

CURA Welcome Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 27, 2023 - 12:00-13:00

1. Welcoming Remarks by Provost and VP (Academic)

Susan Nesrallah introduced the Provost & V.P. (Academic), Pauline Rankin, who replaced Jerry Tomberlin, who assumed the position of Interim President. President Benoit-Antoine Bacon has become President of UBC. A search is in place to fill this position by July 1, 2024. The university has had a good relationship with CURA since its founding in 2006 and we look forward to continuing this tradition.

- We are one month into the fall term. The residences are full, courses are in full swing, and athletics, clubs, events, and other activities are all underway. The Carleton community continues to make good, collective progress on the Strategic Integrated Plan.
- Carleton's annual research funding continues to grow, reaching \$97.4 million this year, an increase of 79% in only four years, placing us second in growth among Canada's comprehensive and medical universities.
- Two of our researchers were presented top-ranking awards from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Council (NSERC).
 - Lenore Fahrig from the Department of Biology won the Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering, the country's top science and engineering honour.
 - Sonia Chiasson from the School of Computer Science received an Arthur B. McDonald Fellowship, given to only six early-stage researchers annually in all fields of natural sciences and engineering to enhance their research capacity so they can become leaders in their field.
- This year, three buildings on campus were given new names to reflect our diversity and commitment to inclusion. The buildings are:
 - Nideyinàn – formerly the University Centre (our heart)
 - Pigiavik – formerly Robertson Hall (the starting place)
 - Teraanga Commons – formerly Residence Commons (Senegalese name from the Wolof language that emphasizes generosity of spirit and sharing of material possessions in all encounters)
- We continue to facilitate unique experiential learning opportunities that ensure graduates have the necessary skills for life after they leave the university. For example:
 - The new Future Learning Lab opened on the fourth floor of the MacOdrum Library this past February. The lab encourages innovation and student-centered teaching through physical space and various programs, including undergraduate research opportunities and innovation grants.
 - The lab will be enhanced with the opening of the Experiential Learning Hub next month. The hub will feature three new spaces to support experiential learning

using expanded reality media: a teaching studio, a creation studio, and an experience studio. Through this lab and hub instructors will have access to innovative applications, experiences, hardware, tools, and support.

- Carleton’s new 450 bed student residence building is taking shape with four of the nine floors completed with level 5 underway. The design is focused on providing first-year students with more amenity spaces such as a small gym, game, and media rooms, study rooms and lounges. April 2025 is the scheduled completion date.
- The City of Ottawa’s twinning of the O-Train tracks and the building of a new Carleton station are well underway, but a completion date has not been confirmed. We have been working with OC Transpo to ensure that bus service to campus is improved in the absence of a train service.
- Work continues on the new pedestrian bridge at the south-end of campus that will link Carleton to Vincent Massey Park. The City of Ottawa has confirmed the bridge opening will coincide with the restarting of the O-Train service.
- For the first time, Carleton earned the recognition of being named a Top 100 Employer in Canada, a Top Employer for Canadians over 40 and one of Canada’s Top Family-Friendly Employers. We also earned the Top Employer in the National Capital Region recognition for the ninth consecutive year.
- Looking to the future, we will continue to focus on community engagement and outreach. Our vision is to extend our influence beyond campus, inspire our students to be engaged citizens and strengthen meaningful community partnerships.
- In closing, I appreciate all you do to maintain your link to your colleagues and to Carleton. There are many more exciting things happening on campus.

2. Introductions – Susan Nesrallah

Susan introduced the members of the CURA Executive:

President –	Susan Nesrallah (& Webmaster)
Vice-President –	Andrew Brook
Past President –	Peter Watson
Secretary –	Susan Jameson
Treasurer –	Irwin Reichstein

Members at Large - Bruce Winer, Martien De Leeuw, Wendy Watkins (also CURAC rep) and Zack Jacobson,

Mandy Hair is the Director of HR Operations and our CURA rep. She promotes CURA to new retirees and facilitates requests that we may have from the University.

3. President’s Report / Activities

There are two items that have been pending for the past few years:

- We requested that retiring staff should have the option of keeping their Carleton email accounts same as retired faculty –they did, in fact, in 2016 and 17 but was denied after that, so we have been working on reinstating this with various ITS CIOs

and most were in favor, so it was added to the Email Policy and presented to the Senior Management Committee. It was rejected because the General Counsel said it poses liability risks, but we still want to pursue it with another option, not giving up!

- The second request is to have a retiree on the Carleton Pension Committee. We met with Betsy Springer in past years and recently with Andrew Urquhart, the new Director of the Pension Fund. We have not yet received a definitive “no”, so we can still hope.

Activities:

- Two General membership meetings: the Welcome Meeting in the Fall and the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the Spring
- 2 Tours – either indoors or outdoors
- 2 Dinner-with-Speaker events
- President’s Holiday Reception
- Pension Plan Update Presentation (for ALL retirees)
- This makes 8 events a year, with a break in July and August

Below are some of the tours we’ve had in the past:

- Bonnechere Caves
- National Arts Centre and National Art Gallery
- Carleton Dominion Chalmers Centre when it was acquired by Carleton
- Dominion Brewery, Marijuana facility in Smith’s Falls
- Beechwood Cemetery
- Last week we had the tour of the Carleton Campus
- Tomorrow is a tour of the Mer Bleue Bog

Some of the Dinner-with-Speaker Series:

- Peter Fried gave a presentation on Marijuana (the year it was being legalized)
- Irwin Reichstein on 19th Century Photography
- Andrew Brook and Peter Watson spoke on “TIME”
- During the lock-down, on Zoom, Richard Van Loon gave a talk entitled: “6000 years up the Ottawa River and into the West” Part 1, and then by popular demand, Part 2
- Professor Maria DeRosa talked about Carleton’s work on “Parkinson’s Disease Aptamers”
- Last April Dr. Rafik Goubran spoke on “smart homes for independent Living, what technology exists and what is being developed”
- Tentative for November: Dinner-with-Speaker Dr. Lenore Fahrig
- We conducted a Writing Competition for ALL Carleton retirees – Winners and their papers are on the CURA website
- The President’s annual Holiday Celebration is in December

4. Treasurer’s Report - Irwin Reichstein

- The updated bank balance was \$8,387 but with recent e-transfers is \$9,300 – most of this money was a balance from the CURAC Conference held in Ottawa in 2017
- CURA’s membership fee of \$50 covers the 2 lunches at the 2 general meetings

- We have recently set up e-transfer for payment of membership fees

5. CURAC Update

Wendy Watkins is our representative on CURAC (College and Universities Retiree Associations of Canada). David Holmes is Carleton's rep on the Conference Committee.

- CURAC's Purpose is:
 - coordinate activities that promote communication among member associations
 - share information about activities of member organizations
 - provide mutual assistance
 - speak publicly on issues of concern to the over fifteen thousand individual college and university retirees across Canada
- Major benefits are health, travel, trip cancellation, and pet insurance
- The 2023 Annual Conference was held in Saskatoon
- The 2024 Annual Conference will be held in Waterloo, May 22 to 24, the theme is "Thriving in Retirement"
- More information may be found on our website at <http://carleton.ca/cura>

6. Closing Remarks

- We've generally been very lax in invitations, and not sticking to the "paid-up" rule.
- But with 305 interested, we need to decide how to go forward with defining "CURA Membership", and that will be on the Committee's Agenda for the next meeting
- All the activities mentioned earlier are for "PAID-UP" members and partners and/or guests, certainly the President's Holiday Reception is
- Peter Watson and Wendy Watkins will be conducting a survey on how much retirees contribute to the University – the last survey was done 3 years ago
- Josh Beer and Gail Larose mentioned the event hosted by OSFAS (Ottawa Society of the Arts & Science) entitled "Watching paint dry: the fascinating world of polymer physics", to be held on October 12th at the Carleton Dominion Chalmers Centre, 355 Cooper Street, Ottawa ON K2P 0G8 and via Zoom (please contact Gail Larose at glarose0@gmail.com for the Zoom link)
- Under activities there are photos, information on upcoming events and other links that may be of interest. (<https://carleton.ca/cura/>)

Thank you everyone for attending!