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November 9, 2010

Professor Cheryl Misak
Vice-President and Provost
Simcoe Hall
Room 225, 27 King's College Circle
University of Toronto

Dear Professor Misak:

Re: Association Grievance re FAS Academic Plan

I am writing to propose a possible framework for resolution of the Association grievance prompted by the Faculty of Arts and Science Academic Plan 2010-2015. UTFA filed this grievance on September 17, 2010, and discussed it with you at Joint Committee on October 6, 2010. UTFA reserves the right to inform members of the fact and content of this proposal, and does not consider this letter to be confidential.

Several of the recommendations that flowed from the FAS Academic Plan were sweeping and unprecedented and were plainly detrimental to faculty and the reputation of the University. The Dean's July 14, 2010, memo that accompanied release of the Plan stated, "The real work of implementation now begins." This memo indicates that the Administration was prepared to reallocate faculty, including tenured faculty, to revoke departmental status or its equivalent from a number of units, and to close centres, all of which could have adversely affected the academic appointments of faculty. This is to say nothing of the impact on staff, undergraduate and graduate students, and the wider community that is so heavily invested in our public university. As you know, from the perspective of UTFA, the process that produced the FAS Academic Plan was seriously flawed. This process lacked transparency, collegiality and inclusiveness. The Administration did not consult adequately with affected units, faculty members, librarians, staff, and UTFA prior to the finalization of the Plan; nor did the Administration share the financial rationales that were apparently driving academic planning.

The Administration began implementing closures and amalgamations prior to approval by the affected units, Faculty Council, or Academic Board. For example, FAS Human Resources administrators met over the summer with USW support staff and advised that they should begin looking for other jobs. Hasty implementation has meant losses of one kind or another in some units, including the loss of valued staff members. On the issue of

implementation, see the July 2010 memos from Vice-Dean Robert Baker to graduate students, in which he clearly presumes that execution of the Plan, including the dis-establishment of some departments, will occur (<http://www.utfa.org/content/association-grievances-and-decisions>). UTFA notes that Vice-Dean Baker later re-issued these memos, revising the earlier references to implementation.

As UTFA articulated to you in a letter dated September 10, 2010, the shortcomings in the FAS planning process reveal the absence at the University of Toronto of any prescribed or well-understood process for academic planning—and collegial participation in such processes—of the type common at other Ontario universities.

As a result of widespread protests from faculty, students, donors, staff, and other stakeholders, and under the additional pressure brought by UTFA's grievance, the Administration has withdrawn most of its recommendations, in whole or in part. Nevertheless, proposals that would have significant consequences for some units appear to remain in play. Neither details of these proposals nor new plans and agreements have been fully and formally disclosed.

In light of the above-noted events and circumstances, and because UTFA represents faculty and librarians whose working conditions, academic freedom, and career trajectories are affected by academic planning, UTFA proposes settling the Association grievance in accordance with the following general framework:

1. UTFA and the Administration immediately establish a joint committee, titled the Joint Academic Planning Committee, consisting of equal numbers of representatives of each party (with each selecting its own) to develop a mutually agreeable process for university-wide academic planning and program restructuring. This Joint Academic Planning Committee will consult widely with faculty members, librarians, students, and community stakeholders. It will also consult fully with the University's other employee groups, as appropriate.

The academic planning process that will result from the Joint Committee's work will be founded on shared governance, transparency, equitable representation, inclusiveness, and collegiality and will ensure that all relevant information, including financial information, is shared and all reasonable proposals are considered. The new planning process will also ensure full consultation with all affected units, faculty members, librarians, students, staff, UTFA, and other stakeholders.

2. The parties agree that the process for academic planning and program restructuring will be added to the list of matters subject to Article 6 of the Memorandum of Agreement. To that end, in the event that the parties are unable to agree on the details of the Joint Academic Planning Committee and/or the details of a new process for academic planning, negotiations will be moved to the upcoming round of bargaining between UTFA and the Administration (commencing winter 2011). If necessary, the matter will be referred to dispute resolution under Article 6. Referral to the Article 6 process will occur either when the parties enter into mediation or prior to the finalization of a mutually negotiated Article 6 settlement, as is appropriate.

Further, recognizing that the FAS Academic Plan has undergone significant changes over the late summer and fall months, and acknowledging the need for academic planning in FAS to move forward, UTFA is willing to consider settling those aspects of the Association grievance specific to the current FAS Academic Plan on an expedited basis. The two parties must agree, however, on a Joint Academic Planning Committee to develop a mutually agreeable framework for university-wide academic planning and program restructuring. In addition, to formulate a proposal on settling any portion of the grievance, UTFA needs answers to the following questions:

- a) It appears that the FAS Academic Plan no longer exists in the form in which it was issued on July 14, 2010. Is a new or modified Plan being developed? If so, what process is being followed to develop a new Plan? Who is formulating the recommendations? What planning guidelines are governing the process?
- b) What is the rationale, if any for the proposed program change and restructuring? How do the proposed changes address any such concerns?
- c) What role did budgetary considerations play in the original proposals in the Plan of July 14? What are the detailed budgetary implications of and academic justifications for the elements of the Plan that remain?
- d) What steps have been taken toward implementation of any parts of the Plan, either in the form it took on July 14 or as it exists today?
- e) Which of the University's governance bodies will be asked to approve any further academic planning for the five-year period covered by the now (largely) defunct Plan? What will be their role?
- f) What meetings or consultations have taken place involving you, the FAS Dean, or persons from either of your offices, with faculty, librarians, departments or schools regarding the FAS academic plan? With whom have you met, and what is the status of these consultations or the process of engagement?
- g) What is the status of any and all discussions, proposals, and agreements with individuals or units related to the academic Plan? Please provide copies or summaries of any and all agreements that have been reached.
- h) What are the details of the new recommendations for each of the affected units? What conditions, if any, are being put on individuals and/or units? What documents are chairs and/or faculty being asked to sign?
- i) What steps have been taken toward implementation of the Plan?
- j) What staff changes are anticipated as a result of any and all agreements that have been reached or proposals being discussed?

- k) What effect will the Academic Plan have on graduate students? In particular, please provide any information on changes to the number of graduate student spaces, graduate student funding, and intake policies. Has the crisis caused by the troubled planning process resulted in any change in the number of graduate student applications in any of the affected departments?

UTFA believes that it would be in the best interests of faculty and librarians and the University Administration to establish a mutually agreeable process for academic planning that respects the principles of collegial governance and the provisions of the Memorandum of Agreement.

UTFA reserves the right to refer this grievance to the Grievance Review Panel.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

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