

# MCMASTER UNIVERSITY AND MUALA LABOUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 6, 2011

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Mills L-206

**Representing MUALA:** Nick Ruest, Laura Banfield

**Representing the University:** Jeff Trzeciak (Meeting Chair), Liz Bayley, Dale Askey

**Administrative Support:** Melanie Garaffa

## NOTES

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1. **Ground Rules for the Labour Management Committee (LMC):**

**Chair:** Nick Ruest will serve as the co-chair for MUALA. Co-chairs will chair alternate meetings.

**Meeting Documents:** Library HR Consultant will serve as administrative support to the Committee, and will prepare the agenda and meeting notes. Reasonable efforts will be made by both Parties to provide background information or a contextual summary as they relate to each agenda item in advance of the meeting to facilitate an informed discussion.

**Communication:** The Committee, when it reaches a decision to make a recommendation, will forward such recommendation to their respective principles. Where further discussion on issues raised at meetings is necessary with parties other than Committee members, the Committee will agree on what issues will be discussed and with whom the discussion will take place.

**Mandate:** the mandate of the LMC as laid out in Article 29.01 of the Collective Agreement is to “review matters of concern arising from the application of this Agreement, but will not discuss any matter related to the specifics of a current grievance.” Therefore it serves as a vehicle for joint discussion and consultation and exploration of possible solutions to mutual problems and concerns as they relate to the collective agreement. In addition, the LMC can serve as a legitimate but not required step in resolving issues that might otherwise lead to formal grievances.

2. **Instruction and Workload:**

MUALA raised concerns about the communication around the changes in instruction workload for some of its members. In particular, there was confusion around expectations and priorities, especially in instances when position responsibilities had changed significantly with the new blended learning model. MUALA is also seeking clarification for those for whom their job hasn't changed significantly, but their teaching load has.

MUALA also asked for clarification on the status of the liaison/21st Century Fluencies program, and proposed a meeting between library administration and MUALA members to clear up any misunderstandings, and move forward with messages to the McMaster community.

The University stated that instruction remains a priority. The fall of 2011 will be a transition period for all librarians as Blended Learning is implemented and evaluated. Supervisors will take this into account when completing the 2011-2012 goals with MUALA members.

**ACTION:** In order to get a higher level uniform message about expectations, Jeff Trzeciak will discuss this issue with the Library Leadership Team at the September 7 meeting and get back to MUALA with suggestions.

3. **Professional Service and Activity Equity**

MUALA expressed concerns around goal setting for the Professional Service and Activity components of Part 2 of the Annual Activity Report. There is no clear explanation of the level of expectation for activity and service, particularly for librarians at different levels. MUALA proposed members meeting with supervisors more regularly to check-in with goals, and update goals if required. The rationale being that it would add more transparency to the performance review process in the spring, members would have a better understanding of where they are at, and that there would be no surprises at the end of the performance review process.

The University agreed that there needed to be consistency and that there should be no surprises at the end of the year when achievement of goals was evaluated.

**ACTION:** Jeff Trzeciak will meet with the leadership team to discuss performance and goal setting in order to establish consistency in application. Liz Bayley will be invited to these meetings so as to maintain alignment between the UL and HSL.

4. **Morale**

MUALA expressed concern about the extremely low morale among its members. The major issues raised were the events leading up to unionization, the departure of talent from the University Library, poor communication in general from University Library administration, the physical and emotional demeanor of University Library MUALA members, the lack of recognition of the role of its members and the damage to McMaster's reputation.

The University acknowledged the morale problem, and pointed out that both sides needed to work on solutions. By soliciting constructive ideas from MUALA members on how to improve morale, there is an opportunity to build a productive dialogue between MUALA members and Library Leadership.

Jeff Trzeciak stated that he is committed to rebuilding the relationship between librarians and leadership. Jeff Trzeciak asked how it would be perceived if he offered to meet with all MUALA librarians individually in an attempt to break down the communication barriers and provide information about the direction of the library. The purpose of the meeting would be for MUALA members to offer suggestions on how to improve morale and reduce communication breakdowns.

**ACTION:** Nick Ruest would bring forward to MUALA members the offer from Jeff Trzeciak to meet with individual librarians as an attempt to start rebuilding trust and discuss strategies for improving morale and communication. Nick Ruest will also solicit ideas to improve morale from the MUALA membership. Jeff Trzeciak will await Nick Ruest's response.

5. **Article 2 – Recognition and Article 22 – Appointment and Promotion**

**ACTION:** Both parties agreed to defer this agenda item to the next meeting.

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, November 22, 10:00 am -12:00 pm. Chair: Nick Ruest**