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Threats to UTFA members contained in Administration's Trespass Notice

May 24, 2024

Dear colleagues,

As many of you are likely aware, the U of T senior Administration has issued a "trespass notice", which among other things, threatens faculty, librarians, and staff participating in the encampment with fines up to $10,000 and discipline up to and including termination. It expressly references the Memorandum of Agreement between the Administration and UTFA.

To our knowledge, in the relationship between UTFA and the Administration, there has never been a public threat of mass termination of our members for the peaceful and lawful exercise of their freedom of expression and academic freedom.

The Administration's premise—outlined in a communication to the student body by Vice Provost, Students, Professor Sandy Welsh, on April 28, 2024—is that the University's lands are private property and that all unauthorized encampments constitute an act of trespass.

On April 30, 2024, we sent a letter to President Meric Gertler in response, outlining our fundamental disagreement with this premise, which remains unanswered.

Significantly, UTFA became aware of the threats to our members through reports in the media. The Administration provided UTFA with no prior notice.

This is an evolving, and entirely unprecedented situation and we will continue to update you.

We are committed to protecting our members' rights under the Memorandum of Agreement. We are currently seeking legal advice on the best way to do so and will provide an update to you shortly.

Sincerely,

The UTFA Executive

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