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OCUFA's Status of Women and Equity Committee Statement on International Women's Day

March 8, 2020

OCUFA's Status of Women and Equity Committee

Dear colleagues,

On International Women's Day, the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations' Status of Women and Equity Committee (SWEC) celebrates the achievements made by women, trans, gender-diverse, and non-binary faculty and academic librarians towards workplace equity on Ontario campuses.

Addressing employment equity within and across academic institutions continues to be a priority issue for SWEC. We applaud Ontario faculty associations who have made significant gains towards addressing gender-based inequities such as gendered salary anomalies and enhancing provisions for parents and caregivers in their workplaces. The tireless efforts of these gender equity champions have made significant differences in the lives of academic staff.

While we celebrate these achievements, there is still more work to be done.

On campuses across Ontario, women, trans, and gender-diverse faculty continue to be underrepresented as full-time, tenure-stream faculty and librarian appointments and overrepresented in precarious, short-term contract positions. This discrepancy is more pronounced for those marginalized by multiple aspects of their identities including Indigeneity, race, sexuality, and ability.

The provincial government's Bill 124, which caps public sector wage increases at 1%, further exacerbates gender pay gaps by denying faculty unions the ability to negotiate better compensation for these contract faculty members. This cap will deny fair wages and benefits to thousands of academic staff working term-to-term and already struggling to make ends meet, including taking care of their families.

SWEC also urges the provincial government to reverse the unnecessary metrics being implemented

through the new performance-based funding model. These ill-conceived metrics have the potential to adversely impact students belonging to underrepresented communities in programs that are often taught by women and gender-diverse faculty.

We join with our colleagues who work on short-term, precarious contracts in calling on the government to provide increased stable, reliable funding to postsecondary institutions to improve the lives of women, trans, and gender-diverse faculty and academic librarians in the province.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Godderis, SWEC Chair

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