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[Home](#) > U of T Admin Announces Inadequate Pay Increase for Tenure Stream Women Only: A Flawed Process

U of T Admin Announces Inadequate Pay Increase for Tenure Stream Women Only: A Flawed Process

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The Administration has just announced that, at the end of June, it will increase by 1.3% the salary of tenure stream faculty who identify as female. The Provostial Advisory Group on Faculty Gender Pay Equity arrived at this figure by relying on a single methodological approach—multivariate regression analysis. In the next ten days, UTFA will release a Summary Report that outlines UTFA's own findings. UTFA used a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach for all of its members at U of T. This approach identified a probable gender-based salary gap for women in the tenure stream of **at least double the 1.3%** recognized by the Administration. UTFA also found a gender gap for the teaching stream and the librarians. UTFA certainly supports the initial pay increase for tenure stream women, but we believe that it is not enough to redress the discrimination that has impacted women in the tenure stream. And the Administration has so far done nothing to address the salary gap issue in the other streams.

The Administration did not find any statistically significant gender salary gap in the teaching stream, using the same singular methodology, multivariate regression analysis. The Administration did not conduct any analyses of pay inequities for librarians, part-time faculty, or CLTAs. These groups feature disproportionately large numbers of women, and are also among the University's lowest paid academic appointments.

UTFA does not dispute that well-designed multivariate regression analyses may partially illuminate the complex problem of gender pay discrimination, provided that the theoretical assumptions underpinning the regressions are valid to begin with. Unfortunately, UTFA and its experts have concluded that the Administration's regression makes a series of untenable assumptions that significantly undermine its validity. In particular, UTFA is deeply concerned that the Administration's analysis works more to obscure than illuminate the complex problem of the gender pay gap faced by our members. In consultation with a range of experts, UTFA has concluded that the exclusive use of regression analyses to capture the nature and the extent of salary discrimination at U of T is neither analytically rigorous nor statistically reliable.

UTFA's Approach

UTFA indicated in early 2016 that we would pursue a gender salary gap analysis and that we would use the grievance process rather than collective bargaining. In March 2018, UTFA advised the Administration that we planned to file an Association grievance on the matter. UTFA is pursuing these matters through both mediation and the grievance process.

Consulting experts in the course of its inquiry, UTFA undertook the following multiple methodologies:

1. An examination of descriptive statistics
2. A multivariate regression analysis of salary data in every academic stream
3. A review of the robust literature on gender discrimination in the university sector
4. An analysis of how gender bias affects key salary determinants (i.e., starting salaries, merit pay, salary anomaly adjustments, and across-the-board increases)

UTFA's comprehensive analysis confirms that a persistent, pervasive, and systemic gender pay gap exists at U of T. **We will expand on the results listed below in a forthcoming report.**

UTFA FOUND THE FOLLOWING THROUGH ITS INQUIRY:

Probable gender pay gaps, based on descriptive statistics and multivariate regression analyses:

- In the tenure stream in the range of 2.7 to 8.6 %
- In starting salaries for the teaching stream (1.6 to 2.3 %) and the tenure stream (3.8 to 6.9%)
- For Librarian IIIs (3.7 to 9 %)

Gender-based discrimination:

- In PTR for faculty and librarians
- In promotion for faculty and librarians
- In salary adjustments made under the Salary Adjustment Policy
- In precarious appointments
- In start-up funding for new tenure stream faculty

SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION'S ANALYSIS (not an exhaustive list):

- The Administration's analysis was limited to a single methodological approach, regression analysis. The analysis did not include a review of the relevant qualitative research.
- Regressions are tools commonly used by scholars in the fields of Economics, Statistics, and Management. The divergent approaches used, and insights generated in, for example, the areas of Sociology, Labour Studies, and Higher Education Studies—fields and disciplines in which women scholars are significantly better represented—are entirely ignored. These include fields of study in which there are vast scholarly literatures on gender bias and discrimination in the university sector.
- The Administration's analysis used more than 100 dummy variables in both the tenure stream and teaching stream regressions, limiting the power and reliability of the resulting conclusions.
- The Administration's analysis relied on variables that are themselves tainted by gender bias. For example, academic rank was included as a variable, although full professors are disproportionately male.
- The Administration created Home Organization Unit (HOU) and used it as a proxy variable for

academic discipline. Unfortunately, HOU is not a good proxy for discipline. The same discipline makes up several different home units, and several home units comprise faculty in multiple academic disciplines. These conditions in a multi-disciplinary university make the results unreliable and difficult to interpret.

- An additional significant problem related to the Administration's use of Home Organization Unit as a variable relates to its gender-biased nature. Where there are more males in a unit, the salaries skew higher. Inclusion of this gender-biased variable "tainted" the analysis and suppressed gender-related salary differentials.
- The Administration's analysis relied on arbitrarily defined variables, and produced skewed results. For example, in the Administration's teaching stream analysis, the President's Teaching Award was the single variable that conveyed merit. In addition, the teaching stream analysis made an arbitrary distinction between faculty hired within the last 10 years and other faculty. No basis was provided for this distinction. The inclusion of these and other variables makes the Administration's results difficult to interpret.
- The Administration's analysis failed to consider *the determinants of salary* at U of T, or the existing, extensive, research on gender inequity in pay in the university context.

Given all of the above, UTFA has communicated to the University Administration that the gender gap analysis its group of faculty and graduate students conducted is unduly restrictive both in its scope and methodology, and that its results are unreliable.

UTFA has long sought data from the Administration in order to assess discrimination in pay for members of other equity-seeking groups, such as Indigenous and racialized faculty and librarians. The University Administration has consistently indicated that it does not possess these data.

UTFA is committed to the eradication of discrimination that results in inequitable salaries.

Please stay tuned. More information is coming.

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Email faculty@utfa.org with questions or comments

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