

**UTFA**  
**Annual General Meeting 2021-2022**  
**Tuesday, April 19, 2022, 4:00 – 6:00 P.M.**  
**Via Zoom**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

H. Russell called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

H. Russell welcomed the members to the third UTFA online AGM. He confirmed that UTFA's quorum requirement of 100 members had been met.

H. Russell introduced himself as the Speaker for UTFA Council and moderator for the AGM.

1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Land (Joseph Carens)

J. Carens read the acknowledgement of Traditional Land.

2. Review of the Agenda

H. Russell reviewed the agenda with the members. As set out in the Constitution, the agenda was approved by the UTFA Council at its March meeting.

H. Russell welcomed the following guests:

- Jim Turk, founder of the Centre for Free Expression
- Sue Wurtele, OCUFA President
- Jenny Ahn, OCUFA Executive Director
- Rose Da Costa, Assistant to OCUFA Executive Director
- Hugh Mackenzie, Consultant to UTFA in bargaining and the UPP Trustee

3. Minutes of 2020–2021 AGM

H. Russell said that the minutes from the 2021 AGM, held on April 27, 2021, were provided to the members and are available on the UTFA website.

As there were no changes to the April 27, 2021, AGM minutes, they were approved as distributed.

4. Welcome and President's Remarks (Terezia Zorić)

T. Zorić welcomed the members and thanked them for attending the meeting. She acknowledged the heavy workloads and other extraordinary professional and personal demands many members have faced while seeking to support student learning and the broader education purposes of the University. She provided several examples of the many issues that have led to these heavy

workloads, including, but not limited to, the pandemic. UTFA has been working hard to help our members address their individual and shared difficulties. As a result of our advocacy, we achieved some important agreements with the Administration, including policy changes and accommodations.

T. Zorić updated the members on the recent three-year agreement under Bill 124 and the COVID Letter of Understanding and discussed how UTFA was going to proceed in the coming arbitration. UTFA's top priority is to defend equal health benefits for retirees and resist the Administration's efforts to establish a two-tier system.

T. Zorić spoke about the need to reform and improve the Memorandum of Agreement (*Memorandum* or MoA), originally signed in 1977. Although it has been updated a few times, such as with the agreement to eliminate mandatory retirement and the Special Joint Advisory Committee (SJAC) expansion which outlines the list of topics that UTFA can bargain for, there is more to be done regarding the dispute resolution processes.

T. Zorić said that the values of equity, anti-racism, and justice are at the heart of UTFA's commitment to be inclusive and represent all its members. Sometimes these commitments entail collaborating with the Administration to make positive changes, as with U of T's Anti-Black Racism Task Force, the Antisemitism Working Group, and the Anti-Islamophobia Working Group. U of T must also take more seriously the threat of anti-Asian racism.

T. Zorić briefly discussed the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) censure motion, the Association grievance on salary discrimination, and the work of ensuring that the University Pension Plan (UPP) invests ethically and responsibly.

T. Zorić said that UTFA has continued its principled advocacy over the past year to protect the health and safety of students, staff, faculty, and librarians by effectively pressing for a safer response to COVID and safer conditions for returning to in-person work. We could not do this work without listening carefully to and being aligned with our expert advisory group of internationally recognized public health scientists. One of UTFA's core responsibilities is to advocate that faculty and librarians are treated fairly and are not subject to arbitrary decisions or unfair biases by those in positions of power at U of T.

T. Zorić said that the last year has reinforced the importance of UTFA's work promoting the common good. We understand that the support that the University has provided to faculty and librarians to meet unprecedented difficulties has been uneven at best, and too often inadequate. Even when the general crisis subsides, some will face ongoing problems from the effects of the pandemic, and we promise not to lose sight of these concerns and the need to have adequate policies to address them. T. Zorić encouraged the members to read the AGM Newsletter to find out about various activities in which they might wish to participate.

T. Zorić expressed her thanks to the members of the UTFA Executive, Council, and committees, who resolve issues and bring energy to the work of the Association; to UTFA's dedicated office staff, who carry out the day-to-day tasks required to ensure that UTFA meets the needs of its

members; to UTFA's insightful legal team, who support and advise our members; and to UTFA's Executive Director, K. Johnson, who never fails to provide strategic advice to the Association.

5. Featured Q&A-based discussion: Jim Turk, found of the [Centre for Free Expression](#), with Rinaldo Walcott and Judith Taylor

J. Taylor introduced J. Turk and R. Walcott.

J. Turk is a Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Ryerson University and the Director of Ryerson University's (now called Toronto Metropolitan University) Centre for Free Expression. From 1998 to June 2014, he served as the Executive Director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT).

R. Walcott is a professor in the Women and Gender Studies Institute (WGSJ) at U of T and the author of *The Long Emancipation: Moving Toward Black Freedom* (Duke, 2021).

J. Taylor is the Interim Chair of the UTFA Membership Committee and the Council representative for Sociology, Anthropology, and Socio-Legal Studies, and a jointly appointed associate professor of Sociology and WGSJ.

J. Taylor spoke about the WGSJ, academic freedom on a global stage, and the widespread influence of J. Turk's work on academic freedom. She introduced the conversation and encouraged members to visit the Centre's website under [Events](#) to view and listen to Centre-hosted talks and panels to get a sense of the Centre's priorities and vision.

J. Turk spoke about his background, how he became the Director of the Centre for Free Expression, and the initiatives the Centre is involved in. These include 80 public panels that were recorded and are posted on the Centre's website.

The panelists answered several questions.

J. Taylor thanked J. Turk and R. Walcott and noted that UTFA is happy to host further and more in-depth discussions in the next academic year as we build a friendship with the Centre and its projects.

6. Greetings: Sue Wurtele, OCUFA President

S. Wurtele thanked T. Zorić and the members for inviting her to speak. She introduced J. Ahn, OCUFA's Executive Director.

S. Wurtele spoke about current threats to collegial governance at universities. She outlined the various ways universities create these threats and what faculty and librarians need to do to take back some of the power that has been taken away from them to engage in collegial decision-making. She cited what took place at Laurentian University as an example of a manufactured crisis, the signs of which the provincial government ignored.

OCUFA is holding a workshop on May 6 called "The Erosion of Collegial Governance: Reclaiming Lost Ground." It will be a hands-on, training-focused event aimed at supporting

OCUFA member associations and faculty and academic librarian representatives on governing bodies in their advocacy and activism around shared governance.

S. Wurtele said that the work OCUFA does is a counterbalance to administrations and governments. It amplifies the voices of its members while defending academic freedom and public institutions.

S. Wurtele thanked the members for their time and commitment.

7. Presentation of the UTFA Academic Citizenship Award (Judith Taylor and Terezia Zorić)

UTFA's 2021 Academic Citizenship Award honours faculty members from the Dalla Lana School of Public Health: Professors Arjumand Siddiqi, Ashleigh Tuite, David Fisman, James Scott, Jeffrey Siegel, and Paul Bozek

J. Taylor said that the UTFA Academic Citizenship Award is being given to Professors Arjumand Siddiqi, Ashleigh Tuite, David Fisman, James Scott, Jeffrey Siegel, and Paul Bozek, all from the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, for their extraordinary contribution to the health, safety, and well-being of the University of Toronto community.

J. Taylor said that this award was developed in 2016 and she outlined its terms of reference. Previous recipients were Alissa Trotz, Andrew Clement, Deb Cowan, Heidi Bohaker, Lisa Austin, and Stephanie Perrin.

J. Nogami said that UTFA is proud to present the 2021 Academic Citizenship Award to the above-noted professors. These UTFA members were nominated for effectively advocating for the adoption of best practices in health and safety during the global COVID-19 pandemic. J. Nogami outlined their work, especially on the Central Health and Safety Committee (CHSC), over the past two years. Collectively and individually, they advocated for principled policy and practice, shared their expertise with an international community, and expertly and generously provided advice to faculty, librarians, staff, students, and members of our broader community. They also advised UTFA on the best approaches to protecting the University community from COVID-19, all while conducting and disseminating their own world-class research and scholarship during a once-in-a-century public health crisis.

T. Zorić said that these faculty members dedicated countless hours to working for UTFA at the CHSC, for the public, as well as advising provincial and federal governments and other groups. We were and are safer because of the contributions of these hard-working scholars, and UTFA is deeply honoured to count them among its members.

T. Zorić invited the members to show their appreciation for the award recipients through virtual applause.

8. Reports of the 2021–2022 UTFA Officers and Chairs of Committees

H. Russell noted that the reports of the Officers and Chairs of committees, as well as information about the University Pension Plan, were published in the AGM Newsletter and would not be read at the meeting.

Officers, Committee Chairs, and the Past President introduced themselves and answered questions on their portfolios and the University Pension Plan (UPP).

T. Zorić said that members do not have to be on Council to join one of UTFA's many committees. Any member can join, although Council does approve the committee membership.

9. Presentation of UTFA Student Award Recipients (Roy Gillis)

2022 UTFA Al Miller Memorial Awards

2022 UTFA Undergraduate Tuition Awards

R. Gillis announced that Alaa Alsaafin, a PhD candidate in Pharmacology & Toxicology, received the 2022 UTFA Al Miller Memorial Award. R. Gillis also announced the two recipients of the 2022 UTFA Undergraduate Tuition Awards, Nicolas Vergara Ruiz, who is majoring in Cell and Molecular Biology, and Inioluwa Ajenifuga, who is majoring in Finance and Economics at Rotman Commerce.

R. Gillis said that these awards are based on academic achievement and financial need.

R. Gillis congratulated the award recipients and thanked the University and External Affairs Committee for administering the awards.

10. Other business and questions from the floor

T. Zorić invited the U of T health experts to provide an update on COVID-19. D. Fisman and A. Siddiqi spoke about the next wave of COVID-19 and how the removal of some public health restrictions, including mask mandates, is significantly increasing the number of those affected. They agreed that we should continue to be vigilant to protect ourselves.

H. Russell thanked the members for attending the meeting and the staff for their work.

11. Adjournment

**Motion** by T. Zorić, seconded by J. Nogami, that the meeting adjourn. **Carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Chris Penn  
Senior Administrative Assistant