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Report of the Chair of the Teaching Stream Committee, 2019-2020

July 2, 2020

This year the Teaching Stream Committee worked to build on the important work of previous committees, in documenting the needs and concerns of teaching stream faculty while advocating for improved working conditions and support for the stream. In recent years, UTFA has made great strides in areas important to teaching stream faculty, such as the professorial title, but our work is not finished.

Prior to the pandemic, the main issues that were the focus of the Committee's work were:

- Mental health—of both our students and our faculty;
- Questions of equity—within the teaching stream and in the broader faculty landscape at U of T; and,
- Better support for teaching stream faculty who would like to conduct research and other forms of scholarship, whether pedagogical or disciplinary.

Here, briefly, are some of the ways in which we have worked on these issues.

Mental Health
Mental health and campus climate continue to be pressing concerns at the University of Toronto. The Committee has discussed how mental health concerns manifest uniquely in the teaching stream. We continue to seek ways to improve working conditions and supports for teaching stream faculty.

Equity
We are concerned about inequities both within the teaching stream and across faculty streams. We continue to collect data and examples of the inequities that faculty experience and we are working to support attempts to address these inequities through various mechanisms such as the grievance process and the current round of bargaining.

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Professional Practice within the Teaching Stream

UTFA is committed to the principle that teaching stream faculty are full partners in the scholarly and intellectual functions of the University of Toronto. We also believe that research, scholarship, and creative professional practices are intimately connected to the quality of teaching practice. To better understand and document the experiences of members of the teaching stream with regards to research and other scholarly activities, we conducted a survey of teaching stream faculty. The data from this survey has already informed UTFA's work to address workload issues on various fronts and will continue to inform organizing on support for research, scholarship and creative professional practice in the stream.

The pandemic, with its physical distancing mandates, the rapid shift to online teaching, the increased familial and community responsibilities of our members, along with many other associated challenges, has significantly impacted our working lives. This spring, much of my work has been focused on understanding the impact of these shifts on the workload of teaching stream faculty and using this to inform UTFA's demands for improved support for faculty as they work through these shifts. This work is intimately related to the three priorities I identified above and underscores the need for continued dialogue and advocacy in these arenas.

I welcome your thoughts on these issues or any other that you would like to see the Teaching Stream Committee address. Please do not hesitate to contact me—and if you have capacity to join us on the Committee, even better.

David J. Roberts
Chair, Teaching Stream Committee

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