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Taking Stock in Challenging Times: UTFA's Organizational and Governance Review

November 26, 2026

The academic sector is rapidly changing, with multiple challenges facing university faculty and librarians. To best respond to the challenges facing our members, UTFA retained the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) in 2025 to conduct an Organizational and Governance Review. (The full document is available here.) UTFA commissioned the review in order to seek recommendations on how to democratize UTFA's internal governance structure, to make our Association more responsive, effective, and efficient, and to better align our structure with other Faculty Associations in the sector. We selected CAUT for its expertise and ability to compare UTFA's structure with those of other Faculty Associations across Canada.

UTFA recently received CAUT's comprehensive Report, prepared over a one-year period. Member engagement exceeded expectations, with over 1400 faculty and librarians participating through interviews, surveys, and submissions.

Nearly 70% of respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with UTFA. While this highlights the high regard in which members hold UTFA, the report identifies room for improvement to more effectively support our members and their interests.

The Report provides an overview of UTFA's history, current structure, and the challenges that lie ahead. CAUT identified the following themes from its review:

- UTFA's Mission and Purpose
- UTFA Council
- UTFA Elections

- Executive Members' Role Clarity, Responsibility, and Accountability
- Workload
- Improving UTFA's Effectiveness

The Executive, therefore, is developing a strategic plan for each of the following general areas:

1. Focusing UTFA's Mission Statement;
2. Reforming the role of UTFA Council to focus on bringing the voice of our membership to the Executive
3. Expanding the number of directly-elected Executive positions to provide more opportunities for member engagement, and defining more clearly the role of Executive Members;
4. Expanding the voice of the membership at general membership meetings;
5. Revamping the structure of existing Committees;
6. Continuing to prioritize bargaining for members, including by reviewing structures and processes that can improve outcomes;
7. Streamlining processes for internal governance to decrease the load on staff time.

The Report is thorough, and there are many additional recommendations. While the Report is critical of inefficiencies and discordancies, it also offers an optimistic roadmap for robust discussions and further engagement opportunities for our members.

The Report is available to all members here.

This Report marks the start–not the end– of UTFA's self-review. As we move into the implementation phase in the new year, your advice and involvement will be essential in shaping whether and how we move forward with the Report's recommendations.

Jun Nogami, UTFA President
On behalf of the UTFA Executive

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