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Join us for UTFA's AGM this Thursday!

October 27, 2020

Dear UTFA Colleague,

I'm writing to encourage you to attend this Thursday's Annual General Meeting, and also to provide you with a brief update on UTFA's Salary, Benefits, and Workload Negotiations.

1. **UTFA's AGM is Thursday, October 29, 2020, 4-6 p.m.**

We hope you will join us in an important conversation about ***Creating the University We Want During and After the Pandemic***. To register, and or to offer a brief question or comment for our panel, email faculty@utfa.org. This event will also feature a more detailed update and Q & A on UTFA's Salary, Benefits, and Workload Negotiations; Reports on UTFA's work of behalf of Faculty and Librarians; and a tribute to Past President Cynthia Messenger. (Click here to see a detailed agenda and minutes from previous years' meetings.)

2. **Brief Update on Negotiations (with Jun Nogami, UTFA's VP, Salary, Benefits, Pensions, and Workload).**

When UTFA last wrote you a detailed account of UTFA's SBPW negotiations with the Administration, we stated that:

… the Administration's refusal to implement PTR for July 1, 2020, comes at a time when UTFA members have been called upon to make herculean efforts to assist the University's continued operation during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic—including the sudden and unexpected transition to remote-delivery work in the Winter 2020 Term. In UTFA's view, this refusal to compensate UTFA members for their performance during the 2019-20 year in a timely way, in addition to constituting a breach of the 2018 Settlement, devalues the extraordinary contributions of UTFA members…

The Administration's ongoing refusal to pay UTFA members the PTR they earned in 2019-2020 is a deliberate choice, rather than an inevitable or unavoidable consequence of ongoing bargaining in this

round—as it has sometimes been portrayed by deans to our members. UTFA and the Administration are scheduled to appear before Arbitrator William Kaplan, who remains seized in relation to this dispute, on Thursday November 5, 2020.

When UTFA last wrote, we also noted that:

The impact of the pandemic on nearly every dimension of our members' work—detailed in a record-breaking number of responses to UTFA's three member surveys—has meant that UTFA is seeking to address a series of urgent issues. These include (but are not limited to) efforts to:

- *protect the health and safety of our members;*
- *streamline the accommodation process for members who have caregiving responsibilities and/or are at high risk of severe illness due to COVID-19;*
- *enhance job security for precarious members; and*
- *rein in excessive workloads.*

Through the spring and early summer, UTFA's negotiating team tabled an extensive list of proposals based on member feedback and pursued these and related goals (e.g. increasing TA and technical support) diligently through several bilateral (face-to-face) meetings with the Administration. We struggled to have meaningful dialogue on issues of substance. When it became clear that the two sides were very far apart, by mutual agreement further bi-lateral meetings were put off until such time that the financial picture for the University (including student enrolments for 2020-2021) was clarified.

In October, we restarted the bargaining process. **We have asked for a fair and reasonable settlement for both ATB and PTR, in recognition of the extraordinary work done by U of T faculty and librarians when the pandemic began and in preparation for the current academic year.** Our proposals also reflect concerns about dramatically increased workloads due to the sudden and insufficiently supported shifts to remote, online, or hybrid models of teaching and service work. Unfortunately, the Administration's official story about its finances—widely shared with deans and other Administrators—remains unchanged, despite the fact that Fall enrollments at U of T have not seen a significant drop. In fact, enrollment at U of T has grown overall by about 7% according to the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA). UTFA's SBPW Negotiating team will continue to advocate for a fair and reasonable settlement that is responsive to our members' needs and priorities.

To learn more about Salary, Benefit, and Workload Negotiations, and the other areas in which UTFA is advocating on your behalf, be sure to register at faculty@utfa.org and attend on Thursday!

Sincerely,

Terezia Zorić
President
University of Toronto Faculty Association
720 Spadina Avenue | Suite 419
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2T9

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