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Statement on Equal Pay Day

April 9, 2018

April 10, 2018 marks Equal Pay Day in Ontario. Equal Pay Day is intended to draw attention to the continued gap in earnings between men and women. First proclaimed by the Government of Ontario in 2014, Equal Pay Day is recognized on different dates internationally. In Ontario, the date is selected based on the gap in annual average earnings between men and women. Each year, the date is based on the amount of time women must work past December 31 before they earn the same amount as men. This year, this is an extra 3½ months, which is why the date is being recognized on April 10.

31 years ago, in 1987, the Ontario government passed the *Pay Equity Act*. While this legislation made some progress in addressing the gender wage gap in Ontario, the gap has shown itself to be surprisingly resilient. It was last calculated at 29.4% in Ontario.^[1] The gap has been shown to increase with education. It has also been shown to increase as incomes grow.^[2] In fact, the top 10% of female earners in Ontario have a wage gap of 37% compared to the top 10% of male earners.^[3]

A 2016 OCUFA Report noted that the gender salary gap persists among University professors, and that this problem is worsened because “women are overrepresented in the ranks of poorly paid, precariously employed contract faculty members, which means that despite a shrinking but persistent gap between the salaries of men and women in tenure stream positions, within the broad realm of academic work women on average continue to earn significantly less than their male colleagues”.^[4] Several Canadian universities have taken steps to address this problem. At the University of Waterloo, McMaster University, Western University, Queen’s University, and the University of Windsor studies have found and sought to correct gender salary gaps. Several of these studies also recognized that addressing the cause of the gender salary gap requires measures to address issues of bias in starting salaries and merit increases.

UTFA has investigated the gender salary gap at the University of Toronto and has filed a draft grievance as the first step in seeking redress. UTFA has found evidence of a persistent, systemic, gender salary gap that affects our members. This year, UTFA is recognizing Equal Pay Day by calling on the Administration to take steps to close this gap and to prevent it from re-opening in the future.

[1] Mary Cornish, "[Every Step You take: Ontario's Gender Pay Gap Ladder](#)" (Ontario, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2016), 7.

[2] Ibid., 12.

[3] Ibid., 9.

[4] Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, "[Pay Equity Among Faculty at Ontario's Universities: OCUFA's Submission to the Ontario Gender Wage Gap Steering Committee](#)" (Ontario, OCUFA, 2016), 3.

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