Published on *University of Toronto Faculty Association* (https://www.utfa.org)

Report of the Chair of the Teaching Stream Committee, 2023-2024

April 19, 2024

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Introduction

I have learned so much this past year, my first as a member of the UTFA Executive and Chair of the Teaching Stream Committee. With so much happening (bargaining and an election), it has been 'full on' the entire time, and a swift and steep introduction into the work of UTFA. I can truly say that I have been surrounded by the best mentors for this journey. The members of the UTFA Executive have become among my most beloved colleagues. I am so grateful to have had this opportunity to work alongside them, and learn from the unique leadership strengths that each of them brings.

This year, the Committee held two meetings of the whole, with smaller groups attending to various tasks and projects (e.g. the Barriers to Research survey described in the Report of the Chair of the Appointments Committee, above). The first meeting was held to establish priorities for the year, while the second meeting was an open update on Teaching Stream bargaining town hall, which was available to all Teaching Stream faculty. Both sessions were well-attended, and two more information sessions are scheduled for May 2024. We encourage you to attend.

Current Teaching Stream Landscape

As of November 2023, there were 1,110 Teaching Stream faculty members appointed at the University of Toronto. There has been a fairly steady increase in Teaching Stream appointments over the past two decades, with the most significant growth being Part-Time appointments (see Table 1 below). Full-time Teaching Stream appointments have well outpaced the increase in full-time Tenure Stream appointments over this same period (107% versus 38% growth, respectively).

Table 1: Change in Faculty Complement by Appointment Category (2004 & 2023)

	2004	2023	% Change
Teaching Stream - Continuing Status (FT)	230	476	107%
Teaching Stream - Part-Time	78	325	317%
Teaching Stream - CLTA (Term)	224	309	38%
Tenure Stream - Continuing Status (FT)	1,855	2,298	24%
Tenure Stream - Part Time	16	68	325%
Tenure Stream - CLTA (Term)	237	174	-27%
Totals	2,640	3,650	38%

Note: These numbers are based on the University of Toronto's HRIS data.

Top Concerns Among Teaching Stream Faculty

Precarity for Part-Time Faculty & CLTAs

The AAPM (Academic Administrative Procedures Manual) currently limits Contractually Limited Term Appointments (CLTAs) to a maximum of five years. We are hearing from some members that they are offered part-time appointments (75% instead of 100%) following five years as a full-time CLTA in order to qualify for a continuing appointment; additional casual contract work is sometimes offered to bring the faculty member closer to a full-time salary, which UTFA sees as an improper, precarious work-around to a traditional full-time continuing position. Beyond the obvious problem of a reduction in salary, there are a few additional concerning implications as well: 1) their pensionable earnings are limited to the 75% appointment salary (i.e., they do not include any casual or sessional work added), 2) the policy governing part-time appointments does not protect faculty from being terminated without cause (meaning that there is no real job security) even after they have successfully undergone a review for a continuing appointment. This raises the obvious question: **Why can't the University create pathways to full-time and continuing status appointments for both long-term CLTAs and part-time faculty?**

Many part-time faculty who come to UTFA seeking assistance do so because they feel they have no choice but to accept unfair employment conditions to keep their jobs. With maximum two-year contracts prior to review for a continuing appointment, part-time faculty spend the first six years of their appointments wondering if they will be rehired. CLTAs are in a similar situation, with contracts limited to a maximum of three years at a time for a total of five years total. Part-time faculty also worry about the possibility of their full-time equivalent (FTE) appointment percentages being cut back from year to year. This means that vulnerable part-time faculty and CLTAs are often not in a position to engage to their fullest potential in academic work, in collegial debate with their colleagues about contentious issues, or to protest unreasonable working conditions with their unit heads for resolution–or to grieve violations of their rights.

Workload

Many Teaching Stream faculty, particularly those who are precarious (part-time or pre continuing status), come to UTFA with questions and concerns about the amount of teaching and service they are asked to do relative to their full-time continuing status stream counterparts. Full-time Teaching Stream faculty also often express concerns about heavy teaching course loads that crowd out the "reasonable time" for

research and scholarship that is promised in section 7.2 of the Workload Policy and Procedures (WLPP).

While the WLPP espouses that the University is committed to "[a] fair, reasonable and equitable distribution of workload," the reality often does not live up to this commitment. UTFA's leadership team is working hard to close the gap between the principles that are supposed to guide the assignment of workload in the WLPP and the way in which workload is actually assigned at the local level.

One major piece of the problem is that units are left to define their own workload standards and norms, and these vary widely and typically do not quantify norms in ways that would reasonably allow faculty members to evaluate the fairness, reasonableness, and equity of their assigned workload. Furthermore, service responsibilities are often left undefined, meaning that faculty members are not always fully aware of how much or how little time a particular committee or role will entail until the associated work is upon them. In the context of bargaining, the Administration has refused to acknowledge that our members are overburdened. More detail about our workload discussions at the bargaining table can be found in the Report of the Vice-President, Salary, Benefits, Pensions, and Workload. The Report of the Vice-President, Grievances also contains information about our Association Grievance on Workload and what individual UTFA members who are experiencing unreasonable workloads can do.

Insufficient Respect for the Teaching Stream

Our Teaching Stream faculty members, both full- and part-time, deserve respect and support as teachers, scholars, colleagues, and full contributors to the academic mission of the University. The appointment type is not universally understood and appreciated, however. UTFA has heard many stories of faculty members hired with the promise that Teaching Stream positions 'are basically the same as Tenure Stream, except you just teach more and aren't required to supervise thesis students.' While these may be major differences between these two appointment types, there are many other differences as well: for example, Teaching Stream faculty often face significant barriers to and lack of support for their research, their merit award pools (and thus their merit awards on average) are lower than those of other faculty colleagues, and **until UTFA fought for and won this right a few months ago, Teaching Stream faculty were not eligible for housing support by the Faculty Relocation Office**. (Unfortunately, part-time faculty remain ineligible for this office's services.)

Conclusion

The absence of a collegial governance structure at the University of Toronto is a consequential weak link at our institution. This brings to mind the expression, 'we are only as strong as our weakest link.' I look forward to the efforts ahead with the Executive and Council to make headway on examining all of the options to fix the MoA (as explained in the President's Report) to improve the terms of employment for Teaching Stream faculty and all UTFA members.

A special thank you to Sherri Helwig for her mentorship as I assumed this position and learned the ropes.

Also, thank you to our committee members.

Source URL (modified on Apr 1 2025):https://www.utfa.org/content/report-chair-teaching-stream-committee-2023-2024