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Final Arbitration Update: UTFA Continues To Fight For You

June 3, 2026

Dear UTFA Colleagues,

We write to provide further salary and benefits arbitration updates, following those of May 22 and May 25, 2026.

Specifically, we want to share the additional legal submissions we prepared and filed on our members' behalf last week in response to the Administration's faulty data, disclosed to us only on the eve of the arbitration hearing. We also want to draw your attention to some of the most disrespectful claims being advanced by the Administration as it seeks to depress UTFA members' salaries.

Recall that at the arbitration hearing on Saturday, May 23, 2026, we advocated for a meaningful 4.9% salary increase and reinvestment in PTR, effective July 1, 2026, as well as a series of necessary improvements to our Health Plan and the Child Care Benefit. These proposals are critical to ensuring salaries catch up with the COVID-era inflationary surge and current rising inflation, as well as to maintaining UTFA members' top-of-market position.

The Administration disagreed, instead advocating for a 1.5% across-the-board (ATB) salary increase that would leave UTFA members well short of catching up to inflation and would result in our salaries falling behind those at comparator institutions.

Critical to both parties' positions was the extent to which UTFA members' salaries are falling behind those of other U15 institutions. In recent years, the University of British Columbia has pulled ahead. UTFA's position was unequivocal: a significant adjustment is necessary to restore our top-of-market status.

Throughout the arbitration process, however, the Administration maintained that average faculty salaries at the University of Toronto are the highest in Canada (even though its own data showed that UofT salaries have fallen behind UBC and Queen's in several professorial ranks). To make this claim, it relied on the University and College Academic Staff System ("UCASS"), which normally reports data provided

by each institution in Canada. Of note, the UofT often lags years behind other universities in its submissions to UCASS, which is currently the case; this makes up-to-date institutional comparisons and analyses more difficult, if not impossible.

UTFA disputed the Administration's claim that UofT faculty are already the highest paid and criticized its overreliance on UCASS, which excludes librarians and part-time faculty. We argued that the UCASS data does not represent the full range of UTFA's membership and, in particular, it excludes UTFA's lowest-paid (and most precarious) members. We also had concerns about the data the Administration provided to UCASS and demanded to see the source documents in order to appropriately respond to the Administration's position.

It was not until UTFA sought a Production Order from the Arbitrator to compel the Administration to comply with its production obligations that the Administration disclosed its 2024 submission to UCASS to us, mere hours before the hearing.

At that point we saw that the situation was worse than we thought.

We noticed a **critical** issue: the Administration had mislabeled **all** Teaching Stream faculty. Instead of giving these faculty the codes that corresponded to their rank, they gave Teaching Stream faculty the code that corresponded to the rank "below assistant professor", which "includes lecturers, instructors, and other teaching staff".

When we asked the Administration to confirm that they had coded Teaching Stream faculty in this way, their response was shocking: Teaching Stream faculty "do not hold appointments at the rank of Professor, Associate Professor or Assistant Professor". This directly contradicts a signed agreement on professorial ranks for Teaching Stream professors that recognize accomplishments across the scholarly career.

As we argued in our sur-reply:

Coding teaching stream faculty as ranks below assistant professor is plainly wrong and, frankly, insulting. It is profoundly disrespectful to teaching stream faculty, who are not lesser faculty and are in no way ranked below Assistant Professor. It is also a violation of the parties' 2014 agreement. Teaching stream or tenure stream, at the University of Toronto, a professor is a professor. There is no basis for this misclassification in the UCASS survey.

Not only is mislabelling Teaching Stream faculty insulting, but it also skews the average salaries substantially: removing these members inflated the Administration's calculation of UTFA's average salaries by over **$12,000**. The Administration therefore presented the Arbitrator with a significantly higher version of UTFA's average salaries to argue that we remain top of market.

In its response to our submissions, the Administration did not correct its error. Instead, it doubled down, arguing that "faculty members with appointments in the teaching stream cannot and do not hold the ranks of Professor, Associate Professor or Assistant Professor."

In drawing this clear distinction between the professorial titles in the Tenure and the Teaching Stream, the Administration makes it clear that it does not value the work of our Teaching Stream members who contribute greatly to the academic mission of the University.

Contrary to the Administration's rhetoric, UTFA's proposal of a 4.9% ATB increase ensures that UTFA faculty and librarian salaries will keep pace with inflation and will be top of market. The Administration's 1.5% ATB proposal reflects a real wage cut. In addition, the Administration's selective data inflates the UTFA average salary to create the illusion that our salaries are effectively top of market. Clearly, they are not!

You can read our sur-reply and their response to the sur-reply here:

- UTFA's Sur-Reply, submitted May 27, 2026
- The Administration's Response to UTFA's Sur-Reply, submitted May 29, 2026

As we stated in our Arbitration Newsflash, we have jointly sought an expedited decision from Arbitrator Parmar. We anticipate receiving a decision before the end of June, so that your new salaries and benefits can take effect on July 1, 2026.

As always, we welcome your feedback (via faculty@utfa.org).

Sincerely,

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UTFA President

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UTFA Vice-President, Salary, Benefits, Pensions & Workload

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