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Bargaining Report #5

August 28, 2015

Background

UTFA's last settlement with the University administration expired on June 30, 2014. Your bargaining team has been negotiating with the University administration for over a year and is determined to reach a fair and reasonable agreement on monetary and non-monetary issues covered under Article 6 of the Memorandum of Agreement. The two parties participated in two full days of mediation on the weekend of May 30th and 31st with Mr. Kevin Burkett. Progress was made, and we agreed to Mr. Burkett's suggestion that the two sides meet again at the end of June. Meanwhile, we worked on refining our position and crafting a response to the University administration's proposals in a sincere effort to reach a mediated settlement. However, after further discussions with both sides, mediator Burkett recommended that we proceed to the arbitration stage.

Next Steps in the Process

The parties have, however, agreed to attempt a further round of mediation under the auspices of Mr. Kaplan, on the weekend of October 3rd and 4th. Should arbitration be required, it will take place on November 21st. We are already discussing with the University administration how any salary increases (including retroactive increases) secured in the settlement or award could be implemented as soon as possible in 2016.

Agreement on July 1, 2015 PTR Implementation

We are happy to report that the University administration has agreed to UTFA's request to distribute this year's PTR awards ahead of a negotiated settlement (or arbitrator's award). PTR amounts will appear in your salary starting in September. There will be a slight anomaly, however. As you know, the amount of PTR funds distributed in any given year increases by the previous year's ATB. Since the July 1, 2014 ATB has not yet been determined, July 1, 2015 PTR will be calculated based on June 30, 2014 PTR breakpoints

and above- and below-breakpoint amounts. After the ATB has been determined, members will receive a small adjustment based on the overall average PTR awarded this year multiplied by the July 1, 2014 ATB %. July 1, 2016 PTR will proceed as normal, with the breakpoints and above- and below-breakpoint amounts reflecting both 2014 and 2015 ATB increases.

Improvements to PTR for the Teaching Stream

The structure of Teaching Stream PTR will be significantly improved, effective July 1, 2015, following the recent policy changes that recognize and strengthen the teaching stream. The breakpoint for Teaching Stream faculty will be increased to $135,400 (from $118,950), the amount in the PTR pool per FTE (which is also the average award) below the breakpoint will be $3,100 (from $2,550) and the amount per FTE above the breakpoint (average award) will increase to $1,800 (from $1,455). In practical terms this means that many more Teaching Stream faculty will be included in the larger below the breakpoint PTR pool and will, on average, receive higher PTR. Teaching stream faculty who remain in the same pool will also receive higher PTR awards on average, since the amounts available in both the above and below breakpoint pools have been increased.

Improvements for Librarians

After reviewing comparator salaries at other universities, UTFA and the University administration have agreed to an increase in the salary of lower-paid librarians. All librarians earning $73,907 or less as of July 1, 2014 will have their annual salaries increased by $2900 (pro-rated for appointments less than 100%). In addition, the salary floors for each librarian rank (I, II, II, and IV) will be increased by $2900, effective July 1, 2014.

Looking Ahead

Bargaining for faculty and librarians at the University of Toronto is always a drawn-out process. We do not enjoy the tight timelines that a certified union is often able to demand, nor does the University administration have incentive to speed up the process. Salary and benefit changes that allow our members to keep pace with inflation and obtain fair and reasonable salary increases and other improvements need to be argued for at the bargaining table.

One of our challenges is to remain patient and persistent throughout the process. We ask our members to consider supporting us by expressing their opinions forcefully and respectfully to members of the University administration (President Gertler and Vice-Presidents Hildyard and Mabury, and Vice-Provost Nelson). Feel free to contact these individuals to encourage them to reach an agreement as swiftly as possible and to respect the basic principles behind UTFA’s bargaining position: fair and reasonable compensation for all faculty and librarians and a salary structure that recognizes the efforts of all our members to maintain U of T’s pre-eminent national and international reputation.

Thank you for your continued interest and support. Please contact the bargaining team at any time with questions or concerns (bargaining@utfa.org).

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Members of the Negotiating Team:

Linda Kohn – Professor, UTM Biology; UTFA Vice-President, University and External Affairs

George Milbrandt – Retired Professor, Faculty of Education

Katharine Rankin – Professor, Department of Geography and Planning; UTFA Council member

Cynthia Messenger – Associate Professor, Teaching Stream, Director of the Writing and Rhetoric Program, Innis College; UTFA Vice-President, Grievances

Bobby Glushko – Scholarly Communications and Copyright Librarian

Paul Hamel – Professor, Department of Laboratory Medicine & Pathobiology; UTFA Executive Member

Scott Prudham – Professor, Department of Geography and Planning and School of the Environment; UTFA President

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