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## Report of the Chair of the Librarians Committee, 2022-2023

April 18, 2023

This Committee provides advice on all matters related to the concerns of academic librarians and the profession at U of T.

by Harriet Sonne de Torrens

### Involvement in Working Groups, Negotiating Teams & Committees

In the past year librarians have represented colleagues with faculty in the following working groups and negotiating teams: pay-equity grievance (Kyla Everall, Whitney Kemble), Policies for Librarians (modernizing 1978 policy, chief negotiator, Kathleen Scheaffer, Whitney Kemble, Dan D'Agostino), Academic Continuity Policy, Systemic Bias Working Group (co-led by Whitney Kemble, Kyla Everall), Barriers to Research (MRA) Working Group (Kathryn Barrett, Whitney Kemble), and the Salary, Benefits and Workload negotiating team. In addition to the [UTFA Librarians Committee](#) librarians participated in the following [UTFA committees](#): Appointments Committee (Whitney Kemble), Equity Committee (Kyla Everall), External Affairs Committee (Rea Devakos, James Mason), Membership Committee (Kathleen Scheaffer), 2023 Nominating Committee (James Mason), Pension Committee (James Mason), Retired Members Committee (Kent Weaver, Elinor Fillion, Suzanne Meyers Sawa), Salary, Benefits, Workload and Pension Committee and Teaching Committee. Three members of the UTFA Librarians' Committee sit on the Provostial Advisory Committee on the University of Toronto Library System: Meaghan Valant (UTM), Kathryn Barrett (UTSC) and Alexia Loumankis (St George).

### Principal Investigator Status for Librarians

As a result of the working group's collaborative efforts with University Administration, Librarian ranks I-IV are eligible to serve as Principal Investigators and have access to MRA upon appointment to the UTL system via the ESS platform. MRA submissions from librarians are automatically escalated to the Office of the Chief Librarian, Dean's Office (St. George), or Principal's Office (UTM and UTSC) for approval. UTFA is currently examining the levels of approval. This is historically a first for U of T librarians. *Librarians can now apply for grants to support their open access publications and research contributions to scholarship,*

which they were unable to freely do before, unlike librarians at other Canadian universities.

## **Diving Deeper into Work Experiences of Our Campus Librarians**

This past year the Chair of the Librarians Committee has been involved in issues raised by librarian members concerning hiring practices, transfer of librarians' responsibilities to non-union and non-librarian positions, and academic freedom in the UTL system. Bi-term UTFA meetings with the UTFA Librarians Committee are organized where updates and concerns from across the campus are discussed and shared. Weekly office hours are offered to colleagues with H. Sonne de Torrens, Chair of the UTFA Librarians Committee to discuss sensitive issues. The Chair represents U of T librarians on the CAUT Librarians' and Archivists' Committee and at the annual CAUT Librarians' and Archivists' conference. UTFA librarians have three areas of responsibilities, professional practice, service, and scholarship. *It is vital, therefore, that U of T librarians be recognized in all policies that impact our terms and conditions of work as full academic partners with UTFA faculty.* We are always seeking more membership involvement – contact us if you are interested in participating in UTFA!

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank all UTFA members who have served on this year's [Librarians Committee](#), members of the UTFA Executive, UTFA Council, staff, lawyers, and colleagues in the various negotiating committees who have consistently supported the rights of academic librarianship at the University of Toronto. A special thanks to Jun Nogami and Terezia Zorić for their ongoing committed support.

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