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Report of the Chair of the Teaching Stream Committee, 2021-2022

April 15, 2022

This year, a primary goal of the Committee was the development of a better, shared understanding of issues of concern to Teaching Stream members across the University. To this end, the regular Committee meetings were opened to all Teaching Stream faculty. Meetings were well attended, and discussions were active and productive.

The enhanced interest in Committee efforts and issues specific to faculty members in the Teaching Stream is both encouraging and disheartening: it has been encouraging to share information with and learn from greater numbers of faculty in ways that can benefit all, and at the same time disheartening because we are learning more about how widespread and deep-rooted some challenges are, and about some of the unique and troubling ways our Teaching Stream members are experiencing them in different units.

One focus of the Committee's work this year has been an initial exploration of challenges that Teaching Stream members regularly face as they fulfil the goals and responsibilities of the scholarship- and practice-related component of their work. Research-related challenges are not faced equally by all Teaching Stream faculty across the University, but they are encountered in large enough numbers that they cannot be dismissed as aberrations or as localized to only a few units. The Committee continues to learn of faculty who were hired following a demonstration of impressive research or creative/professional practice and whose ability to continue this work is frustrated by a combination of inadequate time, funding, and support. A member survey building on this initial investigation is in development (by the Barriers to Research Working Group) and will allow the Committee to learn more about the impact of these challenges.

Other Committee efforts focus on working conditions, PTR, and pay for the Teaching Stream. These issues intersect in significant ways with other important work of the Association (including existing and potential Association grievances related to pay equity/salary discrimination, student evaluations of teaching [SETs], and Teaching Stream workload), and the Committee is contributing to each of them.

Looking to the future, the Teaching Stream Committee plans to develop clear and regular communications to inform faculty about timely and essential issues, and to create targeted advice (to Teaching Stream members of unit workload committees, for example) to better support them as they exercise their rights.

Thanks

I have been fortunate to work with a stellar group of people this year. I am so very grateful to the members of the Teaching Stream Committee, the guests at our meetings who contributed so generously and insightfully to our discussions, and those people who went above and beyond in their support of the Committee's work, including the past Chair David Roberts, UTFA President Terezia Zorić, and the incredible UTFA staff.

Sherri Helwig
Chair, Teaching Stream Committee

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