Published on *University of Toronto Faculty Association* (https://www.utfa.org)

Update on July 1, 2020 PTR and Update on Current Round of SBPW Negotiations

November 25, 2020

Update on July 1, 2020 PTR:

UTFA is continuing to receive a large and increasing number of inquiries from faculty members and librarians who are concerned about the status of the PTR payment that members expected to receive on July 1, 2020. This PTR increase was earned during the 2019-2020 academic year and reflects the outcome of ***last year's*** (June 30, 2020) PTR process.

The Administration is asserting that it is not obliged to implement 2019-2020 PTR increases because Salary, Benefits, Pensions, and Workload (SBPW) negotiations for 2020-2021 are ongoing. This is both inconsistent with what UTFA previously negotiated and a clear departure from the practice that has been consistently followed for at least a decade. For example, despite the fact that SBPW negotiations were ongoing on each of the following dates, PTR payments were made on July 1, 2011, July 1, 2014, and July 1, 2017. Notably, **the withholding of your July 1, 2020 PTR is neither necessary nor inevitable.** Rather, it is a choice that is being made by the University's Senior Administration.

To be sure, the Administration has all that it requires to grant PTR increases to UTFA members in fulfillment of the PTR process ending June 30, 2020. The Administration's failure to make the July 1, 2020 PTR payment violates the April 25, 2018 Memorandum of Settlement between the parties, which clearly states that "PTR breakpoints and increments will move [….] by 2% for the June 30, 2020 PTR exercise".

Since at least April 2020, UTFA has been pressing the Administration to adhere to past practice and honour our agreement. In the face of the Administration's ongoing refusal to do so, UTFA sought to bring the dispute before Arbitrator William Kaplan for an expedited hearing before June 30, 2020 with the hope that he would be able to assist the parties in quickly resolving the issue. Unfortunately, and despite UTFA's best efforts, we have not yet been able to argue the substantive merits of our case before Mr. Kaplan. However, UTFA continues to make every effort to reach the earliest possible resolution and has recently secured a hearing date of December 17, 2020. In the event Arbitrator Kaplan is unable to

resolve the matter, an UTFA Association grievance will provide another forum to challenge the Administration's ongoing refusal to pay our members their July 1, 2020 PTR.

Finally, it bears emphasizing that not all faculty and librarians at U of T are being denied last year's PTR increases. Notably, despite the fact that their bargaining process was (and still is) ongoing, our colleagues working within a certified bargaining unit at St. Michael's College received their 2019-2020 PTR increases on July 1, 2020. U of T Senior Administration has taken the position that UTFA does not enjoy the same rights and protections under the *Ontario Labour Relations Act* as do our St. Mike's colleagues.

It is our strong belief that the Administration's ongoing refusal to pay last year's PTR to our membership is both wrong and deeply disrespectful, and we will continue to do everything in our power to resolve this issue.

Update on Current Round of SBPW Negotiations

Prior to the current round of SBPW negotiations, UTFA's team consulted at length with our faculty and librarian members, and tabled proposals with the U of T Administration that reflected the issues that were identified as being of the greatest importance.

UTFA members identified the following priority items for this round of negotiations:

- Workload;
- Accommodation;
- Precarious appointments;
- Student course evaluations/Student evaluations of teaching;
- Benefits;
- ATB;
- PTR; and
- Health and Safety.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the need to address these issues.

UTFA's bargaining team has invited the senior administrators who sit 'across the table' from us in bargaining to engage in keeping with our shared values and joint responsibilities to the UTFA membership. We have also proposed a phased approach to assist the parties to proceed through the bargaining process.

UTFA's bargaining team has encountered resistance from the Administration to commonly accepted features of bargaining, including: engagement in meaningful discussions, the presentation of concrete written positions/counter-proposals, and movement on positions to address key issues identified by our members.

This resistance on the part of the Administration would prove frustrating in any round of bargaining. However, it is particularly so during a pandemic that has produced major challenges for faculty and librarians who have been working extremely hard while seeking to uphold U of T's standards of excellence in teaching, professional practice, research and scholarship, and service.

It is important to understand the University of Toronto's financial position. U of T's has had a 7% increase

in student enrollment this fall and a carry-forward of hundreds of millions of dollars for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. This financial position makes it clear that the U of T is more than well enough resourced financially to: 1) support the salaries of *all* its staff; and, 2) provide effective supports to lessen the ongoing heavy burdens being borne by its faculty and librarians.

Administrations at other Canadian and Ontario universities have negotiated agreements with their Faculty Associations to respond to their identified priorities during the pandemic. **We ask U of T's Administration to do the same for UTFA members.**

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on behalf of the UTFA SBPW Negotiating Team

Source URL (modified on Dec 3 2020):https://www.utfa.org/content/update-july-1-2020-ptr-and-update-current-round-sbpw-negotiations