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Report of the Chair of the Retired Members Committee, 2015–2016

April 26, 2016

2015 was a significant year for the retired constituency of UTFA. The UTFA Constitution was revised, a new standing committee of UTFA for retired members was approved, and the Retired Academics and Librarians of the University of Toronto (RALUT) ceased to exist. This report highlights some of the key developments and the contribution that the Committee and the constituency are making to UTFA.

RALUT was established in early 2001 and enjoyed a number of successes, including an annual Symposium starting in 2006 and the establishment of Senior College in 2009. On March 16, 2015, UTFA Council approved a motion to establish a new standing committee for retired members. On April 22, at the UTFA AGM, a motion to make changes to UTFA's Constitution (Article III) and Bylaws (Article 14.1) was adopted largely to give effect to UTFA's enhanced efforts to represent and advocate for retired colleagues. On April 23, at the RALUT AGM, the membership voted to dissolve the association. On July 1 the Retired Members Committee was officially in business.

At the time of dissolution, the RALUT membership agreed to donate the association's net assets to the RALUT Boundless Memorial Award. This award has been and continues to be generously supported by both RALUT members and UTFA retirees.

Several retirees agreed to serve on the Retired Members Committee and I want to thank Elinor Fillion, Helen Grad, Lino Grima, Mary Alice Guttman, Ken Lavin, Ruth Pike, Bob Pilliar, Helen Rosenthal, and John Valleau for doing so. We regret that Ruth Pike has since had to step down.

A variety of matters, including benefits, pensions, communications, educational workshops, potential social occasions, the Joint Benefit Committee, CURAC and AROHE, and a JSPP were discussed at the first meeting. Some of these are discussed further below.

The Committee is concerned with several benefits and pensions issues, including the recently concluded negotiations, the Joint Benefits Committee, and the U of T Pensions Committee. In November UTFA noted

its resistance to all proposals designed to freeze retiree benefits at the current levels and to reduce the current out-of-country benefit, and a concern that full pension augmentation could not be achieved. These issues and the proposed multi-employer JSPP will be a major committee concern over the next academic year.

The U of T Pension Committee, established in late 2010, has 20 members, including one retired member. Helen Rosenthal served as our representative from 2010–2011 to 2013–2014, when George Luste succeeded her for 2014–2015. In 2015 Tom Alloway agreed to serve and has now been succeeded by Art Rubinoff. We thank both of them.

As part of the 2010 arbitration award arising from SBP negotiations, Martin Teplitsky established the Joint Benefit Committee. UTFA and the University each appoint three representatives. The terms of reference included review of claims experience, of claim rejection/denial reports, identification of trends or patterns, and review of communication materials for plan members. Paul Downes, Judith Taylor, and Kent Weaver are the current UTFA members. The Committee met in February.

There are about 600 retired colleagues who are members of UTFA. This number fluctuates at the beginning of each calendar year with membership renewals. In addition to those named above serving on the Retired Members Committee, the following UTFA retirees should be acknowledged for their contributions over the past year:

- Tom Alloway – Salaries, Pensions, Benefits and Workload (SBPW) Committee, University of Toronto Pension Committee
- Ed Barbeau – Councillor
- Elinor Fillion – Councillor
- Lino Grima – SBPW Committee, University and External Affairs Committee
- George Milbrandt – SBPW Committee, last year's Bargaining Team
- Mary Alice Guttman – Councillor, Equity Committee, SPBW Committee, the joint committee (UTFA, other employee groups, and U of T Administration) reviewing possible conversion of our pension plan to a single-employer JSPP model
- Margaret Procter – Teaching Stream Committee
- Arthur Rubinoff – U of T Pension Committee
- John Valleau – Councillor, University and External Affairs Committee

As Chair of the Retired Members Committee, I also sit on Executive Committee and am a member of the Grievance Committee, Joint Benefits Committee, and SPBW Committee.

Most academic retiree associations in Canada are independent bodies with loose ties to an academic staff association. The retiree association most like ours is the Retiree Section of the McGill Association of University Teachers.

At the behest of the Retired Members Committee, UTFA has joined the two major organizations representing retired faculty and academic librarians in North America – the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada (CURAC) and the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education (AROHE). More information can be found at http://www.curac.ca/ and http://www.arohe.org/.

Since July 1, 2015 the UTFA retiree constituency has lost several members. We remember Abdo H. Abdelmessih, Alexander Allan, C. Harold Bedford, Albert Breton, Phyllis Grosskurth, Guido Pugliese, Wendy Rolph, Albert E. Safarian, Jeannelle Savona, and Cicely Watson.

As Chair, I want to thank all of the members of the retired constituency for showing their commitment to UTFA by maintaining their membership and to recognize the committee members in particular for their invaluable involvement.

Kent Weaver
Chair, Retired Members Committee

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