Biannual Stewards Meeting
PSAC610

UC2105
August 29th 2019
5:00pm-8:00PM

Executive Attending: Sandeep, Katie, Ari, Katelyn, Matt, Jodi, Gregory, Anil, Dichou, Reza

Stewards Attending: Julie Nord, Shewa Wudneh, Allyson Woo, Sananda Sahoo, Arsharash Ashrafi

Others: Mohammed Abugazia, Muhammed Chowdry

Regrets: Wesley Robinson

Numbering System:
1 – Sananda Sahoo
2 – Sandeep
3 – Katie
4 – Jodi
5 – Ari
6 – Matt
7 – Gregory
8 – Anil
9 – Dishou
10 – Allyson Wood
11 – Julie Nord
12 – Wudneh Shewa
13 – Reza
14 – Arsharash Ashrafi

Commencement: 5:17pm


Matt - Reads PSAC statement of harassment.
Katelyn:

- If you experience harassment, go to President or President-elect if the president is the harasser.

**Agenda:**

1) **Approve Agenda:**
   a. Would anyone like to add any?
   b. Anil (8) moves to have the Post-Doc Chair present his report first. **Ari (5) seconds**
   i. **Vote:** motion unanimously passed
   c. Approval of agenda
   i. Unanimously passes

2) **Approval of minutes**
   a. President motions to table, 3 seconds
   i. **Vote:** 12 in favour, 0 not in favour, 2 abstain

3) **Motions**

4) **Reports:**
   a. President
   b. Communication Chair
   c. Admin Chair
   d. Finance Chair
   e. Postdoc Chair
   f. Chief Stewards
   g. President-Elect

5) **Unfinished Business**

6) **New Business**

**Motions**

**Motion for the Bylaws Committee to develop a Gender Parity Policy – Moved by President**

WHEREAS only one (1) woman ran for an executive position;

WHEREAS more men than women are stewards;

WHEREAS more men than women join committees;

WHEREAS Western University has greater composition of women in teaching assistant positions and should have a union that reflects that composition;

WHEREAS women may not feel comfortable disclosing sensitive information to a male union representative;

BIRT the bylaws committee develops a policy that:
• Seeks to encourage women’s participation in union events, committees, steward roles, and candidacy for executive positions; • Actively recruits and guides women into leadership positions within the Union;

• Seeks equal representation of women on the executive committee, stewards network, and other union committees;

• Continuously prioritizes the participation of women within the Union.

BIFRT this policy contains a section that focuses on fostering a safe and welcoming environment for women, where their voices are heard and respected.

Seconder: (8)

Katelyn motivates: For many years, we have had more men in the union than women. Currently 7 female stewards out of 52. And over half of the GTAs are women, however, more men in postdocs. I really want women to get involved.

Anil Motivates: Anil feels like we need to have equal representation.

Reza (13) Point of information: What do you mean by a policy? Maybe encouraging interest may be a better route. What is your approach for this policy

Katelyn: I would like to create an environment that is women friendly or how Greg has specifically encouraged females to join as stewards. I don’t think we need a policy that states half the executive has to be each biological sex. Maybe we can just go around and ask why women don’t want to be involved? There are many routes to go about.

Vote: 12 for, 5 abstain

Motion to move $5,000 from unexpected costs to a disciplinary committee budget line - Moved by the President,

WHEREAS PSAC 610 is currently conducting an investigation against a member;

WHEREAS PSAC 610 needs to cover the hotel, travel, and loss of salary costs for the committee to conduct their investigation;

WHEREAS based on section 25 of the PSAC constitution the local will cover the costs of complaint made by a member towards another member: BIRT PSAC 610 uses $5,000 from unexpected costs to cover the costs of a disciplinary committee

Seconder: (2)

Katelyn Motivates: this would not include people that are not from PSAC610 but belong to PSAC so they are not biased. However, due to Section 25, if one member complains against another, PSAC regional would cover the cost. That being said, we have to cover their expenses or lost of time working. Lastly, investigations are confidential and can’t tell you anything about it.
Debate (4): point of information: do we know for sure its going to cost $5000?

Katelyn: doesn’t mean we are going to use it, we just want to have money set aside if we do need it.

Debate (8): can $5000 be approved at this meeting?

Katelyn: We don’t need to ask stewards but we are. Stewards can approve anything budget wise.

Debate (13): who will know the cost of this?

Katelyn: use randomizer and first three people that answer you back will be used. They will also give us receipts, and Finance chair will look over, but I will not know the results of the investigation. Results will go to

Vote: 10 in favour, 2 opposed, 2 abstained.

Motion to continue delegate status at LDLC for 2019-2020 – Moved by the President

WHEREAS the President has served as an executive and delegate of London District Labour Council (LDLC) throughout 2018-2019;

WHEREAS the President is ending their presidency on September 1st, 2019;

WHEREAS they would still love to participate in the labour movement and be involved in wider union issues in the London community;

WHEREAS PSAC 610 only has two delegates; WHEREAS it is difficult for PSAC 610 executive members to attend LDLC meetings due to time conflicts and work overload; BIRT that the current PSAC 610 President, Katelyn Mitri, remains a delegate of LDLC.

Seconder (3)

Katelyn Motivates: have been working with council for about two years. We are supposed to propose a delegate to our members, and I am proposing myself. It is a separate organization but is affiliated.

(3) motivates: Katelyn knows many people in the labour community, so it would be convenient for her to continue to going and in the past, Executive meetings are usually at the same time, making scheduling conflicts

(6): friendly motion: add Katelyn’s name within the motion. Friendly motion amendment accepted.

(13): there should be a motion, not a friendly amendment.

President-Elect: our rules allow friendly amendments, and I am allowing the friendly amendment

(1): who is the other delegate?

President-Elect: Jodi.

(13): what is the cost?

President-Elect: there is yearly cost that we pay.
Finance chair: its $1000 a year for our local.
(8): fee is associated with number of members.

Vote: 13 in favor, 0, 1 Abstains

**Motion for GTA Solidarity with Postdocs – Moved by the President**

WHEREAS Postdoctoral Associates (PDAs) will be entering bargaining in the fall;

WHEREAS PDAs are a much smaller bargaining unit than the Graduate Teaching Assistants;

WHEREAS PDA certification is still recent;

WHEREAS the University is using Bill 124 to avoid bargaining a wage increase over 1%;

WHEREAS PDAs need as much support and resources as possible for successful bargaining;

BIRT GTA stewards will show active support for Postdocs during their collective bargaining;

BIFRT this support comes in the form of participating on mobilization and research committees and actively promoting PDA bargaining to members of both Unit 1 and Unit 2;

BIFRT each GTA steward participate in one (1) act of solidarity (i.e., participation on a committee, hosting a town hall, encouraging members to join committees, etc.) during PDA bargaining.

**Seconder: (6)**

**Katelyn Motivates:** we just finished collecting our survey for Post-Doc bargaining demands. We expect going into bargaining later October or early November. Post-Docs are really overworked. If we had more help we could. Ford government is proposing a bill that prevents a raise increase of more than 1%.

**Motivates:** we need solidarity. Post-docs are much smaller group, and it would help if GTAs could help

Vote: 12 for, 2 abstains

**Motion to endorse CUPE Local 2 Free Transit Campaign – Moved by President-Elect**

WHEREAS the Ford government is attempting to inhibit bargaining rights for public sector workers under Bill 124, which caps wage and benefit increases under collective bargaining to 1%, and;

WHEREAS public transit should be free for all members of the public

WHEREAS the call for free public transit has the ability to unite unionized and non-unionized workers across Ontario in a campaign to de-commodify our cities and bring down the Doug Ford government:
BIRT PSAC 610 endorse CUPE Local 2’s campaign for free public transit and mass strikes to bring down the Doug Ford Ontario Provincial government, as well as publicize that statement across campus

Seconder: (6)

President-Elect Motivates: This is my research and I think this would be a good idea, and helps the people that need it the most, the poor.

Seconder motivates: we benefit from having subsidized transit, so we should in solidarity support others.

Point of information (1): the bus passes are not free, we pay for them. Friendly amendment change WHEREAS public transit should be as accessible for all members of the public as it is for 2 University and College students in London; to WHEREAS public transit should be free for all members of the public in London

(6) friendly amendment: remove in London in second WHEREAS

(13): why do we want to do this since it's in Toronto and is not directly related to us?

President-Elect: it doesn’t affect us, but we need to fight for it since as unionized workers we need to look out for the entire city.

(1) point of information: how do we choose to support certain things.

President-Elect: this is not just about transit, its also about governmental changes.

Vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstention

Motion to Support Migrant Rights (through the Migrant Rights Network) - Moved by Communications Chair

WHEREAS an injury to one is an injury to all; and

WHEREAS employers are using different immigration categories to pit workers against each other and we refuse to be divided; and

WHEREAS migrants and refugees do not steal jobs, drive down wages or devalue work. Rather it is provincial and federal policies and laws that give power to employers to exploit migrants and refugees; and

WHEREAS respect for human and labour rights, permanent resident status and full access to services for migrant will ensure increased rights for all workers; and

WHEREAS women and racialized people's work is systematically being devalued, and it's primarily those migrant workers who are denied the most rights; and

WHEREAS migrant women and racialized workers are those most likely to be at risk of abuse, harassment and exploitation at the hands of employers and have their rights denied and work devalued;
and WHEREAS anti-immigrant, Islamophobic, and other racist nationalist groups are organizing in our communities and spreading hatred and fear against racialized people and migrant workers; and

WHEREAS many people have been forced to migrate in order to escape poverty, climate change, war, persecution and economic exploitation.

BIRT that PSAC 610 will lobby the federal government of Canada and all federal political parties to:

- Grant all migrants (international students, refugees, temporary foreign workers, undocumented) permanent residency status and grant permanent residency on arrival to those that come in the future and end detentions and deportations;
- Ensure migrants, and all workers, have full access to social entitlements (EI, CPP, healthcare, settlement services, etc);
- Ensure genuine enforcement of labour standards and basic human rights;
- Ensure decent work, fair wages, all labour protections including open and non time-limited work permits for all workers, including migrants and refugees;
- End discrimination against and criminalization of migrants, refugees and racialized people (particularly anti-Black racisms and Islamophobia), and ensure gender justice and Indigenous self-determination;
- Actively stop Canadian involvement in climate change, war, economic exploitation, mining injustice and social oppressions abroad that force people to migrate.

BIFRT PSAC 610 commits to:

- Organizing educational events on anti-racism, immigrant rights and migrant solidarity for its members by assigning members to be trained as trainers by Migrant Rights Network;
- Develop or distributing anti-racist and solidarity materials to members;
- Contacting local Labour Council and requesting that #UniteAgainstRacism, anti-racist solidarity, immigrant rights and migrant justice be key themes for Labour Day 2019 (September 2) activities;
- Build relations with and politically and financially support migrant led campaigns coordinated through the Migrant Rights Network

Seconder: (5)

Communication Chairs Motivates: from the migrant rights network. Saying we support this would help. This doesn’t necessarily commit any monetary funds.

President-Elect: we have many international students in our union. Internationals should be able to choose to stay after finishing or leave if they want to.

(13): This is a motion not a report right?

President: Correct
(13) point of info: why do we need to vote on this since we already did this at Executive meeting.

Communications Chair: we want to have steward support.

(1): will we have to pick up the cost of international students?

President: depends. But 60% of post-docs are international, and they find it difficult to find healthcare, they don’t a have a stable health care plan, and lastly don’t have job security.

President: we tried to get OHIP for everyone, but we got barred by many places.

Vote: 10 for, 0 against, 1 abstain

Reports:
- Post-Doc Chair left, President-Elect will read it.
- President Report:
  o This is my second last day, we have a new committee and they are great!
  o Goals outlined:
    ▪ Higher participation
      • We never get high numbers.
    ▪ Concise and transparent communication
      • Done, all goes through chair
    ▪ And more...
  o Postdoc dues refund
    ▪ University took more money than necessary,
    ▪ Tax information was a major hurdle
      • We don’t have info to information required to make T4s
    ▪ We asked university to do it. Took about a year to get them to agree to issue refund but only for those at western.
    ▪ September 27th Postdocs will get there dues refunded.
    ▪ For those not hired by Western, volunteer will contact each person and issue T4s to give refunds.
  o Freedom of Expression Forum
    ▪ Nothing new in this policy, they just amalgamated many documents.
    ▪ Teaching and Learning Centre will host workshops to help TAs learn how to handle freedom of expression within the classroom
  o Other ongoing issues:
    ▪ Clawbacks to other sources of funding for GTAs
    ▪ PDA layoffs
    ▪ GSA/GTA issues
      • They claim University is allowed to give two different groups the same work
    ▪ University silencing the Union at events
      • This year, all the orientations we are invited to now.
    ▪ Health and safety regarding office spaces.
• If experience poor office space conditions, please report to health and safety issues.

  o PSAC service agreement
    ▪ Agreement between PSAC national on what they give to locals (we are local 610)
    ▪ New things can be found on our website.

  o Completed local projects
    ▪ Mental health fund
      • Increase to $599
    ▪ Grievance Database
      • Completed by our casual staff
    ▪ Motions database:
      • Completed by admin chair
    ▪ Electronic voting
      • Ran it for the first time.
      • You can decide if it was a success
    ▪ More orientations
    ▪ Community activism
      • 15 & fairness
      • Free speech mandate
      • Supporting other local unions
      • London Pride
      • United way Backpack drive
    ▪ PDA bargaining
      • 44% of postdocs filled out their bargaining survey
    ▪ Coalition of Graduate Employees Unions Conference
      • Over 100 delegates at 44 different union organizations across north America
      • Presented our accomplishment
      • Large differences in organizations between Canada and USA
      • We have a well-organized and strong union
    ▪ Questions?

- Communication chair
  o Updated website, switched to new emails,
  o Helped out with SOGS
    ▪ To stick with SOGS
  o Scholarship committee
    ▪ Has been delayed due to needing to do all the redactions manually.

- Admin Chair sends his regrets
- Finance chair
  - We have not finalized our budget due to cuts.
  - We have increased mental health fund
  - Kept EHP at $599 for this coming year
  - We may have a few changes if we have GTA cuts
  - We plan on keeping the member benefits the same

- Arts & Humanities
  - Grievances
    - English department
    - Hispanic Studies
      - SGPS sided with us – YAY!
  - Lookout for:
    - GSA vs GTA duties
    - TAs being hired to teach their own courses or have little/no supervision
  - Future work:
    - Helping librarians & Archivists
    - Allocating scholarships for scholarship committee
    - Helping PDAs
    - Filling steward position within A&H
    - Steward solidarity event will most likely occur in late October.
o Gender Equity:
  ▪ Looking to encourage a gender parity policy.
  ▪ Deadline to apply as a steward is mid October
  ▪ Katelyn and I will be attending PSAC womens conference at the end of September to learn more about Gender Equity.

- Biological Science Chief Steward Report:
  o One of my main goals this year is to get departmental stewards for every department and have every department host a solidarity event to help create a stronger PSAC610 network of stewards. I've already emailed all of the current stewards from my department inquiring if they would like to run again as steward for their department for this upcoming year. If you are from my department and do plan on running again and haven't informed me, please do so by emailing me at bioscichief610@gmail.com. for all of the departments that so far have open steward positions, I have already proactively started recruiting stewards for next year. Many have already handed in their nomination forms, but there are still many departments that have no person nominated for this upcoming year. We are hoping to start having interdisciplinary solidarity events to promote communication between different departments potentially from different divisions (for example, one department from the biological sciences division and one department from the arts & humanities) the plan is to start hosting solidarity events for multiple smaller departments at the same time and see how well this works. In September, I will be representing PSAC610 at graduate orientations that fall within my division. In the middle of October, I will be hosting a Biological Sciences stewards meeting to discuss duties and creating a schedule for when solidarity events will be hosted for each department. I have gone to PSAC610 training and will be going to more training to better enable me to help the constituents. This past month, I have been a part of one grievance with the president elect to better understand the nuances of grievances and prepare for future grievances. If anyone has any questions or would like to get in contact with me, you can email me at bioscichief610@gmail.com

- Physical Science Chief Steward Report:
  o Contacted previous Stewards
    ▪ 3/6 are graduating
    ▪ We would like to get more women involved
    ▪ Hopefully before next steward meeting, we have more women and more diversity for all departments.

- Social Science Chief Stewards
  o Have been doing training
  o Also, have a problem with departmental stewards.
  o No chief stewards showed up today (not including Ari, president-elect)
    ▪ Disappointing
  o Have had some clawback problems
  o Make sure funding package is reflecting what is in the
- President-Elect Report
  o Under collective agreement we get 198.02 raise minimum.
    ▪ In the collective agreement, it states there can’t be a clawback
      • Clawback being deducting an equivalent amount gain in GRA from our WGRS
  o Postdocs need our support!
    ▪ At events, the university has prevented myself from going to specific postdoc events.
  o Two events to highlight
    ▪ Labor day rally at Victoria Park. Will march to Thames park
    ▪ Picnic at the Thames park
    ▪ Federal Election is coming up
      • Everyone is encouraged vote!
      • Contact me if you want to volunteer for Canvas for the federal election.

(11): how do we email our membership?

President: President-elect will get Jessie to make department lists and will disseminate to chief stewards

No unfinished business

New business?

Information about orientation:
  - They need to be giving us 15 minutes for every orientation or,
  - Tell us they aren’t having an orientation.

What happened with SOGS?

Motion to go in camera – President

Seconder – President-Elect

Vote: unanimously approved

Motion to adjourn:

Unanimously approved