



# Annual Report 2019/2020

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## President's Report

I am pleased to present the 2020 Annual Report for the University of Waterloo Staff Association (UWSA) on behalf of your Board of Directors. Your 2020 Board consisted of Kathy Becker (President-Elect), Michael Herz (Past President), Lawrence Folland (President), Annette Dietrich (Secretary), Jane Arnem (Treasure), Agata Antkiewicz, Bill Baer, Dave McDougall, and Christine Wagner. I thank them all for their service and dedication to the UWSA and to improving work conditions for staff at the University of Waterloo.

We have two excellent staff in the UWSA. Gail Spencer is our Executive Manager and handles the bulk of our advocacy work. She shows tremendous skill and empathy in supporting our members. Gail is intimately familiar with the UW systems and policies that are required to facilitate this work. Catherine Bolger is our Communications & Administrative Coordinator. Catherine handles so much of the communications with our staff, including social media, as well as all of the myriad tasks that need attending to in running an organization as busy as ours! We couldn't do it without the two of you!

This, of course, has been a very different year for all of us due to the impact of the pandemic. There has been a lot of uncertainty amongst staff including issues of having to remain on campus at the beginning of the pandemic, concerns about the safe return to work as we start into the Fall term, working from home with family responsibilities, concerns about job security in an uncertain financial situation for the University, health concerns – both physical and mental, equipment and ergonomic concerns when working at home and many others. This has been both a challenge and an opportunity to work with and help our staff navigate the systems of the University and seek clarification from the administration. This has also been challenging for the administration as there just hasn't been any recent precedent for this situation.

Staff, faculty, CUPE and the administration managed to pivot the University from in-person to online courses within a couple of weeks and keep the University operating. This has been an incredible accomplishment of which we should all be proud! We have, for the most part, kept all staff employed as we've moved into the Spring and now Fall terms. I am very grateful for that.

Another important issue that came to the forefront this year was that of systemic racism. While the events in the United States brought that into sharp focus, we are reminded that this is a long-standing issue that needs to be addressed here as well. The Board, individually and collectively, have been educating ourselves on the issues and working on ways to improve equity, diversity and inclusivity within our Board and for our members. We have committed to having regular self-education sessions within our Board meetings. There is much more work to be done.

We have also, as a Board, been examining our governance structures. Are we structured properly to deliver on our mission, vision and values? Are those even up-to-date? These are amongst the questions we have been asking and exploring. We are working towards putting together a proposed set of changes to take to the membership for review and, hopefully, approval.

We continue moving through on the work of revising our Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) . While this has been ongoing for quite some time, we feel that we are getting close to a conclusion. Unfortunately, with the onset of Covid, this did go on the back-burner for a while, but is now back in full swing and we hope to have an agreement to take to our membership in the near future. Once we do,

we will have full information sharing sessions to answer any questions and address any concerns you may have.

Another on-going process is that of policy revision. Some major policies have been under review and required a lot of time from the members of the respective policy drafting committees (PDCs), the UWSA and FAUW Boards and the administration. Some highlights are Policy 33 – Ethical Behaviour, Policy 14 – Pregnancy and Parental Leaves, and Policy 57 – Accommodation. We are looking forward to the positive changes these revised policies will have on the workplace for all employees at UW. I know many staff have struggled with issues of child care while working from home or helping elderly parents. I, myself, have had to recently handle helping my elderly mother through serious health concerns during this pandemic. An upcoming policy that we will be working on is that of Compassionate Care leaves. I'm sure this will be of great importance to many employees.

I meet regularly with senior members of the administration, in particular the Provost, Dr. James Rush and Associate Provost Human Resources, Marilyn Thompson. This affords a great opportunity to bring the concerns of staff directly to decision makers on campus. This has been particularly important as we all worked through the pandemic planning. I have definitely seen our concerns taken into account and changes made. I have been very appreciative of that and let them know. Where there are still issues of concern, I have been able to let them know that, too. All-in-all, I think we have a solid line of communication with the administration.

I have been very pleased with the great work of our Area Reps committee led by Lisa Habel, Steve Bradley and Jennifer Morgan. They have ensured that we have had great speakers and informative sessions. While we've allowed for remote access for a couple of years now, the move to completely online has greatly increased the participation rate for many of our members. We have been having an attendance of upwards of 90 people at those meetings! We are definitely encouraged to continue with this format into the foreseeable future.

This has been a year of tremendous learning and growth for me personally. As Staff Association President it has been my privilege and duty to become more informed on so many issues and to be involved in a wide variety of committees on campus, including the Sexual Violence Task Force, Copyright Advisory Committee, Staff Relations Committee, Provost's Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation, President's Award for Exceptional Service Committee, as well as a number of internal UWSA committees – Governance Committee, IT Review, Pension and Benefits and Staff Compensation, Transportation and Commuting Working Group, and the MoA committee. I have taken courses on a broad spectrum of topics including Developing Equity-Informed Leadership, Unconscious Bias, Indigenization in STEM, Board Governance, Governing in Uncertain Times, Designing Virtual Meetings, Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence and Verbal De-Escalation and Crisis Intervention.

The job of President is demanding but very rewarding. There are many initiatives that I would like to have spent more time on but the demands of the day-to-day operations of the UWSA don't always allow for that. Certainly, there are projects that I will continue working with as I move to the role of Past-President. This year I have worked a lot with our incoming President-Elect, Kathy Becker. I have been very impressed with Kathy's skills, knowledge and empathy. I believe she will be an excellent President for 2020-2021. I do hope you all give her the same support and positive feedback that I have received over the year.

Sincerely,  
Lawrence Folland, President, University of Waterloo Staff Association

### Treasurer's report

The official Financial Statement for the fiscal year May 1, 2019 to April 30, 2020, prepared by the accounting firm HFK McRae & Wilson LLP, is included with the agenda package. It shows that the UWSA once again had a modest surplus from activities in the year.

I am pleased to report that the financial state of the UWSA is good standing. UWSA is working hard to provide services in a creative way to its members during these less than normal times we are in.

Jane Arnem  
Treasurer, UWSA

## UWSA Standing Committee Reports

### Area Representatives

The Area Representatives Committee (Area Reps) provides a conduit for the exchange of information between staff and the UWSA Board of Directors. All staff are welcome.

The monthly 1-hour meetings provide opportunity for constructive communication, learning opportunities about resources and workplace changes, COVID-19-related information and discussions, and other information relevant to the UW workplace.

Area Reps have a safe arena whereby they can express issues staff in their units are facing and openly discuss and/or call the UWSA President to action. For this reason, earlier changes to the Area Reps Policy included the designation of a Chair, and Vice-Chair appointed from among themselves, by themselves.

The term in office would normally begin in November as well as the positions of Secretary and Programmer.

I would like to acknowledge the work of Jennifer Morgan (Secretary) and Steve Bradley (Programmer) for their service to the Area Reps Committee. Thank you!

Thanks to all of our area reps, listed below, with special thanks extended to the members of the outreach committee.

Thank you to Catherine Bolger, who at times is our recording secretary and for preparations for the meetings.

### Area Rep Program Subcommittee

A Program subcommittee of the Area Reps Committee was formed in March 2016. This year the organization and coordination work was performed by Steve Bradley. The mission of this subcommittee is to "engage staff by providing relevant, quality topics of interest." Speakers from various departments and areas across campus are invited to the monthly Areas Reps meetings to present and engage in dialogue and Q&A with staff. All staff and new UWSA/area rep members are welcome to join, and suggestions for presenters are welcome from all members.

Speakers so far this year have been:

- Nancy Heide, Director, The Centre (Student Service Centre)
- UW President Feridun Hamdullahpur
- Tony Frost, Associate Vice-President, Marketing and Strategic Initiatives
- Michelle Hollis, Director of HR Client Services
- Dr. James Rush, Vice-president Academic and Provost

## Area Representatives Members

In 2019-20, there were 66 active area reps, with 4 new members added, who have been highlighted in the list below:

Area Rep Name	Department
Agata Antkiewica	Games Institute
Amanda Pickett	CECA - Cooperative Education & Career Services
Andrew Urschel	Sedra Student Design Centre
Angela Rooke	GSPA
Annette Dietrich	Dean of Engineering Office
Bill Baer	Information Systems & Technology
Brigitte Schneebeli	Classical Studies
Brigitte Schneebeli	Spanish & Latin American Studies
Camille Graham	Sociology & Legal Studies
Cathy Logan-Dickie	Chemical Engineering
Cathy Logan-Dickie	Computer Science Dept
Charles Boyle	Engineering Machine Shop
Cheryl Soulliere	Biology
Christine Wagner	Procurement & Contract Services
Colleen Mechler	Chemical Engineering
Danielle Jeanneault	Registrar's Office
Dave McDougall	Federation Of Students
Doug Dye	Safety Office
Ed Chrzanowski	Computer Science Computing Facility
Jackie Leach	Systems Design & Engineering
Jane Arnem	Athletics & Recreation
Jason Gorrie	Information Systems & Technology
Jennifer Morgan	Waterloo International
Jennifer Doucet	Anthropology
Jenny Conroy	English Language & Literature
John Fedy	Organizational & Human Development
Juli-Ann Sannuto	Dean of Arts
Karin Staley	Fine Arts
Karen Browne	Office of Advancement
Kathleen St. Laurent	French Studies
Kathy Becker	Engineering
Kathy Smyth	CEL - Centre for Extended Learning
Katie Damphouse	FAUW - Faculty Association, University of Waterloo
Katy Wong-Francq	Office of Research
Laura McDonald	FAUW - Faculty Association, University of Waterloo

Lawrence Folland	Computer Science Computing Facility
Lillian Liao	School of Optometry
Lisa Habel	Electrical & Computer Engineering
Marcie Parrott	Co-operative and Experiential Education
Michael Herz	Mechanical & Mechatronics Engineering
Murray Zink	WatPD
Nicole Brandt	CECA - Cooperative Education & Career Services: Off-Campus
Paula-Ann Zahra	Print & Retail Solutions
Ricardo Rolon	Electrical & Computer Engineering
Rita Cherkewski	Dean of Arts
Robyn Landers	Applied Mathematics
Robyn Landers	Math Faculty of Computer Facility (MFCF)
Robyn Landers	Pure Mathematics
Sandra Groen	Science
Sarah Landy	Engineering
Shannon Taylor	CECA - Cooperative Education & Career Services
Shannon Taylor	Engineering Undergrad Office
Sheila McConnell	Political Science
Shelly Jordan	Psychology
Stacy Reda	Anthropology
Stefaniada Voichita	Library - Davis Centre
Stephanie Facca	CEE Services
Stephanie Filsinger	Office of Research
Steve Bradley	School of Pharmacy
Susan Oestreich	Office of VP Acad Provost
Tammy Neal	Psychology
Terry Labach	Information Systems & Technology
Tim Ireland	Library
Tracey McKee	Registrar's Office
Trish Van Berkel	Physics & Astronomy
Wes Stewart	Central Stores

## Area Rep Outreach Team

The team has not met as of yet, however 4 new members were welcomed/onboarded via email from Lisa Habel. However, only 2 had been able to attend in-person meetings before we moved to virtual. The goal is to reach out to all of the departments that are not represented.

Lisa Habel, Area Reps Chair

## Communications and Membership

The Communications and Membership Committee oversees communication with UWSA members and promotes awareness of membership benefits to University Support Staff.

**Committee projects for 2019-2020 were:**

## Communications

**UWSA banner:** Designed and invested in a banner for use at all UWSA events. Many thanks to Print Services and the UWSA Fundraising and Social Committee for making this concept a reality with a Bug banner model.

**UWSA website:** The website continues to be a place for UWSA updates on news, events, and many services for members such as: online committee application forms, scholarship and grant information, and our list of discounts and program partners in our community.

**UWSA Facebook:** UWSA continues to connect with our members via our Facebook page. We promote UWSA events, news, and stories. We have over 425 followers and continue to increase that engagement.

**UWSA Twitter:** We also keep members informed via our Twitter account: @UWStaffAssoc. Staff following us on Twitter hear about UWSA social events, services, grant recipients, speaker events, and issues of interest in the wider University of Waterloo community.

**UWSA Instagram:** This social media platform has been resurrected as another vehicle to reach our members.

**Blog:** This new website initiative creates avenues of communication from UWSA board directors to members. UWSA Blogs are accessible to the UWaterloo community through the Daily Bulletin.

**Monthly emails:** These Mailchimp emails are sent to members the first of each month, summarizing events, activities and opportunities for UWaterloo staff.

**Member survey:** A COVID-19 survey in May received 738 responses. Results were shared with members in July.

## Membership

**Membership form:** Working with HR, an online membership form was designed and created due to COVID-19 making a signature untenable.

**Staff leaves:** The UWSA board tasked this committee with clarifying how UWSA membership fees are treated when a member goes on leave. UWSA fees are not taken during unpaid leaves or periods of leave when an employee is receiving birth leave or top-up. UWSA fees will commence again when the member returns to work.

**UWSA member identifiers:** Membership cards have gone digital; 2020 membership cards were sent to membership in January.

**Committee Members:** Catherine Bolger (Chair), Dave McDougall, Annette Dietrich, Kathy Becker, Terry Labach

Catherine Bolger  
Communications and Administrative Coordinator

## Members' Advisory

The Members' Advisory Committee provides guidance and support for UWSA members navigating difficult workplace situations and University of Waterloo policies and procedures, both formally and informally. Sometimes, as a result of this work, Committee members provide recommendations to the Board of Directors to inform work done in various committees.

The Executive Manager's time is primarily used for staff advocacy. This year, the committee supported a total of 55 new UWSA member cases.

COVID-19 upended everyone's working life at UW, whether staff were suddenly working from home 100% of the time, or whether they were deemed essential and remained working on a very empty campus. Concerns were raised from parents of young children at home as well as more recently staff being asked to return to work with safety questions and concerns. We worked with staff and management to assist in sorting these issues where we could and advocated for more communication from the administration.

The Members' Advisory committee provided support and assistance to staff in addressing specific issues:

- Changes in job/contract conditions
- Probationary period extensions
- Navigating workplace leaves
- Job changes or loss due to department reorganizations
- Workplace accommodation requests and sick leave process
- Difficult work environments/difficult relationships/non-collegial conduct
- Workplace harassment
- Performance Improvement Plans and the broader performance management process, including progressive discipline
- Policy 36 Informal and Formal Dispute Resolution process
- Terminations
- Performance appraisal content and rating concerns
- Job description and job evaluation concerns
- Secondments
- Policy 33 complaint and investigation process
- Resignation exit interviews
- Policy interpretation and advocacy
- Workplace issues arising from mental health care
- Return to work following leaves
- Issues of returning to campus post COVID-19 work from home

The Executive Manager and the UWSA President supported and advocated for staff in a variety of ways; some of which were:

- Assisting staff with responses to workplace discipline
- Making referrals to and working with other on-campus service providers on behalf of staff,
- Supporting employees in meetings with supervisors where there is a dispute or discipline

- Informing managers and department heads of informal workplace issues needing attention
- Assisting staff with performance appraisal responses and advocacy for changes
- Helping staff communicate around conflict with their supervisor
- Helping with documentation for formal Policy 33 complaints and responses
- Helping with documentation for informal Policy 36 complaints and formal Tribunal preparation
- Supporting and advocating for staff on leaves
- Seeking labour relations legal advice for members
- Attending legal appointments with members
- Attending/supporting members through Policy 33 and 36 processes
- Managers seeking assistance for coaching staff and/or performance
- Helping contract staff members understand their rights and limitations under policy
- Assisting and bringing to light inconsistencies in departmental reorganizations
- Advocating for fairness and transparency for staff through formal policy processes

Early intervention is the best scenario and the UWSA will strive to reach out to line management when it is requested and there is a clear path to an appropriate, workable solution for both parties. The Executive Manager and UWSA President advocate regularly with Human Resources and at the Department Head, Secretariat, Associate Provost Human Resources, and Provost level when appropriate and necessary.

In June 2020, the Executive Manager presented a general summary of members' advisory cases to the Staff Relations Committee. Cases were categorized by types of issues raised by members with concerns about management actions or inactions being the highest reported category. The impact of these workplace situations on staff mental health was emphasized.

With the Members' Advisory committee members, President-elect, Past President, and President (at 100% release time) there is the capacity for the UWSA to support staff members in cases where both parties have requested UWSA member support, even where one party is a manager. Each person will be matched with a separate support person.

Committee Members: Gail Spencer (Chair), Lawrence Folland, Kathy Becker, Michael Herz.

## Nominating

The purpose of the Nominating Committee is to nominate and/or appoint UWSA members to committees:

- UW or UWSA Standing Committees
- UW or UWSA ad hoc Committees requiring staff representatives

The Committee meets to vet applications when a call for nominations has gone out to UWSA members requesting staff representatives on committees. We encourage all members to participate in committee work that is of interest as positions become available. The work of staff on University Committees and on UWSA business requires a variety of skills and experience that can complement and enhance their personal and professional development.

A sincere thank you to the following staff who served on UW and UWSA committees in 2019/20:

**Employee Assistance Program:** Monika Bothwell, Alternate: Ashley McKnight

**Joint Health & Safety (Main Campus):** Ryan Comfort, Paulina Cisneros, Ahmad Ghavami, Andrew Urschel, Melissa Holst.

**Joint Health & Safety (Architecture):** Sue Martin/Mike Syms

**Joint Health & Safety (Health Sciences Campus):** Terry Li, Monica Tudorancea

**Joint Health & Safety (Digital Media School in Stratford):** Sheri Macguire

**Advisory Committee Traffic Violations and Parking:** Judy Reidt

**UWSA appointed Dispute Resolution for USG:** Dave Logan, Sarah Landy, Heather Lang, Philip Demsey, Alannah Robinson, Ryan MacMillan

**Appeal Committee on Property Infractions:** Selena Santi

**UW Pension & Benefits:** Ted Bleaney, Michael Herz

**Pension Investment Committee:** Michael Herz

**Provost's Advisory Committee on Equity (PACE):** Sacha Geer

**Wellness Collaborative Advisory Committee:** Sue Fraser

**Healthy Workplace Steering Committee:** Sonya Walton/Kalpita Gaitonde

**UW Accessibility Committee:** Annette Denny

**UW Accommodation Committee:** Eric Jardin, Bill Baer

**Fundraising and Social Committee:** Catherine Bolger (Chair), Annette Dietrich, Lawrence Folland, Jane Arnem, Dave McDougall, Jessica Jordao, Carmen Peters, Paula Ann Zahra, Marcie Parrott, Nancy Sej, Kristen Deckert, Lew Fraser, Lisa Habel. Special thanks to our retirees who work with us to connect events to the UW Retirees Association: Sue Fraser, Dianne Foreman, Peggy Day, Rose Vogt

**Chief Returning Officer:** Joe Allen

**Staff Excellence Fund Committee:** Annette Dietrich (Chair), Jane Arnem, Kalpita Gaitonde, Melissa Potwarka, Dana Mohapl, Eric Jardin.

**Waterloo Women's Wednesday (W3) group:** Cassandra Bechard

**Transportation & Commuting Working Group:** Lawrence Folland, Angela Rooke, Lisa Brackenridge, Nadeem Lawji, Murray Zink.

As Chair of the **Nominating Committee**, I thank the following members of this committee for their service this year: Lauren Broderick, Dave Logan, Rebecca Wroe, Joe Allen, Jenny Conroy, Bill Baer.

Gail Spencer

## Fundraising & Social Committee

Committee members worked diligently throughout the year to provide activities and events that draw our members and their families together for social or philanthropic goals. This committee has grown in

both size and the number of events organized for members over the past several years. Even while we live in uncertain times socially, our committee has been meeting regularly during COVID-19 to brainstorm innovative events that can be held while following health regulations. Stay tuned.

### **Survey leads to new social events**

The committee reached out to members asking for suggestions for improving our event planning this year. As a result, it hosted:

- a private screening to see the movie “Frozen 2” on November 23, 2019 at Landmark Cinema.
- Reserved seating at a Titans’ Basketball game at the Kitchener Auditorium on March 8, 2020.
- Please note a planned trip to see a Blue Jay game in April, a production of “Chicago” in Stratford on April 25, and a second annual UWSA Picnic at Wonderland in June were all cancelled due to COVID-19 safety concerns.

### **Shopping trip to Erie, PN**

Following a two-year hiatus, 32 people boarded the bus for the weekend of November 8, 2019 for a shopping excursion. A survey following this event indicated all attendees thought this fun trip was well organized, and that they would support another trip in 2020. Unfortunately, COVID-19 does not allow for this event to take place in 2020.

### **26th Annual Craft Show and Sale**

Held November 28 and 29, 2019 in the Davis Centre, 22 vendors and silent auction donations raised over \$2,800 to UWaterloo student awards. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, all vendors have been notified there will be no craft show and sale on campus in 2020.

### **31st Annual Winterfest**

Thank-you to Santa and his 11 elves for hosting our Winterfest event on Sunday, December 1, 2019 for 200 participants, despite the stormy weather! Activities included skating at Columbia Icefields, crafts, and photographs with Santa. Special thanks to Melissa Holst who managed all the toys for this event and Bob Stemmler, aka Santa Claus. Five high school students helped make the day go smoother, while earning their volunteer hours. Winterfest in 2020 will look different, but we are hopeful Santa will join us on Sunday, December 6, 2020.

### **7<sup>h</sup> Annual Golf Social Tournament**

The golf course was booked, but due to COVID-19, the committee felt it was unsafe to host this annual event in July 2020.

### **Members**

Catherine Bolger (chair), Annette Dietrich, Lawrence Folland, Jane Arnem, Dave McDougall, Jessica Jordao, Carmen Peters, Paula Ann Zahra, Marcie Parrott, Nancy Sej, Kristen Deckert, Lew Fraser, Lisa Habel. Special thanks to our retirees who work with us to connect events to the UW Retirees Association: Sue Fraser, Dianne Foreman, Peggy Day, Rose Vogt.

Catherine Bolger, Communications and Administrative Coordinator

## Staff Enhancement Grant (SEG)

The purpose of the Staff Enhancement Grant (SEG) is to help cover the costs associated with the pursuit of personal development for staff for initiatives not related to job duties. The University of Waterloo Staff Association reviews applications and determines recipients for a Staff Enhancement Grant.

Applications are judged on the basis of the overall merit of the objectives, activities proposed, benefits to the individual, and benefits to the community. All UWSA members are eligible to apply for a SEG.

The Staff Enhancement Grant Committee is the group that reviews applications in detail and makes grant recommendations to the UWSA Board of Directors. There is a pre-determined individual limit of \$500.00. The annual budget allocation for this award is \$4000.00. Membership of this committee consists of a Chair and two Board members, appointed by the UWSA Board. Please see the [SEG Terms of Reference](#) for the committee and for fund information in general.

In 2019 some self-development projects funded were: a community recycling project, music lessons, and a beekeeping venture. Please see [all funds awarded](#) to staff members to see these and other very unique and interesting development opportunities this year.

Grant application due dates are June 1 and December 1 each year.

Committee Members: Gail Spencer (Chair), Agata Antkiewicz, and Jane Arnem.

## Governance Committee

The Governance committee was active this year. We examined the issue of “Governance” vs “Operations” to help clarify the difference between the work the Board should be doing versus that of the Operations team. Clarity in this area will help differentiate “who should be doing what” and where each person needs to focus their energies. This will also allow for better oversight by the Board over the work of the President and the Operations team. We have put together a proposal to reconsider some of the roles within the Board. We have consulted with governance experts at Capacity Canada to get their insight. We expect to come out with a concrete proposal in the next few months, including updates to the Constitution to provide a stronger governance model.

Lawrence Folland, President, University of Waterloo Staff Association

## IT Review

The IT Review committee has been meeting to discuss our IT practices within the UWSA. We reviewed the various pieces of information, determined their level of confidentiality and performed a risk assessment of each piece. We are currently investigating Case Management Software to better handle our cases for both efficiency and confidentiality. We have a proposed solution being considered and hope to have in place within the coming year.

Lawrence Folland, President, University of Waterloo Staff Association

## Pension Benefits & Staff Compensation subcommittee

The PB&SC committee meets to communicate with our Pension and Benefits representatives. This year, the P&B committee initiated a Holistic Benefits Review. We have had a lot of discussion with them as well as our counterparts in FAUW and CUPE to consider possible changes to our benefits plan. Talks are

ongoing while we consider what changes could be made and whether they would be to the advantage of our members.

Lawrence Folland, President, University of Waterloo Staff Association

## Excellence Canada

The University of Waterloo achieved Gold in Excellence Canada's Excellence, Innovation and Wellness Standard in November 2019. The UWSA President participated in the event to celebrate that achievement. While the Excellence Canada committee wrapped up its work, the information learned in the process will be used to inform leadership regarding any gaps and will be used to support the UW Strategic Plan.

## Transportation & Commuting Working Group

The TCWG had an enthusiastic beginning in November 2019 and then met several times until March when things changed drastically! This group had more applications to participate than any group in the past. During Covid the group did not meet, however we will be reconvening and considering some of the issues we had begun to explore, including parking costs, bike parking, visitor parking and signage, trails and paths, Ion train passes, shuttles and the Campus Master Plan.

Lawrence Folland, President, University of Waterloo Staff Association

## University of Waterloo Committee Reports

### Staff Relations Committee (SRC)

The Staff Relations Committee (SRC) is our primary forum for discussing staff and employment issues with the University's senior administration. Over the last year, we have held eight meetings, with one remaining before year-end and after the writing of this report. This is an increase from previous year however still below the usually ten (10) scheduled meetings. Each meeting has included an open forum, where all staff may join to listen and learn about issues related to staff on campus. This is followed by a closed session, open only to the active committee members, where confidential discussions occur.

Membership of the Staff Relations Committee (SRC) includes UWSA Directors, one member at large, and UW administration appointed members, as follows:

#### **UWSA Members:**

1. Michael Herz, Past-President, UWSA and co-Chair
2. Annette Dietrich, Secretary, UWSA
3. Lawrence Folland, President, UWSA
4. Danielle Jeanneault, Member-at-Large, UWSA
5. Jane Arnem, Director, UWSA
6. Bill Baer, Director, UWSA
7. Kathy Becker, President-elect, UWSA

#### **UW Representation:**

1. Michelle Hollis, Director, Client Services, Human Resources

2. Sheila Ager, UW Appointment
3. James Rush, UW Provost
4. Cathy Newell Kelly, UW Appointment
5. Marilyn Thompson, Associate Provost, Human Resources and co-Chair
6. Karen Trevors, UW Appointment

The Secretary to the committee has been Rebecca Wickens, Associate University Secretary. During the open sessions, we usually have presentations made of interesting information including:

- Manager Onboarding Initiative
- Policy 33 by the Policy Revision Committee
- Proposed FS Policy re: Compassionate Care and Bereavement Leaves
- Policy 33 Feedback And Proposed UWSA FAUW Working Group
- AODA Compliance Update
- COVID-19 Disclosure Requirements
- Secondment Processes
- Accommodation Policy update

In the closed sessions, the UWSA continues to represent the interests of our members in reorganizations, issues with following policies, review of HR metrics, and sharing of updates on the MOA process.

Reorganizations are the primary practices and come with almost every closed meeting. Proposed reorganizations that affect staff members must be shared in this forum, and they are all reviewed by the SRC Reorganization subcommittee before coming to SRC. Thus far this year, there have been 42 reorganizations. Roughly 20% of the reorganizations this year required a decision if they involve job loss, appointments or waivers and to ensure that staff are treated fairly and that their voice are heard.

Human Resource Metrics are regularly presented by HR to the UWSA with numerical details including counts of employees, employee movement, new hires, transfers, employee ages, years of service, terminations, and retirements.

Michael Herz, Past-President UWSA

### **Provost's Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation (PACSC)**

PACSC has been reviewing proposals as part of the Staff Excellence Fund and how we allocate those funds. There is a total of \$250k distributed annually for the Staff Conference, Service Awards, Health and Wellness, and Leadership Development. Due to the pandemic, a lot of funded programs that required on-campus/in-person needed to cease. However, a number of those pivoted to remote-access, including yoga and fitness. Similarly, the Staff Enhancement Experience (SEE) Canada and the Staff International Experience Fund (SIEF) were put on-hold during the pandemic. However, the committee is considering ways these programs can be re-initiated.

PACSC has also been getting reports from the Gender Equity Working Group and the Performance Appraisal Review. We are just waiting on the final report from the Gender Equity Working Group. As you may have seen, the Performance Appraisal Review will commence shortly and is expected to be completed by the end of December.

Lawrence Folland, President, University of Waterloo Staff Association

## Staff Excellence Fund Committee

The UWSA Staff Excellence Fund Committee provides project funding recommendations for the Staff Excellence Fund (SEF) to the Provost's Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation (PACSC). PACSC has asked the UWSA on an ongoing basis to review proposals for two components of the SEF: Healthy Workplace Initiatives and Engagement and Leadership Development. Proposals are then brought to PACSC with recommendations about funding. PACSC is responsible for final approval and determining the level of funding for the proposals. The committee accepts proposals year-round, and will but normally carries out evaluations and recommendations three times annually, in January, May, and October. This past year has once again presented challenges for the committee and for staff making proposals.

The committee initially focused on completing the review process for pending submissions from the prior year. These were completed in February 2020. At the February meeting, PACSC agreed to increase the amount of funding for proposals in the Healthy Workplace Initiatives and Engagement with a transfer of some funding from the less applied to Leadership Development portion of the funding pot.

In March, just as the committee was beginning to pick up some momentum in the promotion of the SEF we experienced the effects of COVID-19 restrictions causing yet another delay in the SEF process. The committee also saw a reduction in the number of applications for funding, which I believe can be partially attributed to the inability of some proposals to pivot to an on-line offering adhering to COVID restrictions. While the affects of COVID-19 restrictions did impact application numbers, it provide opportunity for the committee to concentrate on improving the application process and hopefully, the experience of all who apply.

As chair, I want to thank all staff who made proposals over the past year for your patience and apologize for any delays in decision-making and in communications. I am happy that we were able to get final decisions on some outstanding and delayed proposals. In the past year, proposals receiving approval for funding included: UW Fitness on-line courses, several yoga programs and healthy living lunch hour seminars. Unfortunately, many good proposals were not funded, as the money available for SEF projects is limited, or proposals fell outside of the scope of the fund.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the current members of the committee for their generous donation of time, and for their valuable and thoughtful considerations of project proposals. All of your contributions are very much appreciated. Committee Members: Annette Dietrich (Chair), Dana Mohapl, Jane Arnem, Eric Jardin, Kalpita Gaitonde and Melissa Potwarka.

Annette Dietrich, UWSA Director

## Annual Reports from UWSA Members Serving as Staff Representatives on University of Waterloo Committees

### Board of Governors

As noted in previous years' reports, the University of Waterloo Act assigns overall responsibility for the affairs of the university to the Board of Governors, and by election, staff members fill two internal positions on the board.

Members of the University community can attend the open session of Board meetings and we encourage staff who are able to consider doing so. Meeting dates and agendas are available at <https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/governance/board-governors>. The 2 June 2020 Board of Governors meeting was held via Microsoft Teams videoconference. Guests were welcome to join the open session of the meeting similar to a normal "in-person" Board meeting. If you would like to attend future meetings, the agenda is posted on [the Board of Governors webpage](#). The next few Board meetings will likely be virtual, so there a great opportunity for staff that might not otherwise be able to attend the meetings to listen in.

Routine business at Board Meetings includes approval of administrative leaves, administrative appointments, organizational unit and building naming proposals, reports from Senior Administration (e.g., President and Vice-Presidents) and business brought forward by the various Board Committees (e.g., Audit & Risk, Buildings & Properties, Executive, Finance & Investment, Governance, and Pensions & Benefits). Some topics occurring at Board meetings in 2019-20 include:

- Approval of the [2020-2025 Strategic Plan](#),
- Review the 2019-2020 operating budget and approval of the 2020-2021 budget,
- Approval of Tuition and other Student Fees for 2020-2021,
- Updates on the Strategic Mandate agreement,
- Updates on the Presidential nomination process.
- Reports from the Pension and Benefits Committee, including activities undertaken; ongoing conversations by the committee regarding actuarial valuations of the pension plan and how Waterloo compares with its peers,
- The Board heard a motion to approve an amendment of the University of Waterloo Pension Plan to increase member contribution rates and to increase the pension cap,
- Presentation from Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of Intellijoint Surgical Inc. (Armen Bakirtzian) who earned his bachelor's degree in mechatronics engineering at the University of Waterloo. He spoke to the Board highlighting the entrepreneurial spirit, and the passion that Waterloo's students have for innovation and transforming lives,
- Presentation from Norah McRae, Associate Provost, Co-operative and Experiential Education, on the Future of Talent & Current Challenges and Opportunities, and
- Guidance of the University's response to COVID-19.

Staff perspective and input on the Board's decisions is a valuable part of University governance, so contact us if you have a question or comment, perhaps arising from past minutes or upcoming agenda items. There will also be an opening on the Board this coming year so it is a great time to learn more about the Board if you would like to put your name forward for consideration in 2021.

Finally, in June 2020, Kate Windsor ended her term on the Board after two consecutive terms elected by staff. During her six years as on the Board, Kate also served a number of terms on the Board Executive Committee. Kate was a consummate professional who we believe enjoyed the respect of the Board as a whole and was effectively able to present a staff perspective on many items of board business. We wanted to ensure that Kate's service to staff and the University as a whole was acknowledged and recognized in this report. Kate – thank you for your years of service.

Prepared by Staff Representatives: Jeremy Steffler (June 2018-2021) and Sue Grant (Elected June 2020 – June 2023)

### Policy 33 Revision Committee

The Policy 33 Revision Committee completed a draft of the Policy which was turned over to a SRC/FRC Working Group to provide feedback. This was an important step as this Policy is a Faculty/Staff Policy which will require both FRC and SRC to approve it. The Policy 33 Revision Committee is expecting to receive the Working Group's feedback in Oct 2020 so that the Policy can be finalized.

### Employee Assistance Program

The EAP (Employee and Family Assistance Program) launched in September 2016. Utilization of services by employees and their families indicates appreciation for and awareness of services available through the EAP.

During the past year the EAP Committee continued to advocate for provision of services to staff, CUPE, faculty and their dependents. Although the EAP is intended to provide a short-term based counselling model, it has been important to the Committee that care is provided as required and not limited to an arbitrary number of sessions, four being the limit on occasion being communicated to individuals.

Other activity during the year included allocation of wellness sessions across campus with the assistance of the Healthy Workplace Committee, and monitoring usage of services made available.

The pandemic had an impact on service provision. A shift occurred to provision of counselling sessions to phone and web at the height of pandemic closure. Homewood also provided numerous written material on how to manage COVID19 related issues and stresses which were made available to the university community.

The three-year contract with Homewood was completed in Fall 2019, and currently the service arrangement is on a month to month basis. It is anticipated that a decision will be made in the coming year as to whether to negotiate a new contract with Homewood, or whether to issue an RFP to determine if better alternatives exist.

The EAP committee meets quarterly, and membership as at June 2019 was as follows:

<b>CUPE Local 793</b>	<b>Staff Association</b>	<b>Faculty Association</b>	<b>Counselling Services</b>	<b>Occupational Health</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>
Jeff Caswell	Monika Bothwell	Katie Damphouse (Chair)	Tom Ruttan	Linda Brogden	Lee Hornberger (Secretary)
Elaine Johnstone	Ashley McKnight	Daphne McCulloch	Cheri Bilitz	Karen Parkinson	Nellie Gomes

## Joint Health and Safety (Main campus)

Link to the minutes of Joint Health & Safety Committee: <https://uwaterloo.ca/safety-office/committees-and-representatives/committee-minutes>

Inspections – UWSA members inspect various Academic, Academic Support and Administration Areas throughout the year.

Incidents - The committee reviews all incident reports and makes recommendations to minimize hazardous situations and continuously improve safety on campus. Data was brought forward and as a result the top three areas of Incidents seems to be slips, trips and falls, exposure, and musculoskeletal, it was suggested that the committee work on a plan for awareness building and campaigning to see if these numbers can be reduced.

One of these recommendations was regarding Asbestos Awareness: In areas where work needs to be carried out, staff sometimes have trouble identifying areas with asbestos and must rely on others for the information. Having access to this information would put workers at ease. The committee recommended that access to an updated database, showing all rooms with asbestos, (signage to be posted) be allowed for all UW workers who might be required to enter these areas. In addition, the Safety Office now offers an online Asbestos Awareness module

(<https://uwaterloo.ca/safety-office/training/asbestos-awareness>), available in LEARN.

Review of JHSC Terms of Reference and Guidelines Risk Assessment Program, Workplace Violence, Workplace Harassment, Asbestos Management, WHMIS, Management, Workplace Violence Risk Assessment, Confined Space, Incident Management.

Major topics completed or ongoing during the past year:

CMH Food Services Grill Ventilation – no further issues Food Services will continue to monitor this.

Roof Access - Hatches are being installed and will be completed by end of year.

Asbestos awareness and removal – sampling was completed and all testing came back as safe for workers to enter and work in the areas.

CO<sup>2</sup>Fire Extinguishers – Acorn is no longer the contractor Plant Operation have hired two external contractors to perform this inspection.

(Related links on Toolkit on Impairment and Workplace Health & Safety)

Staff Representatives: Melissa Holst, Paulina Cisneros, Andrew Urschel, Ahmad Ghavami Auxiliary Members: Tom Dean (Engineering); Michael Ditty (Science)

## Joint Health and Safety (School of Architecture)

The School of Architecture is a satellite campus located in the downtown Galt core in Cambridge. Along with housing the Musagetes Library, Design at Riverside Gallery, Melville Café, a fitness centre and a workshop, the school community includes approximately 455 undergraduate and 125 graduate students, 14 full-time staff and 20 full time faculty members. The joint Health and Safety Committee at the School of Architecture is comprised of Heinz Koller (Management member), Michael Syms (worker member), and Kate Windsor (Safety Office Chair). Currently the Joint Health and Safety Committee is looking to fill the vacant positions of a CUPE member and graduate student representative. The faculty representative is John McMinn. Injury reports are filed regularly, and are common due to the nature of the work students perform at the school, though the number of incidences have remained low this year. The School of Architecture's Joint Health and Safety Committee meets as a group once per term. The CUPE and Worker committee members each perform regular monthly inspections of the workplace as well.

Staff Representative: Michael Syms

## Joint Health and Safety (Health Sciences Campus)

Built in 2009 in the heart of the Innovation District in downtown Kitchener, The Health Sciences Campus is a satellite of the main campus of University of Waterloo. This campus is home of the School of Pharmacy, the School of Optometry teaching clinic, Michael G. DeGroot School of Centre for Family Medicine (CF) and the regional site for the McMaster Family Medicine Residency Program.

The JHSC team in the Health Sciences Campus works in alignment with the University's mission to ensure that the Schools of Pharmacy and Optometry teaching clinic are strategic, effective, efficient, and sustainable.

We successfully transitioned to the PharmD as the entry-to-practice undergraduate degree and implemented a bridging PharmD program for Waterloo graduates. We are also in the process of implementing a new Master of Pharmacy program to train advanced pharmacy practitioners.

Our faculty research programs are thriving and we have close to 1,000 alumni that are making their best in the pharmacy profession and scientific community.

Health Sciences Campus Joint Health and Safety Committee plays an active role in maintaining a safe environment in our work place by identifying the hazards through our monthly inspections, accident investigations and information analyses, making recommendations to the management on health and safety issues, reviewing regularly the drafts of the documents prepared by the Safety Office (programs, policies, procedures, guidelines, etc.) in order to improve health and safety in our university and keep our workplace compliant.

Currently, the School of Pharmacy is the workplace of 27 staff employees, 25 regular and 9 part-time faculty members and, 49 graduate students. Our Joint Health and Safety Committee met four times over the last 12 months, with the last two meetings held online.

The composition of our committee changed from last year. Marija Ilic is the new representative of the UW Society of Pharmacy Students (SOPhS) and Terry Li finished his tenure in the School of Pharmacy. A sincere thank you for Terry's efforts to make our meetings very effective.

Monica Hoang a former member of JHSC also completed her PhD program and would like to congratulate Monica for her great achievement. We welcome also Lisa Walsh, who returned from her maternity leave. She will replace Terry in the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

The number of incidents reported over this period of time was very low with no incidents reported over the last three terms. I should mention that our research activities did not stop over the COVID-19 shut-down since two laboratories were involved in COVID-19 vaccine research and they have uninterrupted activity from March to now.

Our professors and essential staff members in charge of making safety plans and preparations for the back to school return in August 29, 2020 should be mentioned for their effort, as well as the productive discussions had in the JHSC meetings to review the drafts of a series of programs developed by The Safety Office in the context of the Covid-19 global pandemic.

Despite the adversities associated with the presence of the COVID-19 threat, over the last few months many activities took place in the School of Pharmacy, and JHSC members got involved, monitored these activities and tried to maintain a safe climate for all essential workers (researchers, students, faculty, essential staff) coming daily to the School. JHSC members acted in close collaboration with our Management who proved to be very sensitive to our questions and provided great assistance.

The successful renovation of the Professional Practice Laboratory (PPL) ended in May. The new configuration of the Professional Practice Lab will greatly increase student collaboration, as well as accommodate an ever-evolving scope of practice for Pharmacists. Having two new rooms will allow our students to connect with other activities performing in the lab and also have quick access to materials.

New tables with hubs and chairs for students (recreational) were installed this summer along the hallways of the 2nd and 3rd floors. Aside of this, the IT specialists in the School put effort to install new 10 GB switches in every room to improve the quality of our network, to better accommodate the huge volume of online work under the new circumstances.

COVID-19 vaccine team ((Slavcev Lab, Ho Lab and Aucoin Lab (from Chemistry)) continued working over this period to develop the spray vaccine anti Sars-CoV-2.

The staff from the School of Pharmacy has an online Social Channel to keep us connected (via Teams) and to help maintain our sanity over this difficult time. Also, we do have scheduled virtual Coffee Breaks every other week to overcome physical barriers, since March 2020.

The IT and the Communication specialists made continuous efforts to regularly update the School's website in order to provide valuable information about "what's going on" in a world which was drastically changed and the overall pressure on every member of our workplace increased exponentially.

The Health Sciences Campus Joint Health and Safety Committee is dedicated to strengthening the health and safety culture to prevent workplace injuries, occupational illness and to take proactive actions in order to maintain our campus in compliance with all rules elaborated by The Safety Office and with Ontario's Legislation. Given the present day situation of pandemic, our attention is focused on the protection of everyone from the Covid-19 infection.

Monica Tudorancea

## Joint Health and Safety (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)

The Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business is located downtown Stratford, Ontario, and is one of the University of Waterloo's satellite campuses. The Stratford School campus is leading an evolution in learning and career preparation through undergraduate and graduate programming. Students in the Global Business and Digital Arts (GBDA) and the Masters of Digital Experience Innovation (MDEI) programs are immersed in a rich, technology-driven environment where theory, practice, creativity, and innovation merge to forward digital media. The Stratford School's JHSC consists of the following members; Annaka Willemsen is the management representative (co-chair), Sheri Maguire as the worker representative (co-chair), and Doug Dye as the University of Waterloo Safety representative. We are looking into having a staff representative assigned to be the resource staff member. Christine McWebb is the Director; Lennart Nacke is the Associate Director Graduate and Sebastian Siebel-Achenbach is the Associate Director Undergraduate. Presently at 658 undergrad students in the GBDA program and 45 in our Masters MDEI.

Staff Representative: Sheri Maguire

## Advisory Committee on Traffic Violations and Parking

This committee is to consist of six voting members, including at least one representative each from Faculty, Staff, CUPE, Graduate students, and Undergraduate students—with the Director, Police Services (or designate) as an *ex officio*, non-voting member of the committee. No meetings were held in 2019-2020. This committee is currently on hold.

Staff Representative: Vacant

## Appeals Committee on Property Infractions

The mandate of this Committee is to provide a separate entity from Parking Services and Police Services to review all written appeals of property infractions issued on campus. Infractions are issued to vehicles and individuals that have contravened the University of Waterloo Parking and Traffic Regulations or Policy #29 – Smoking.

To date, the Committee has only deliberated on parking infractions. Regarding Policy #29 – Smoking, Police Services is now in an 'individual' phase meaning that if a warning has been previously issued to an individual and a subsequent infraction has been made that a ticket will then be issued for the smoking infraction. To date no appeals have been received regarding Policy #29 – Smoking.

From July 10, 2019 to September 10, 2020, 13,658 tickets were issued with 432 appeals – 260 of which were approved. Further, 129 appeals were denied resulting in \$4,965 paid in fines. All paid fines go towards the University of Waterloo Scholarship and Bursary Fund.

Committee representation includes the following:

- Faculty Rep. Chair
- UWSA Rep. Selena Santi
- Grad. Rep.
- Union Rep.
- WUSA Rep.
- Parking Services Zoe Clemens

- Parking Manager ED Danhousen

Staff Representative: Selena Santi

## Internal Communication Review

In December 2019, University Communications initiated a project to develop a cohesive framework or strategy to guide internal communication across the University with the goal of ensuring employees at the University are engaged and informed to support and deliver the University's mission, vision and values. Under the leadership of the vice-president, university relations, University of Waterloo, this project is to develop a cohesive framework or strategy and complementary tools to guide internal communication across the University.

The project sought to:

- evaluate the effectiveness of current strategies and tactics used to communicate with employees at the University of Waterloo;
- develop and articulate a framework or strategy for internal communication;
- identify gaps or improvements to current internal communication practise and recommend next steps to those address gaps.

Brand Clarity was chosen to facilitate this review, from 32 applicants. Current internal communications materials, existing surveys, employee engagement survey, and town hall exit survey were all reviewed. One-on-one interviews with leaders from Human Resources, Communications, Provost, Registrar, Student Services, UWSA, FAUW, and Advancement were conducted. A 31-question survey was sent to staff and faculty (1,984 people responded). Twelve focus groups were held with both senders and receivers of internal communications. The high participation rate in the survey and the enthusiastic participation of both staff and faculty in the focus groups and interviews was a clear demonstration of an interest in internal communications.

Results from Brand Clarity are in, and the findings will now be presented to Vice President, University Relations Sandra Banks. A detailed internal communications strategic plan is to be developed. A few highlights from the Brand Clarity findings: Email is king on this campus, 50% of employees read the Daily Bulletin, there is an absence of best practices across the silos of communication including measurement and metrics.

UWSA representative: Catherine Bolger, Communications and Administrative Coordinator

## UW Pension and Benefits Committee

The Pension and Benefits Committee (P&B) is a committee of the Board of Governors tasked with oversight of both the UW pension plan and the health related benefits such as Long Term Disability and Extended Health coverage. Representation on this committee is from all stakeholder groups which includes two representatives from the UWSA.

Many important documents are published at the Pension & Benefits Committee webpage:

<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/committees-and-councils/pension-benefits-committee>

On this webpage you will also see a link to the agenda packages and minutes.

The Committee spends the bulk of their time ensuring UW employees have a solid pension plan on which to rely on in retirement. The most recent pension Valuation was Jan 1, 2020 (the next Valuation isn't required until Jan 1, 2023). The Jan 1, 2020 Valuation shows our plan to be in good health with \$1.94B in assets and a Going Concern Funded ratio of 96.3% to support the pension for our 4,891 active members.

In May 2020 a change to member contribution rates was implemented to help restore the pension cost sharing ratio for University & member contributions. This was required due to reduced expectations for future rates of return, new funding rules, and increasing life spans. While the funding for existing benefits was appropriate, the funding for future benefits required increased contributions by both the University and the plan members.

A Holistic Benefits Working Group (HBWG) was created in the Fall of 2017 to review of the UW benefits package. In addition to a 2018 comparison of UW benefits relative to 21 other comparable organizations, a 2019 survey of all staff groups has been conducted. With the help of our consultant AON, the data from these two sources was used to draft a set of options. These were shared with the leadership of the employee groups June 2020. The HBWG plans to incorporate the feedback from the leadership of the employee groups and present recommendations to the P&B for the coming year. The goal is to have recommendations that can be approved and implemented for the coming fiscal year. Ted Bleaney has been our member on this Committee.

Based on recommendations from P&B, the Board of Governors approved the inclusion of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors in our investment policies and have agreed that UW will work towards becoming a signatory of the UN PRI (Principles for Responsible Investing).

The Registered Pension Plan Investment Subcommittee was dissolved in 2018. It was replaced this year by the Pension Investment Committee (PIC).

<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/pension-investment-committee>

We've had just one meeting this year. This will be a standing committee of the Board of Governors and you can expect more fulsome reports in the future. Michael Herz has been our member on this Committee

P&B Staff Representatives: Ted Bleaney and Michael Herz

### **Provost's Advisory Committee on Equity (PACE)**

Last year PACE's membership and structure was re-organized to ensure that equity seeking groups on campus were represented on the committee. This restructure was completed, with broader representation from various staff, student and faculty members across campus who have lived experiences with different aspects of equity. As part of this restructure, the Director of Equity serves as the committee's chair.

Once re-constituted, the PACE membership contemplated its role and function given that PACE was created before the creation of the Associate Vice President Human Rights Equity and Inclusion (AVP HREI) role and the majority of staff roles within the Office of Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion (HREI). Initially, PACE's objective was to provide feedback to the university's president on equity issues. Once the AVP HREI position was created, with responsibilities to serve as the bridge between the Human

Rights, Equity and Inclusion office and the university president, an assessment of the role and function as well as terms of reference for the committee were suggested. Conversations took place to determine how PACE committee members could be engaged and involved. PACE members received updates on the actions of HREI staff and were asked to contribute feedback to a draft Collecting Democratic Data resource. PACE committee members also learned about and gave ad hoc feedback on various other campus wide initiatives such as a report from an external consultant group on equity issues.

In August 2020, an organizational review of the Office of Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion was announced by Vice President, Academic and Provost James Rush. Given this review, it is anticipated that conversations about the role, function and responsibilities of PACE will be ongoing.

Staff Representative: Sacha Geer

### Working Group on Sexual and Gender Diversity (LGBTQQIPAA+)

Operating under the Provost's Advisory Committee on Equity (PACE) and supported by the Equity Office, the Gender and Sexual Diversity Working Group (GSDWG) seeks to address equity issues related to gender and sexual identities.

The working group focuses on community-building, education, and advocacy, and we have been active in these three areas over the past year:

1. Community-building: The GSDWG organized a gathering on campus for staff and faculty in the fall. Another event was planned for March, but was cancelled due to the pandemic.
2. Education: The GSDWG worked with the Equity Office to coordinate education workshops and the Making Spaces training program. The latter is a community of practice, comprising trained community members who provide visual allyship and referrals to anyone in the University of Waterloo who is seeking support on gender and sexual identity-related questions.
3. Advocacy: The GSDWG has been advocating on behalf of community members with bodies on campus, as needed. In the spring, the group released our Statement on Pride 2020, #BlackLivesMatter and Anti-Racism, a commitment which has since guided our work.

Recently, the GSDWG created a sub-group to discuss the structure and terms of reference of the working group. These discussions are happening in conjunction with the Equity Office and PACE.

The GSDWG seeks to have representation from campus stakeholders at its meetings, as reflected in its Terms of Reference. However, meetings are open to all 2SLGBTQIA+ members of the University of Waterloo community who are invited to participate fully in discussions and consensus-based decision-making. Anti-oppression and anti-racism are two of our core values, and we prioritize intersectionality in membership and as a lens for our activities.

For more information on the GSDWG and when the next meetings will be held, please contact the committee chair, Clare Bermingham, [clare.bermingham@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:clare.bermingham@uwaterloo.ca).

### Healthy Workplace Committee

The [Healthy Workplace Committee](#) (HWC) implements the principles and mandate of the university's [Healthy Workplace Statement](#), committed to fostering a healthy, safe, and supportive workplace where all individuals feel valued, engaged, and able to thrive in a fair and equitable manner. Established in 2016, and accountable to the Associate Provost of Human Resources, the committee includes University

of Waterloo community representatives from Human Resources, Organizational and Human Development, Occupational Health, Excellence Canada, faculty, UWSA staff, CUPE staff, undergraduate students, and graduate students.

On Wednesday, October 16, 2019, the HWC hosted Waterloo's annual Keeping Well at Work Day, an employee-focused conference providing strategies for managing wellness both at home and in the workplace. The daylong event included two keynote speakers in the morning and an afternoon of workshops, activities, and wellness booths to provide information and support.

Valerie Pringle, one of Canada's most accomplished and popular television hosts, opened up about why she is an advocate for mental health, discussing her daughter's experiences upon starting university. She also shared four key pieces of advice for those suffering in mental illness or supporting loved ones as they go through it. Bruce Sellery, Business journalist and author of Moolala, conducted a workshop for employees on handling their money so they can live the life they want.

Other workshops included topics on Managing Time and Energy, Healthy Sleep, Equity 101, Building Resiliency, Menopause, and much more. Homewood Health, Heart & Stroke, Diabetes, Blood Pressure Monitoring organized wellness booths. Several other activities such as Yogalates, Hatha Yoga, and both indoor and outdoor wellness walks were also organized.

Staff Representative: Kalpita Gaitonde

## Accessibility Committee

Advisory to the Associate Provost, Human Resources, the Accessibility Committee provides a forum for consultation and collaboration on campus-wide initiatives relative to improving the University's accessibility for persons with disabilities whether they be employees, students, visitors, or members of the general public. Compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is a foundational focus for the Accessibility Committee and where possible, members will consider inclusive practices that extend beyond a state of AODA compliance. The Accessibility Committee meets on a bi-monthly basis and provides regular progress reports to the Associate Provost, Human Resources and other members of executive leadership, as necessary.

Below is a summary of some of the main initiatives that the committee has consulted on throughout 2020 to date:

### **2019 Compliance Report**

An email was received from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO) on March 12, 2020 as follow up to UW's non-compliance report filing for 2019. The ADO required UW to submit a full compliance report within 20 calendar days (i.e. April 1, 2020) to avoid enforcement action. Due to the current working conditions with COVID-19, an extension was received until May 12, 2020. Since, UW has completed 2 of the 3 noncompliant areas with the remaining issue held up due to ongoing COVID-19 affecting operations.

### **Accessibility at Waterloo website launched**

[Accessibility at Waterloo website](#) launched on April 22, 2020. It is organized into three buckets: students, employees and visitors. It includes a prominent contact us/feedback form which meets the requirements of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) and AODA.

### **Employee Accommodation Guidelines**

UW had a gap in compliance regarding not articulating a commitment to provide denial of accommodation requests in writing. In response to this, the employee accommodation guideline document was updated to include a statement indicating that a manager will provide an employee notice in writing, on reasons for denying an accommodation request, if unable to accommodate. This has been posted online to meet compliance. An accompanying accommodation request form has been posted on the Occupational Health website and includes questions related to possible emergency response needs.

### **Performance Management**

UW's performance management process does not articulate how an individual accommodation plan is taken into consideration. Recommended changes to the staff performance appraisal system were presented to the Provost Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation and approval was received. Details of the changes are still being determined.

### **Accessibility Training**

CUPE membership determined that in-person training was the best option for custodial staff. The training scheduled for April 9<sup>th</sup> was postponed due to COVID-19. Given the continual change in work climate, an alternate training document and record keeping tool will be developed and made available through the Accessibility at Waterloo website.

### **MYAP Report (Multi-Year Accessibility Plan)**

The updated MYAP was published on March 27, 2020. Collection of information for the next progress report began in August. A project timeline is currently being developed to facilitate a mid-term review of MYAP initiatives.

### **Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC)**

RHFAC is a reputable certification with a focus on assisting organization to improve accessibility over time. Implemented similar to LEED rating for sustainability, buildings that meet the certification rating will be highlighted and provided with certification; those that do not meet criteria are not penalized. In January 2020, the Ontario government partnered with RHF to fund 250 complementary accessibility ratings to Ontario organizations in select cities. Kitchener was one of the cities identified. As such, Waterloo put forth applications for assessment of the following buildings: Pharmacy, AHS, SLC, PAC and SCH.

Pharmacy is located in Kitchener and was the first one selected. During the application process it was determined that Waterloo would be considered under the Kitchener catchment area. As such, HR worked with Plant Operations and submitted applications for the other buildings, given the large numbers of visitors and University community members they serve.

The deadline for submission has been extended due to COVID-19. Depending on outcomes, the RHFAC standard may be considered as our comparator for building accessibility.

## W3 (Waterloo Women's Wednesdays)

The W3 Planning Committee has changed the group's name to W3+: Waterloo Womxn and Nonbinary Wednesdays (pronounced "W three plus"). The change in spelling from women to [womxn](#) signals that feminist spaces have historically excluded racialized women; and the plus reflects gender and sexual fluidity of our membership as inspired by LGBTQIA2S+ and the countless ways in which people self-identify. Like an atom that has lost an electron, a positively charged W3+ strives to create space for its members against the negativity of all forms of oppression. We believe that this name better reflects our constituency, our vibe and attitude, and the community we are and hope to continue to build. The purpose of W3+ is to foster a social and support network among womxn and nonbinary grad students, post-docs, staff and faculty. The group offers a safe space to discuss issues, provides a place to present university research, and raises awareness about gender and sexuality at the university both as a workplace and as a place for intellectual engagement.

Our gatherings during the first half of the past year spanned a wide variety of topics and formats: Vaccines - Complexities & Controversies (Narveen Jandu, Heather MacDougall, Nancy Waite), Mythbusting - Women & Awards (Tom Barber, Aimee Morrison), Community-Based Digital Storytelling (Aynur Kadir, Kimberly Lopez), meet and greet, and a holiday potluck. In February, we ran W5: Waterloo Women Writing With Women, a free, day-long writing retreat. W5 offered a collaborative space and supportive environment, quiet writing space and structured writing time, a workshop on Memoir Writing by Lamees Al-Ethari, and guidance and strategies for writing productivity and goal-setting from Clare Bermingham, director of Waterloo's Writing and Communication Centre. Since March, W3+ has been on hiatus due to COVID-19. For the current academic year, we are setting up a Microsoft Team to enable us to virtually (and safely) continue our purpose: to foster a social and support network among womxn and nonbinary UW community members. The team provides a space for our members to engage and connect with each other on their own schedules and the planning committee to host a smaller number of scheduled events, including a September Meet and Greet.

Cassie Bechard

## Accommodations Committee (Policy 57 Drafting)

The Accommodations Committee was created to develop and draft a *Policy 57: Employment Accommodations* jointly between the University of Waterloo, University of Waterloo Staff Association, University of Waterloo Faculty Association, and the Canadian Union of Public Employees C.L.C. Local 793; the policy is to address roles and responsibilities within the University, as well as employees' rights.

**Timing:** Beginning in February 2019, the Accommodation Committee originally met on a monthly basis, however, during the pandemic the committee has increased meetings to every two to three weeks as drafting has been largely completed and stress testing has begun. Work of the committee will continue throughout 2020 and into 2021, with an aim at looking at inspiring practices, legislation, and internal practices. Public consultations will occur, as per Policy 1, once the committee has a fulsome draft.

**Legal Requirements:** Policy 57 will be construed in accordance with numerous applicable laws and particularly the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O 1990, c. H.19 (OHRC) and its regulations.

### **Policy 57 Drafting Committee Members:**

Stephen Murphy (chair) – Faculty of Environment, School of Environment, Resources and Sustainability

Alice Raynard (secretary) - Secretariat  
Jason Brown – Plant Operations; CUPE Representative  
Lori Curtis – Faculty of Arts, Department of Economics; FAUW Representative  
Jay Dolmage – Faculty of Arts, English Language and Literature; Chair, Equity Committee (Faculty Association); FAUW Representative  
Lee Hornberger – Human Resources  
Andrew Scheifele – Safety Office  
Bill Baer – IST; UWSA Staff Representative  
Eric Jardin – Waterloo International; UWSA Staff Representative

## Policy 14 – Pregnancy and Parental Leaves (including Adoption) Review committee

Policy 14 outlines the benefits available to employees taking pregnancy, adoption and parental leaves.

Based on an analysis of the University’s benefit in comparison to other universities, as well as issues encountered by employees taking leaves under this policy, the University and stakeholder groups agreed that an in-depth review of the policy is warranted. The Policy 14 met weekly in 2020 to prepare a draft policy that was submitted to the Staff Relations Committee and Faculty Relations Committee August 2020. At the time of writing this report, the draft is considered confidential.

### **Policy 14 Drafting Committee Members**

Moira Glerum, Chair  
Robin Duncan, FAUW appointee  
Stewart Forrest, CUPE representative  
Lee Hornberger, President’s appointee  
Timothy Ireland, UWSA appointee  
Katherine Marshall, President’s appointee  
Kathleen St. Laurent, UWSA appointee  
Bryan Tolson, FAUW appointee

## Sexual Violence Task Force

Sexual Violence Task Force was formed to create a campus culture where the impacts of sexual violence are understood and well responded to, and to create a campus culture where strong efforts are made to prevent sexual violence. The majority of the Sexual Violence Task Force work this year has been oriented around developing a proposal for meeting the policy and program evaluation tasks as required by the Ontario Bill 132. The reporting requirements stipulate that the University collects and provides to the Minister of Education the following:

1. The number of times supports, services and accommodation relating to sexual violence are requested and obtained by students enrolled at the college or university, and information about the supports, services and accommodations.
2. Any initiatives and programs established by the college or university to promote awareness of the supports and services available to students.
3. The number of incidents and complaints of sexual violence reported by students, and information about such incidents and complaints.
4. The implementation and effectiveness of the policy.

Specifically, the duties of the Task Force include:

- Determine the sufficiency of the SV Policy.
- Assess the effectiveness of SV programs and services.
- Provide recommendations regarding a safe environment for all on campus.

The Task Force has completed tasks 1 and 2 from the list above and a subsequent [report](#) was delivered to the Ministry following the approval of the UW Board of Governors. The Task Force is currently turning its attention to the 3<sup>rd</sup> task of campus safety recommendations as they relate to sexual violence.

Agata Antkiewicz, UWSA Director