Annual Report 2021/2022
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President’s Report
Prepared by Dave McDougall, President

This past year has seen many wins for UWSA. Everyone has been working hard to maintain the excellent customer service members deserve, fulfill their roles on numerous committees, help all members who individually need our help, contribute staff perspectives on many UW Polices etc. We have also been working with our new governance structure, sorting out what are Operational and what are Board duties. We worked with a consultant from Capacity Canada, Sandra Hanmer, to ensure our By-law and governance structure is compliant with the new Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act.

Below you will find a list of our accomplishments over the past year. On behalf of your UWSA, I want to extend a big thank you to all the staff members serving on committees, the area reps, the board directors, the UWSA employees, and the many other campus colleagues who have supported and contributed to this work over the past year!

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) – This document has been worked on for at least 6 years and we finally brought it forward to UW Board for adoption. This process was long and detailed and I want to thank all those who have worked on it. There was a lot of back and forth with UW until we agreed on everything. Then we went to members for their opinion and they overwhelmingly supported it. Key improvements include: establishing the committee-based approach to managing issues impacting staff; formalizing the role of UWSA in staff dispute resolution process (establishing the right of the UWSA to bring forward grievances; enshrining the support role of UWSA for members); making UWSA fees mandatory for new hires; establishing a process for regular review of the MOA; and, identifying some specific roles in senior administration and some professional roles as excluded from the MOA.

Board work - Much time has been spent implementing the new By-law passed in October 2021 at the AGM. These changes include working through all our standing committees to look at their validity to today’s needs, re-writing Terms of References for those which are being kept within the Operations umbrella and tidying up loose ends to those who aren’t. New Terms of Reference are also being created for the two new Board Standing Committees: Governance and Nominations as well as the Finance committee. The change in “higher level” thinking from the Board has paid off – they have almost finished a 3 Year Strategic Plan.

Staff changes – Due to the change in the UWSA governance structure, the President, President-elect and Past President are now part of the Operations Team. This seemed like a great opportunity to re-evaluate the job duties of the Operations Team. One of the first things I did as President was look at our staff compliment to see if there were gaps in how/what we offer members. It was apparent that we
needed someone to recruit, train, motivate and appreciate our members/volunteers who sit on numerous committees and to provide them with a fantastic member experience.

**i-Sight** (Case Management System) – Although this might not seem like a huge accomplishment, it will greatly increase our ability to manage cases from our members who need our advocacy help. It allows us to easily identify common issues for staff through its reporting capabilities. Being the liaison between the company, i-Sight and IST was a big job. We’re all super happy we have this in place now.

**Covid 19** - A lot of our time was spent working with the UW Administration around Covid 19 mandates and adjusting the annual Performance Review process to reflect staff working realities. We advocated for changes to ensure comments from staff were included and an explanation of what the rating numbers mean. Also, we ensured the process was clarified, that staff request their mode of being evaluated, not manager/Dept head down. We also instituted changes to the upcoming Performance Review by adding questions to ensure staff can comment on their work/performance now that many of us are back on campus more.

**Surveyed Members** – We sent out numerous surveys asking Members for their input on many Covid 19 related items including how members are coping, Work from Home Guidelines, Masking and Vaccine mandates etc. We have shared this information with the UW Administration with the intention of helping guide their decisions.

**Created a committee to look at staff compensation strategy** – although our next salary discussions won’t be for over a year away, we created this committee to get a head start. We’ve started by researching similar organizations to gain knowledge of their best practices and getting input on non-monetary forms of compensation. We will continue to work on important compensation issues for staff.

**Created President’s Drop-in Sessions** – since their launch in June 2022, these monthly sessions have attracted between 35 and 70 members each. Topics have included parking, Staff Excellence Fund, non-monetary forms of staff compensation, pay periods and bereavement and compassionate care leave.

**UWSA Committees & Working Groups**

**Appointments Committee**
Prepared by Gail Spencer, Chair

The Appointments Committee (formerly the Nominations Committee) has a new name and an updated Terms of Reference.

The Purpose of the Appointments Committee is to apply an equitable and ethical appointments process to appointing University of Waterloo Staff Association (UWSA) members as representatives to UWSA Board and Operational Committees and to University of Waterloo committees seeking staff representation.

If you are a UWSA member, you are eligible to be placed on a committee at UW. The Appointments Committee will appoint UWSA members to the following:
- UW or UWSA Standing Committees
- UW or UWSA ad hoc Committees requiring staff representatives
When a call for applications to fill a committee vacancy is sent to the UWSA membership, there are usually between one and ten applications submitted per committee. The Committee meets to vet these applications. Members of this committee develop a knowledge and understanding of many committees requesting representatives.

From October 2021 to September 2022, the committee placed 15 members on 11 committees with vacancies – see table below.

Committee members: Katy Wong Franq, Jenny Conroy, Dana Mohapl, Nancy Sej, Jennifer Morgan, Lewis Fraser, and Margaret Ulbrick.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee/Group</th>
<th>Staff Member Appointed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UW Accessibility Committee</td>
<td>Stefaniada Voichita</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Accommodation Committee</td>
<td>Bill Baer, Eric Jardin</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Advisory Committee on Inclusive Physical Space Design</td>
<td>Christine Zaza</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Advisory Committee on Traffic Violations and Parking</td>
<td>Lorraine Quast</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Appeal Committee on Property Infractions</td>
<td>Selena Santi</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Compassionate Care and Bereavement Leave Policy Development Committee</td>
<td>Kathleen St Laurent, Sara Perkins</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Dispute Resolution Pool</td>
<td>David Everest, Jennifer Morgan, Melinda Szilva, Ryan MacMillan, Samantha St Amand, Sara O’Donnell</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Employee Assistance Program Committee</td>
<td>Ashley McKnight, Renate Donnovan</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Equity Data Advisory Group</td>
<td>Jeremy Steffler</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Healthy Workplace Steering Committee</td>
<td>Kalpita Gaitonde</td>
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<td>UW Joint Health &amp; Safety Committee (Architecture)</td>
<td>Mike Syms</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Joint Health &amp; Safety Committee (Digital Media School in Stratford)</td>
<td>Sheri Macguire</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Joint Health &amp; Safety Committee (Health Sciences Campus)</td>
<td>Lisa Walsh, Monica Tudorancea</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Joint Health &amp; Safety Committee (Main Campus)</td>
<td>Ahmad Ghavami, Andrew Urschel, Mark Kuntz, Maryann Gaspic, Melissa Benjamin</td>
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<tr>
<td>UW Pension &amp; Benefits</td>
<td>Lily Hua, Melissa Graham</td>
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<td>UW Wellness Collaborative Advisory Committee</td>
<td>Sue Fraser</td>
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<tr>
<td>UWSA Chief Returning Officer</td>
<td>Alexa Evans</td>
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<tr>
<td>UWSA Fundraising and Social Committee</td>
<td>Carmen Peters, Jane Arnem, Jessica Jordao, Kelly Wilker-Draives, Kristen Deckert, Lew Fraser, Lisa Habel, Marcie Parrott, Melissa Benjamin, Nancy Sej, Paula Ann Zahra</td>
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<tr>
<td>UWSA Staff Compensation Strategy Committee</td>
<td>Jennisha Wilson, Leah Gardiner, Lisa Habel</td>
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Area Representatives Committee
Prepared by Lisa Habel, Chair; Shannon Taylor and Maris Weiss, Vice-Chairs; Jennifer Morgan, Secretary

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, 10 months of the year, provide opportunity for constructive communication, learning opportunities about resources and information on topics relevant to staff in the Waterloo workplace including workplace safety, workforce planning, human rights, equity, inclusion and anti-racism, COVID-19 and other information. The UWSA President typically provides an update at the meetings.

Area Reps have a safe arena whereby they can express issues that staff in their units are facing and openly discuss and/or call the UWSA President to action. Roles for this committee include a designated Chair, Vice-Chair, Recording Secretary and Program Coordinator. Roles are appointed from among Area Reps, by Area Reps, and term in office normally begins in November.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021-2022 Area Rep</th>
<th>Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agata Antkiewicz</td>
<td>Games Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agata Jagielska</td>
<td>English Language &amp; Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amanda Cook</td>
<td>Human Rights Equity &amp; Inclusion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amanda Pickett</td>
<td>CECA - Cooperative Education &amp; Career Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Urschel</td>
<td>Sedra Student Design Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angela Christelis</td>
<td>Assoc VP Academic</td>
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<td>Angela Rooke</td>
<td>Student Success Office</td>
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<td>Annette Dietrich</td>
<td>Dean of Engineering Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Baer</td>
<td>Information Systems &amp; Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brigitte Schneebeli</td>
<td>Classical Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camille Graham</td>
<td>Sociology &amp; Legal Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cathy Logan-Dickie</td>
<td>Computer Science Dept</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Boyle</td>
<td>Engineering Machine Shop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheryl Souliere</td>
<td>Biology</td>
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<td>Colleen Mechler</td>
<td>Chemical Engineering</td>
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<td>Courtney Bremer</td>
<td>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dave McDougall</td>
<td>UWSA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doug Dye</td>
<td>Safety Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ed Chrzanowski</td>
<td>Computer Science Computing Facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emma Watson</td>
<td>Combinatorics and Optimization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gail Spencer</td>
<td>UWSA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heather Vo</td>
<td>CEMC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Arnem</td>
<td>Athletics &amp; Recreation</td>
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<td>Jason Greatrex</td>
<td>Centre for Extended Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennifer Morgan</td>
<td>Waterloo International</td>
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<td>Jennifer Doucet</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenny Conroy</td>
<td>English Language &amp; Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Fedy</td>
<td>Organizational &amp; Human Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Juli-Ann Sannuto</td>
<td>Dean of Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karin Staley</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathleen St. Laurent</td>
<td>French Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathy Becker</td>
<td>Teaching Assessment Processes Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie Damphouse</td>
<td>FAUW - Faculty Association, University of Waterloo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katy Wong-Francq</td>
<td>Office of Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura McDonald</td>
<td>FAUW - Faculty Association, University of Waterloo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lillian Liao</td>
<td>School of Optometry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Habel</td>
<td>Electrical &amp; Computer Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marcie Parrott</td>
<td>Co-operative and Experiential Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maris Weiss</td>
<td>Centre for Teaching Excellence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicole Brandt</td>
<td>CECA - Cooperative Education &amp; Career Services: Off-Campus</td>
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<td>Priscila Carrara</td>
<td>Science UG</td>
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<td>Rita Cherkewski</td>
<td>Dean of Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Andrade</td>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robyn Landers</td>
<td>Applied Mathematics</td>
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<td>Robyn Landers</td>
<td>Math Faculty of Computer Facility (MFCF)</td>
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<td>Robyn Landers</td>
<td>Pure Mathematics</td>
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<td>Sandra Groen</td>
<td>Science</td>
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<td>Sarah Landy</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>Sarah Robertson</td>
<td>Arts Undergrad Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shannon Taylor</td>
<td>CECA - Cooperative Education &amp; Career Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheila McConnell</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
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<td>Shelly Jordan</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
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<td>Stacy Reda</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stefaniada Voichita</td>
<td>Library - Davis Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephanie Boragina</td>
<td>Centre for Extended Learning</td>
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<td>Stephanie Facca</td>
<td>CEE Services</td>
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<td>Stephanie Filsinger</td>
<td>Office of Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephanie Forsyth</td>
<td>Graduate Studies &amp; Post-Doctoral Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve Bradley</td>
<td>School of Pharmacy</td>
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<td>Susan Oestreich</td>
<td>Office of VP Acad Provost</td>
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<td>Tammy Neal</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
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<td>Terry Labach</td>
<td>Information Systems &amp; Technology</td>
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<td>Tim Ireland</td>
<td>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracelyn Cornelius</td>
<td>VP University Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracey McKee</td>
<td>Registrar's Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trish Van Berkel</td>
<td>Physics &amp; Astronomy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wendy de Gomez</td>
<td>Dean of Engineering Office</td>
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Area Rep Program Subcommittee
Prepared by Steve Bradley, Program Coordinator

The Program subcommittee of the Area Reps Committee continues to operate with much success. 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 are welcome to join, and suggestions for presenters are welcome from all members. Speakers over the past year have been:

- November 2021: Nancy Reeves, Interim Director of Equity on sharing research around integration of child soldiers into new homelands
- December 2021: Marilyn Thompson, Associate Provost, Human Resources & Kate Windsor, Director of Safety on workforce planning for Winter 2022 and preparing the workspace for Winter 2022, respectively
- January 2022: Stepanka Elias, Executive Director, Facilities, Plant Operations on keeping campus safe during COVID-19
- February 2022: Professor Abigail Scholer, Director at the Self-Regulation and Motivation Lab on “Getting Motivated in these Decidedly Unmotivating Times”
- March 2022: Trevor Holmes, Lecturer, Gender, and Social Justice & Associate Director of the Centre for Teaching Excellence on the Women’s Studies collections archive project at Waterloo
- April 2022: Dr. Servos, Canada Research Chair in Water Quality Protection on “Moving from Watersheds to Sewersheds: Wastewater surveillance of SARS-CoV-2”
- May 2022: Sid Heeg, PhD student, Faulty of Environment for Sustainability Management on “Malicious Messaging: How Misinformation Operates Online”
- June 2022: Lisa Yuhasz, Manager, Workforce Planning on the workforce planning process at Waterloo and framework to help support leaders in making decisions

Equity Circle Conversations
Prepared by Jeremy Steffler, Circle Keeper

It has been my honour to act as a Circle Keeper for UWSA members interested in exploring anti-racism, diversity, equity, inclusion, and Indigenization since March 2021. These small group circle dialogues (usually under five people per circle) provided both opportunities for learning/discussion and for members to develop the capacity to support equity, inclusion, and belonging work in their various roles at Waterloo.

After a hiatus in Fall 2021, the circles returned in 2022 exploring topics ranging from “What does it mean to be an Inclusive Leader?” to “Neurodivergence”. Interest in the circles varied with each month’s topic with four circle dialogues hosted so far this year. Over a dozen unique participants from across the institution have participated.
With many members returning to their offices, there seems to be an (understandable) decline in interest in “virtual” circles. Circles have been scheduled for Fall 2022 and we will make a decision on whether to continue in 2023 based on interest in that term.

**Fundraising and Social Committee**
Prepared by Catherine Bolger, Chair

This committee continues to meet monthly to fulfill its purpose of organizing social events for the enjoyment of members. It is an honor to work with such a dedicated (and fun) bunch. We were unable to host the annual Craft Show and Sale fundraiser once again, due to COVID-19 restrictions. Committee members needed to get creative to host social events during an ongoing pandemic. These included:

**Gingerbread Cake, Cupcakes and Cookies Holiday**– Timed around the holiday season, Mari-Beth Davis and Donna Shin hosted 70 participants in December for this virtual baking class. Some colleagues reconnected during the virtual session; it was so lovely to bring the UWaterloo community together! Many joined with their families, and it was so nice to hear that children and grandchildren participated in the baking! Thanks to Johnson Insurance for its sponsorship of this delicious event.

**Winterfest** – This event was “almost” back to the pre-pandemic model with skating, a crafts room, toys and photos with Santa Claus. In keeping with restrictions, goodie bags were given to each participant rather than having a food table. Many thanks to CIF staff and Central Stores for their help with this event.

**For the Love of the Game** – With a Super Bowl theme, this online cooking class hosted by staff members Mari-Beth Davis and Donna Shin showed 45 participants how to make ribs and barbecue sauce with complimentary side dishes. Thanks to Johnson Insurance for its sponsorship of this super event!

**Wonderland Family Picnic** – The purpose of this event in June was to engage members and their families with one another and offer an opportunity to interact with UWSA Directors and Operations staff in an informal setting. Over 100 members purchased tickets for park admission and a buffet picnic.

**Private shopping** – Hudson’s Bay at Conestoga Mall in Waterloo held a private shopping event exclusively for members, friends, and their families after hours on a Saturday evening in June. A fashion show, lively music, welcome gifts, amazing door prizes and discounts made for a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow members.

**Barbecue themed culinary virtual** – To welcome Spring back, Mari-Beth Davis and Donna Shin’s virtual cooking class had 60 registrants for May 18, 2022. Thanks to Johnson Insurance for its sponsorship of this fun event.

**Stratford Festival:** Over 70 people enjoyed a matinee performance of Chicago at the Festival Theatre on August 7, 2022.

Committee members: Jane Arnem, Peggy Day, Dianne Foreman, Lew Fraser, Sue Fraser, Melissa Holst, Jessica Jordao, Marcie Parrott, Nancy Sej, Kelly Wilker-Draves, Rose Vogt

**Members’ Advisory Committee (MAC)**
Prepared by Gail Spencer, Chair
The purpose of the Members’ Advisory Committee is to provide confidential guidance and support for UWSA members navigating difficult workplace situations. This group advocates for our members through workplace situations providing support and guidance and bringing insight on UW policies and procedures that affect staff. The MAC allows the UWSA to support staff members in cases where two parties have requested support, even where one party is a manager. Each person is matched with a separate MAC support person.

In 2021/2022 the MAC supported a minimum of 74 new UWSA member cases. The UWSA is committed to providing support for all members and helping each individual navigate the process in their own unique situation. In 2021/2022 the MAC supported a minimum of 74 new UWSA member cases addressing specific issues including the following:

- Concerns about management and leadership within units
- Difficult work environments/difficult relationships/non-collegial conduct
- Job descriptions and re-evaluations
- Organizational changes leading to job changes or loss
- Contracts and Secondments
- **Policy 33 – Ethical Behaviour** complaints and investigations
- Work from home guidelines and lack of flexibility
- COVID-19 mandates and lack of mandates
- Terminations and Severance
- Performance Appraisals and rating concerns
- Equity in hiring processes and compensation concerns
- Retirement: assistance and support
- Performance Management including Performance Improvement Plans and Progressive Discipline
- Workplace accommodation requests and sick leave process
- Compensation issues and corrections
- Workplace harassment and bullying
- Leaves (e.g. Bereavement leave, sick leave, medical, unpaid etc.)
- Human rights-based concerns
- Benefits and assistance with their application
- Difficulties with communicating to line management
- Mediation assistance
- Policy interpretation and advocacy
- **Policy 36 – Dispute Resolution for University Support Staff** dispute process
- Workload issues

Some of the ways the MAC supported and advocated for members in the past year have included:

- Advocating for fairness and transparency for staff through formal policy processes
- Assisting and bringing to light inconsistencies in departmental Organizational Change
- Assisting staff with responses to workplace discipline
- Attending legal appointments and workplace investigation meetings with members
- Attending/supporting members through Policy 33 and 36 processes
• Checking in and confirming the process with members who have been affected by an Organizational Change
• Helping members communicate around conflict with their supervisor
• Helping with documentation for Policy 33 – Ethical Behaviour and Policy 36 – Dispute Resolution for University Support Staff complaints and responses
• Making referrals to and working with other on-campus service providers on behalf of staff
• Seeking labour relations legal advice and actions for members
• Supporting and advocating for staff on leaves
• Supporting members in meetings with supervisors where there is a dispute or discipline

The Executive Manager presented an overview of MAC cases (similar to the list above) in the April 2022 meeting of the Staff Relations Committee to ensure UW Admin are aware of the issues facing staff. And both the UWSA President and Executive Manager advocate on behalf of members with Human Resources and at the Department Head, Secretariat, Associate Provost Human Resources, and Provost level when appropriate and necessary.

Committee Members: Dave McDougall, Kathy Becker, Agata Jagielska

**Staff Compensation Strategy Committee (SCSC)**
Prepared by Agata Jagielska, Chair

The SCSC was formed in May 2022 to begin preparing UWSA PACSC (Provost’s Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation) members to effectively enter into staff salary conversations, which are scheduled to begin in Fall 2023. You can review the full SCSC Terms of Reference (pdf) on our website.

Since May, we have reviewed staff surveys, considered non-monetary items, and our current Staff Compensation Recommendation 2021-2024 to start building our strategy.

The Chair of the SCSC attended the September 2022 President’s Drop-in Session on non-monetary elements of staff compensation. Staff concerns and requests were recorded and brought to the SCSC’s September 2022 meeting.

Committee Members: Kathy Becker, Dave McDougall, Agata Antkiewicz, Bill Baer, Lisa Habel, Jennisha Wilson, Leah Gardiner

**Staff Enhancement Grant (SEG) Committee**
Prepared by Gail Spencer, Chair

The purpose of this grant is to help cover the costs associated with personal development pursuits of UWSA members. The opportunities funded by this grant are specifically unrelated to job duties. This group reviews applications and determines recipients of this 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. There is a pre-determined individual limit of $500.00. The total annual budget allocation for this award is $6000.00. Membership of this committee is made up of the Operations Team of the UWSA, with the Executive Manager as Chair. The SEG Committee plans to review the Terms of Reference in November 2022 to clarify fund guidelines and details of how funds are allocated.
In 2021/22 some self-development projects funded were: rug hooking course, songwriting retreat, creative baking and decorating course, an Indigenous film program coordinator mentorship, and a therapy dog training course just to name a few. Please see all funds awarded to members to see these and other unique and interesting development opportunities our UWSA members have completed.

Committee Members: Catherine Bolger, Kathy Becker, Dave McDougall, Agata Jagielska

Staff Excellence Fund (SEF) Committee
Dave McDougall, Acting Chair

Over the past year, New Terms of Reference (pdf) and Fund Guidelines (pdf) were established for the SEF Committee who vets funding proposals before sending them to PACSC for final approval. In the past year, the SEF Committee formalized guidelines for funding and vetted 6 applications, all of which were approved by PACSC:

- Yoga classes (2)
- Noon Hour Boot Camp
- Activities for Staff in partnership with Athletics
- Governance and Board Training sessions
- Fitness programming in partnership with Kinesiology.

Hurdles for applying to the SEF was the topic of a UWSA President Drop-in Session where members provided great suggestions on how we can improve the system and make it easier for them to apply.

Committee Members: Kalpita Gaitonde, Eric Jardin, Dana Mohapl, Melissa Potwarka

UW Committees & Working Groups

Accessibility Committee
Prepared by Stefaniada Voichita, Staff Representative

The Accessibility Committee is advisory to the Associate Provost, Human Resources and provides periodic reports with recommendations that are subject to University of Waterloo policies and approval processes. It is mainly formed of administrative departments providing a campus forum for consultation and collaboration on initiatives dedicated to improving the University’s accessibility for persons with disabilities. Compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is foundational; however, the committee goes beyond AODA compliance for inclusive practices where possible. Accessibility Committee meetings are held once per term or as necessary. The main initiatives that the Accessibility Committee consulted on over the past year are listed below:

Accessibility Advisory Panel (AAP)

The Accessibility Advisory Panel launched in March 2021. This panel is open to everyone, including students, staff, faculty, alums, and community members. AC members reviewed the demographics of the current AAP members:

- there were 48 panel members – 56% students, 35% staff, 4% faculty, 2% alumni, and 2% other
- 50% of the panel members identify as persons with disability(ies)
A survey was created to determine the format needs of the panel members and assess engagement barriers.

**Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) Progress Report 2021**

The [MYAP Progress Report 2021](#) was published in March 2022. The report highlights progress towards each of the seven themes identified in Waterloo’s [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) 2018-2022](#). It describes relevant projects and initiatives at Waterloo, including December 2021, also featuring accessibility initiatives/success stories from different departments. Initiatives that were not completed rolled into the MYAP 2023-2027 plan.

**Web Development**

IST has been able to obtain a six-month extension on our Siteimprove license. Siteimprove is an automated assessment tool that audits web pages for conformance to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Unfortunately, we cannot switch out websites/pages for auditing and assessment. It is anticipated that within this 6-month timeline, a longer-term strategy for web accessibility will be devised.

**Digital Accessibility Initiative**

University Relations (UR) has developed a proposal for a Digital Accessibility Initiative for centrally managed websites and social media channels. UR has completed research and consultation with various stakeholders (e.g., faculty, IST, AAS, Library, CEL, satellite campuses) on their perspectives as it relates to digital communication. This proposal is anticipated to be presented to the senior leadership group in September 2022. One aspect of the proposal that is going ahead is onboarding an automated web accessibility audit tool available across campus for web content maintainers, website managers, and social media contributors.

**Government Updates and AODA Education Standard**

The Ministry released the [AODA Post-Secondary Education Accessibility Standard Final Recommendations Report](#) on April 22, 2022. A total of 183 recommendations are categorized into four areas (Infrastructure, Teaching & Learning, Research and Funding, and Student experience) and developed under the AODA, which has an overarching objective of creating a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. Currently, the Ministry is reviewing the recommendations and determining the path to enactment into a final standard. There are two main considerations:

- Recommendations that align with existing standards in the AODA (i.e. Customer Service, Employment, Information and Communication, Design of Public Spaces, Transportation) will be reviewed and determined whether they can be integrated.
- The remaining recommendations that are unique to the educational environment will be reviewed and housed under the Education standard specifically.

A summary of requirements organized by operational impacts has been shared at the senior leadership level. A presentation to Executive Council was scheduled for September. It has been endorsed that an institutional response to the **Education Standard** recommendations requires engagement and direction at the most senior level of governance, particularly since the upcoming Education standard recommendations expand AODA requirements beyond the administrative level, involving academic and research realms. It was identified that some recommendations within the education standard require
the government to provide resources to support the work. Other areas are also being reviewed at a sector level, and discussions with the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) are being held to identify areas where efforts could be centralized and consolidated. Updates on development will be shared with the AC as it becomes available.

**EnAbling Change Program**

The Ministry has approved the *Physical Space Design and Accessibility in Built Environment* project proposals for Government funding.

- The *Physical Space Design* project is a partnership between Plant Operations, Accessibility, Sustainability, and Campus Wellness to develop an outcome-based design strategy for campus building that encompasses accessibility, sustainability, and wellness. The project must be completed by December 31, 2022 and is well underway. Waterloo is working with Human Space (consultant selected through the RFP process) to develop an open-resource document to support decision-makers, design professionals, and clients in a framework that considers sustainability, accessibility, and wellness when renovating and building new spaces. A campus-wide survey will be released in Fall 2022 to understand the needs and interests of campus users. Human Space is also conducting an environmental scan of the various building standards for these themed areas to identify interactions, connections, and possible tensions between them. Where tensions are noted, this framework will provide strategies to resolve them before design decisions are made. The framework will also touch on the “duty of care,” recognizing that each space is part of a larger ecosystem, considering how one space may impact other areas within.

- The *Accessibility in Built Environment* project is a collaboration with the Canadian Council of University Schools of Architecture (12 schools; project to be led by UW’s School of Architecture) intending to develop learning and teaching tools to integrate Universal Design (UD) standards as part of the Architecture curriculum, accessibility assessment tools for different architecture education spaces (e.g., design studio, fabrication labs, computational tools, etc.), and guidelines to integrate UD standards across a variety of domestic, civic, and institutional spaces to promote the creation of inclusive environments.

**Accommodations Committee**

Prepared by Eric Jardin and Bill Baer, Staff Representatives

The Accommodations Committee was created to develop and draft 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: Over the past year, the policy draft was completed and provided to the Provost for feedback, which we are hoping to receive in Fall 2022. There is hope review by the Staff Association, Faculty Association, and the union will occur in early 2023, followed by public consultations.

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

**Advisory Committee on Inclusive Physical Space Design**

Prepared by Christine Zaza, Staff Representative
The Advisory Committee on Inclusive Physical Space Design was formed in June, 2022, to provide feedback on drafts of a new inclusive physical space design strategy for campus. With a focus on universal design, this new design strategy will address accessibility, sustainability, and well-being. Funded by an EnAbling Change program grant, this project is led by a partnership between Plant Operations, the Associate Provost Human Resources-Accessibility, Sustainability, and Campus Wellness.

At the time of writing, the Advisory Committee has not yet met; the Advisory Committee will be invited to review and provide feedback on drafts of the design strategy. Since receiving funding in February 2022, project leads have been working on two primary tasks: 1) the development of a campus-wide survey, and 2) an environmental scan of industry standards in accessibility, sustainability, and wellness. Findings from the survey and the environmental scan will inform the design strategy.

The new inclusive physical space design strategy will be finalized by the end of 2022.

Advisory Committee on Traffic Violations and Parking
Prepared by Lorraine Quast, Staff Representative

This committee consists of six members, including at least one representative each from Faculty, Staff, CUPE, Graduate students, and Undergraduate students who are voting members —with the Director, Police Services (or designate) as an ex officio, non-voting member of the committee. The committee met in June 2022 to discuss an increase to the UW parking fees. After the review of the information provided to the committee and consideration from the Provost, the implementation of parking rate increases was put on hold until 2023. The committee is to meet in the Fall 2022.

Appeals Committee on Property Infractions
Prepared by Selena Santi, Staff Representative

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 include those that are issued to vehicles and individuals that have contravened the University of Waterloo Parking and Traffic Regulations or Policy 29 – Smoking.

It should be noted that to date, no appeals have been received regarding Policy 29 – Smoking.

From September 10, 2021 to September 28, 2022, Parking Services issued 16,495 tickets. Of these, 566 tickets were appealed 442 of which were approved.

Board of Governors
Prepared by Susan Grant and Nancy Heide, Staff Representatives

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 to consider attending. The meeting dates, agendas, and minutes of meetings can be found on the Board of Governors site.
The 2021/22 Board of Governors meetings were held as scheduled in October, February, April, and June. In addition, informal meetings were held throughout the year to learn more about, and discuss, themes within the Strategic Plan. Board meetings have returned to in-person meetings with an option to attend virtually. November 2021 saw the installation of President Vivek Goel at a special ceremony in the Engineering 7 building and this event was livestreamed. A retreat for Board of Governors members was held in December 2021, which focused on innovation, the future of higher education, lifelong learning, trends in post-secondary governance and anti-black racism.

Routine business at Board of Governors 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).

Items brought to Board meetings in 2021-22 included:

• Approval of renovations to the third floor of the Earth Sciences & Chemistry building
• Approval of renovations to the warehouse building on the Health Sciences Campus as part of the Innovation Arena initiative
• Approval of the 2022-2023 operating budget
• Approval of an amendment to the pension plan which raises the nominal pension cap from $3,400/year of service to $4000. The pension cap under the plan grows by one-third of the percentage increase in the average industry wage, calculated on an annual basis, and with the increases in the Income Tax Act limit in recent years of the $3400 cap was reached in 2022. This amendment allows pensions to be earned up to the Income Tax Act limit, or $4000 plus indexation
• Approval of revisions to Policy 42 – Prevention of and Response to Sexual Violence
• Approval of changes to a number of fees for undergraduate and graduate students including the student services fee, residence fee, tuition fees, and WUSA and GSA administered fees

Staff perspective and input on the Board of Governors’ decisions is a valuable part of University governance, so contact us if you have a question or a comment, perhaps arising from past minutes or upcoming agenda items.

Compassionate Care and Bereavement Leave Policy Drafting Committee
Prepared by Kathleen St. Laurent and Sara Perkins, Staff Representatives

The UW (Policy 12) Compassionate Care and Bereavement Leave Policy Drafting Committee is a newly constituted committee for the purpose of drafting a new policy. The 2021-2024 Staff Compensation Agreement included the development of a new compassionate care leave supplemental benefit plan and enhanced paid bereavement leaves for UW employees. The committee’s mandate includes the following:

• draft a new University policy
• review research and best practices to inform policy development
• review other related University of Waterloo policies, guidelines, memoranda and agreements to look for inconsistencies and/or potential conflicts with related documents
• consider other University of Waterloo policies, guidelines, memoranda and agreements which may align and be consolidated with the policy
• seek stakeholder and operational input and feedback

The original goal of the committee was to finish the policy draft by May 1, 2022, to align with the new compassionate care leave (CCL) supplemental benefit plan that became effective on that date. The committee met bi-weekly from January to April 2022 and submitted a draft to Staff Relations Committee and Faculty Relations Committee for feedback and discussion. The draft was reviewed by University administration and has recently come back to the committee for revisions. The committee will continue meeting regularly to finalize a policy draft before it is shared more widely with the University community. In the meantime, the benefits have already been made available through the 2021-2024 Staff Compensation Agreement.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Committee
Prepared by Ashley McKnight and Renate Donnovan, Staff Representatives

The EAP 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. Similar to previous years, the Committee continues to focus on the promotion of the EAP program and its services to the University community.

Other activity during the year included the continued allocation of wellness sessions for campus with the assistance of the Healthy Workplace Committee, and monitoring usage of services made available. One other area the Committee continues to focus on is the maintenance of the EAP website and ensuring all materials remain up-to-date and relevant for the campus community. The EAP Committee meets 3 – 4 times a year. Please see the Terms of Reference for committee membership.

Healthy Workplace Committee (HWC)
Prepared by Kalpita Gaitonde, Staff Representative

The Healthy Workplace Committee (HWC) was established in 2016 to implement the principles and mandate of the university’s Healthy Workplace Statement.

The HWC in collaboration with OHD hosted University of 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 conference is typically a one-day event but was staggered in 2021 over a period of two days (Oct 13 and 19). Key-note topics and speakers for this event were: (i) The Intersection of Mental Health and Anti-Racism (Anthony McLean); (ii) Everyday Resiliency in Ever Changing Times (Robyn Hanley-Dafoe). Other event topics covered were nutrition, mental health, physical wellbeing, wellness through an equity lens, community and campus wellness and overall personal health. These sessions were facilitated by external and internal campus community members. HWC members provided
opening remarks in these sessions. The Keeping Well at Work initiative also outlined ‘Daily Inspirations to Keep Well at Work’ on their website. A few examples of daily inspirations: (i) Hydration is critical to good health; (ii) Does it feel embarrassing to ask for help? Try not to let it. Connecting and sharing when you feel stuck, uncertain, and unwell are powerful mental health boosters.

The HWC in collaboration with the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) also organized following wellness sessions: Establishing Work/Life Harmony; Building Working Relationships; Self-Care Strategies During COVID-19; COVID-19: Strategies for Managing Stress; The Fundamentals of Change & Transition.

Joint Health and Safety Committee (School of Architecture)
Prepared by Michael Syms, Staff Representative

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, 12 full-time staff and 20 full time faculty members. Currently the Joint Health and Safety Committee is looking to fill the vacant positions of a CUPE member and graduate student representative. 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 Worker committee member performs regular monthly inspections of the workplace.

Joint Health and Safety Committee (Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business)
Prepared by Sheri Maguire, Staff Representative

The Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business is a satellite campus located in downtown Stratford, Ontario. The Stratford School campus is leading an evolution in learning and career preparation through undergraduate and graduates 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. Our committee met four times over the past year. Presently 744 undergrad students are in the GBDA program and 41 in our Masters MDEI.

Joint Health and Safety Committee (Health Sciences Campus)
Prepared by Lisa Walsh and Monica Tudorancea, Staff Representatives

The Health Sciences Campus is a satellite of the main campus of University of Waterloo located in downtown Kitchener. This campus is home of the School of Pharmacy, the School of Optometry teaching clinic, Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine (McMaster University) and the Centre for Family Medicine.

Health Sciences Campus Joint Health and Safety Committee plays an active role in maintaining a safe environment in our workplace by identifying hazards through monthly building inspections, accident investigations and information analyses, making recommendations to management on health and safety
issues, and regularly reviewing Safety Office draft documents (programs, policies, procedures, guidelines, etc.). These measures are taken to improve health and safety in our university and keep our workplace compliant. This committee met remotely through MS TEAMS every three months to discuss campus health and safety issues and university policies.

Over the past year the School of Pharmacy has returned to pre-pandemic activities while taking the steps to align with current public health guidance. With a return to our new normal, monthly inspections detected a few items that had been overlooked in the pandemic absences and staffing turn overs. Recommendations and corrective actions were made for the identified items, and the issues have been resolved.

The number of incidents reported over the past year was low with only minor incidents occurring. All incidents were easily resolved to prevent future injury or damage.

**Joint Health and Safety Committee (Main campus)**

Prepared by Melissa Benjamin, Mark Kuntz, Andrew Urschel, Maryann Gaspic, Ahmad Ghavami.

Meetings – The Joint Health & Safety Committee (Main Campus) met 5 times through 2022.

Link to the minutes of Joint Health & Safety Committee (Main Campus) minutes.

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

The purpose and/or mandate of the committee: Terms of Reference V5 Sept. 2019

Some key accomplishments/forward moving steps in the past year

Annual Programs reviewed
  a. WHMIS
  b. Working at Heights
  c. Nanomaterials
  d. Radiation Safety
  e. X-Ray Safety

**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, with fewer people on campus injuries were down from previous years, and with more people returning continue to monitor.

**Training Records project** - It was indicated this would be a multi-phase project. IST has agreed to provide a project management resource who is leading the project and developing timelines. Phase 1 will involve defining the needs and current problems –namely identifying who needs access to training records, how this is currently being managed, and what gaps exist. The deliverable at the end of Phase 1 is a list of problems, persons affected and recommended solutions. Phase 2 has not been scheduled but will be where a solution is chosen and implemented.
**Pension and Benefits (P&B) Committee**  
Prepared by Lily Hua and Melissa Graham, Staff Representatives

The Pension and Benefits Committee (P&B) is a committee of the Board of Governors tasked with oversight of both the University of Waterloo 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.

The Committee spends the bulk of their time ensuring Waterloo employees have a solid pension plan on which to rely in retirement. Pension Valuation are required at least once every 3 years per government regulation. University of Waterloo submitted an updated Valuation in June 2022 using Actuarial Valuation as at December 31, 2021. This submission showed our plan to be in good health with $2.38B in assets and a Going Concern Funded ratio of 111% to support the members (4,851 active members and 7910 total members). This valuation of course has changed since the beginning of 2022 given the market condition; however, such changes are not unexpected and the University has made long term commitments to provide additional fundings to the pension plans. You can find past meeting agenda packages and minutes, as well as actuarial reports and copies of communications to the Waterloo community, at [https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/committees-and-councils/pension-benefits-committee](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/committees-and-councils/pension-benefits-committee).

In 2021-22 the P&B Committee has implemented some of the recommendations made by Holistic Benefits Working Group (HBWG) which was created in 2017 to review the Waterloo benefits coverages to see if cost neutral improvements could be identified. As a result, Green Shield was selected as new administrator for extended health and Dental Benefits effective 1, 2023 and Sun Life Financial was chosen to insure the long-term disability program effective 1 May 2022. The P&B Committee is provided with regular updates and continues to make decisions that guide the transition.

Additionally, changes sought by UWSA on HR interpretation of Policy 23 – Eligibility for Pension and Insured Benefits were implemented 1 June 22 which will reduce the number of years of service required to join the benefit plan from 3 to 2 years. Changes were also made to the wording in Policy 59 – Reduced Workload to Retirement and Policy 23 – Eligibility for Pension and Insured Benefits effective 1 July 2022 to explicitly include in definite term/temporary consecutive contracts employees in the definition of employees.

A working group has been struck to review in vitro fertilization coverage to review implications of expanding coverage to plan members without a uterus or those whose uterus cannot or will not be utilized.

**Provost’s Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation (PACSC)**  
Prepared by Dave McDougall, Acting Chair

This committee, as the name suggests, deals with staff compensation. Since we are in the middle of the staff agreement and it won’t come up for discussion for another year and a half, much of the business in this committee surrounded the Staff Excellent Fund (SEF). Your UWSA PACSC Members worked to separate the institutional driven initiatives from the staff driven initiatives to ensure that the latter is protected. PACSC reviewed and approved 6 SEF proposals from staff, reviewed institutional proposals from Organizational & Human Development and University Relations, set budgets for each of the funds,
created and clarified stipulations for future proposals, compacted the 4 funds into two funds, and recommended that the SEE Canada program be re-started.

Another big topic was the amount of time it takes to hear back once a Job has been submitted to HR. That timeline went from 8-10 months to 2 months.

Other topics addressed over the past year have included the following:

- **Policy 67 – Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** cancelation
- **Disconnecting from Work Guideline** (in response to **Bill 27 - Working for Workers Act**)
- Gender Equity in Salary Administration
- Staff Performance Management
- UWSA Committee Members: Agata Antkiewicz, Agata Jagielska, Kathy Becker

Staff Relations Committee (SRC)
Prepared by Dave McDougall, Co-Chair

The vast majority of conversations at SRC revolved around Covid 19. We discussed/made decisions on many aspects of how the pandemic was affecting staff working conditions. This included work from home guidelines and resources, mask and vaccine mandates, returning to work guidelines etc. UWSA Committee Members tirelessly advocated for staff in all aspects of this work and ensured that the staff perspective was front-and-centre in discussions and decisions regarding staff working conditions.

Topics addressed over the year included the following:

- Stipends
- Performance Evaluations
- Staff working on contracts
- T4 and 2200T tax forms
- Exit Surveys
- USG’s and why the same job title has different USG levels
- Talent Acquisition
- UW and UWSA staff survey results
- HR Metrics

Policies that were discussed, updated, changed etc include the following:

- **Policy 6 – Vacation – Staff**
- **Policy 12 - Compassionate Care & Bereavement Leave**
- **Policy 18 – Staff Employment**
- **Policy 33 – Ethical Behaviour**
- **Policy 57 - Employment Accommodations**

UWSA Committee Members: Kathy Becker, Agata Jagielska, Courtney Bremer, Priscila Carrara, Amanda Cook, Jason Greatrex
Wellness Collaborative Advisory Committee
Prepared by Sue Fraser, Staff Representative

In the last year, this committee has been active in a number of important initiatives in the areas of equity, diversity and inclusion. We reviewed the work on Health Equity Impact and the Social determinants of Health as it applies to our students. We had a presentation updating the committee on the President’s Advisory Council’s implementation of the recommendations to address the needs of student mental health including the wellness of staff. We reviewed the work of Dr. Marlee Spafford with the Student Experience survey and the implications for student support. The committee reviewed the President’s Anti-racism Taskforce recommendations including recommendations for an institutional commitment to Black, Indigenous and other Racialized persons on campus including the impact of racism on staff mental health and wellness. We also received an update on the Mental Health Initiatives being implemented by Campus Wellness.

The committee addressed the stress of the uncertainty with the return to campus process and how it has impacted the wellness of staff.