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Report of the Chair of the Librarians Committee, 2015–2016

April 26, 2016

This is my last report for the AGM newsletter as Chair of the Librarians Committee. My term concludes June 30, 2016. It has been a great honour and a tremendous pleasure to work with so many knowledgeable and committed colleagues across our three campuses for the past six years.

This report is a summary and public documentation of the many contributions by faculty and librarians who, over the last ten years, have worked to ensure that the thirty-eight-year-old Policies for Librarians (1978), which has never been signed by UTFA, will be revised and modernized. The quest began in 2006 under the leadership of Rea Devakos, Chair of the Librarians Committee, and continued under her successor, Jeff Newman. As a result of the SJAC negotiations in 2014–2015, we are in a position to discuss Policies for Librarians during Salary, Benefits, Pensions and Workload (SBPW) negotiations. This year has been pivotal for academic librarians at the University of Toronto. The following is an abbreviated outline of the lengthy journey, taken neither lightly nor without prudence, since 2006:

2006	CAUT reviews Policies for Librarians, noting several serious flaws.
2006–2010	UTFA Librarians Committee researches, reviews, and drafts new policies.
2008	Hamish Stewart, Chair of the Appointments Committee, urges UTFA Executive and Council to seek negotiations for up-to-date appointment and promotion policies for librarians in a letter dated April 1, 2008.
2008–2009	Jeff Newman and Rea Devakos give presentations on the flaws of the Policies for Librarians.
2010–2014	Eleven formal and informal consultations take place across the three campuses to discuss policies.
Jun. 2011	UTFA Council passes motion in support of academic librarians.
Oct. 2011	Presentation is made to UTFA Council on policy issues pertaining to librarians.
Mar. 2012	George Luste, President of UTFA, sends letter to Cheryl Misak, Provost, concerning inconsistent practices in hiring and appointing new librarians at U of T.
Apr. 2012	Presentation is made at the UTFA AGM on issues pertaining to the appointment of librarians at U of T.
Fall 2012	Subcommittee is formed to work on researching and drafting policies for librarians.
Jan. 2013	UTFA Council passes Executive motion: “The Executive recognizes the serious flaws in the Policies for Librarians and strongly supports the development of a new appointments policy for academic librarians at the University of Toronto.”
Nov. 2013	UTFA Librarians Committee prepares Guiding Principles for a New Policy.
2013–2015	MoA and SJAC negotiations cause previously frozen policies, including the Policies for Librarians, to be “unfrozen.”
Oct. 2015 – Nov. 2015	Town halls for UTFA librarians are held on the St. George, UTM, and UTSC campuses.
Nov. 2015	UTFA Librarians Survey shows that an overwhelming majority supports the modernization of appointment and promotion policies for librarians.
Dec. 2015	Advisory Committee for Academic Librarians Policies (ACALP) is formed. Jeff McKeil, Collective Bargaining Officer, CAUT, joins the ACALP group. Call for volunteers to ACALP is sent to all librarians.

Dec. 2015 – Jan. 2016	Postcards with overdue notices and with profiles of professional activities of U of T librarians go out to all UTFA members.
Jan. 2016	UTFA Appointments Committee passes motion to support new appointment and promotion policies for librarians.
Feb. 2016	Town halls for UTFA librarians are held on the St. George, UTM, and UTSC campuses.
Apr. 2016	Four town halls for UTFA librarians are held on the St. George, UTM, and UTSC campuses.

After ten years of working with the community on this issue, we are now entering the final phase of outreach to our membership before the next round of SBPW negotiations. The members of our advisory team are taking the lead in this phase, taking input and preparing recommendations for the UTFA Council and negotiating team in 2016–2017.

I would like to thank the many supportive members of the UTFA Executive, Appointments Committee, Council, office staff, and Librarians Committee who over the years have worked so hard to ensure that academic librarians were supported, and without whom none of the above progress on new policies would have transpired. A special thank you to UTFA's out-going President, Scott Prudham, who has staunchly supported our efforts and who has been a keen advocate for the profession of academic librarianship at the University of Toronto during his term.

Harriet Sonne de Torrens
Chair, Librarians Committee

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