does not replace the University Academic Plan. In response to the question of what the purpose of the ISDD is, if not to set the strategic direction of the University, the Employer indicated that it views the ISDD as akin to an institutional Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), whose purpose is to operationalize the University's academic planning in a sustainable way.
4. The Association clarified that it reserves all rights under the collective agreement in any matters that may emerge from the ISDD, on the same basis as its stated position regarding the AAPR, expressed at the September 26, 2014 meeting of the JCOAA.
5. The Association requested that it receive a copy of the document intended to provide guidance on the development of responses for the ISDD document.

New Campus

The Association began by requesting detail on the consultations that occurred with units in the development of the list of academic programs included in the University's new campus proposal. The Association indicated that it had concerns about the degree of unit and collegial input in the process and its implications for academic freedom. It also expressed concern about the relationship between the academic programs proposed for the new campus and the programs offered by "cognate" units on the Keele campus. The Employer indicated that it will ask Deans to provide a summary of the consultations that were undertaken and report back to the Association. As conveyed at the previous LRP meeting, the Provost indicated that she asked the Deans to speak with units regarding possible interest in developing programs for the new campus and asked them to appoint a representative to a committee chaired by the Vice Provost Academic. The Provost further indicated that the programs identified in the new campus submission should be viewed as an aspirational framework proposal and that the actual programs on the new campus, if approved, could vary from those identified in the submission.

In response to the issue of the relationship between programs proposed for the new campus and existing York programs, the Provost indicated that selection of programs for the new campus will be guided by the principles that (a) they are new programs or (b) if they are offered on the Keele campus they are programs with unmet demand on the Keele campus.

The Employer had no update to share in regard to the status of the University's proposal.

The Association indicated that in the event that the new campus is approved, it will look for plans from the Employer for timely, good faith consultations. The Employer agreed on the importance of timely, proactive consultations both at the collegial level and through LRP. The Association also indicated that it reserves all rights with respect to the establishment of a new campus.