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Update on CAUT censure

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As you know, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) recently issued a [rare censure](#) against UofT's Administration in response to the hiring controversy at the Faculty of Law. Following that decision, UTFA organized an information session on May 6, 2021 with CAUT's Executive Director, David Robinson, to explain the censure process.

UTFA is a member of CAUT. CAUT is a highly valued, democratic organization that speaks as a respected national voice for faculty, librarians, and other academic staff across Canada's post-secondary sector. It is clear that CAUT Council came to its censure decision by way of an informed process.

The well-attended session addressed more than two dozen questions from our members. Following on the questions from this session, UTFA is preparing an FAQ document on the censure that we plan to have up on our website soon. We are also encouraging our members to learn more about the issues at stake and to participate in the many conversations about the censure that are taking place across the University and beyond.

The principles at the heart of the censure decision are of fundamental importance to UTFA. These principles include:

- Academic freedom;
- Collegial governance;
- Non-discrimination;
- Due process; and
- Freedom from external interference.

Recall that UTFA is pursuing its own distinct, internal, legal process to address our concerns under our *Memorandum of Agreement* with the UofT Administration. Specifically, UTFA has filed an Association grievance, which will be proceeding to mediation, and a second related group grievance on behalf of a number of members of the Faculty of Law. At the crux of the two grievances is the allegation that the University Administration breached the core principles of academic freedom and collegial governance as protected under Articles 5 and 9 of the *Memorandum of Agreement*, and of the University's *Statement of*

Institutional Purpose and Statement on Freedom of Speech. Note that Article 9 protects UTFA members from discrimination on the basis of religious or political affiliation or belief, or any activity pursuant to the principles of academic freedom—as well as any of the grounds set out in the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.

Many who attended UTFA's information session asked UTFA to organize one or more follow-up sessions for our members to address the question of how the UofT Administration came to be censured. We are organizing such an event and will send out details soon. Following that event, I will ask UTFA Council to vote to formally endorse the CAUT censure.

Finally, UTFA has been contacted by several members who have felt threatened with reprisals in relation to their expressions of support for the CAUT censure of the UofT Administration. UTFA will continue to vigorously defend our members' academic freedom and right to free speech in relation to the censure itself.

Terezia Zorić
President, University of Toronto Faculty Association

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