

Renan Levine

From: Renan Levine
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2023 7:40 AM
To: Terezia Zoric; Council_B; Council_A
Cc: Brian McDonagh
Subject: RE: VP, Grievances, position

Dear Professor McDonagh,

I am sad & surprised to hear of your departure from UTFA's Executive.

Thank you for your diligent work on behalf of UTFA since you joined Council in 2014, and especially for your service as VP, Grievances, since July 2020. You became Vice President during remarkable times, and your workload reflected that. I recall one email you sent to me in 2021, where you mentioned that the grievance work had increased by around 160% compared to the previous year! Your AGM reports said even more: you inherited over 200 open matters in 2020, 331 inquiries were made in your first year as VP, and then the number jumped to a record 517 member inquiries in 2020-2021!

Since you previously worked as a steward with CUPE 3902, I'm sure you had an idea of the work that would be required of you as UTFA's VP of Grievances before you took office, but the sustained increases in the number of members who came to UTFA seeking help must have been quite unexpected, and no doubt required many more hours of your time beyond your initial expectations. I am certain that your dedication to our colleagues who had concerns with salary anomalies, tenure denials, unfair department policies, health and safety, PERA & CERF, workplace investigations, and accommodation issues was greatly appreciated by our membership.

I'd be remiss if I didn't also highlight for my council colleagues your work on the part-time appointments policy. For years, you have been the one, or one of the only, part-time faculty members on Council and/or the Executive. You provided effective and knowledgeable representation for a group of members whose voices are infrequently heard on Council and the Executive during a crucial period as the Continuing Appointment category rolled out, and the COVID-19 pandemic led to many concerns about job security for part-timers and CLTA's. I have no doubt that your sensitivity to their predicaments, and knowledge of the underlying issues, was informed by your years as a Sessional Lecturer before you became an UTFA member. Your extensive work on the negotiating team for the Policy and Procedures on Employment Conditions of Part-Time Academic Staff, and then as VP when the policy went into effect two years ago, made a tremendous difference to many long-time part-time colleagues who now enjoy continuing appointments.

Your erstwhile efforts as an proponent of fairness and equity at U of T is deserving of commendation. When you were elected VP, I think many on council were impressed by how you had *already* played a major role in successful grievances over practices that violated the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and your advocacy with CUPE to get access to RSP benefits for sessional and writing instructors. As Vice President, you served on the negotiating team for the Sexual Violence LOU, and I am surely forgetting your service on several other bargaining teams.

Even though we did not always agree on UTFA policies, I appreciate that you approached our differences of opinion with respect and the professionalism. UTFA will surely miss your years of experience across so many of our committees. Hopefully, there will be an opportunity for you to return to UTFA's leadership in the future.

I hope the personal reasons that led to your abrupt departure will not interfere with your continued work as a respected piano instructor, composer, and publisher of music scores through your company, Plangere Editions. Good luck!

With gratitude,

Renan

From: Terezia Zoric <zoric@utfa.org>

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 7:25 PM

To: Council_B <council_b@utfa.org>; Council_A <council_a@utfa.org>

Subject: VP, Grievances, position

Dear Council Colleagues,

I am writing to inform you that Brian McDonagh resigned from the position of Vice President, Grievances, for personal reasons, as of January 18th, and that at its meeting on January 20th, the Executive voted unanimously to have Sherri Helwig serve as Interim Vice President, Grievances, until the end of June.

This position calls for someone who knows and understands both UTFA grievance processes and university policies in order to be able to step in quickly to serve our members; Sherri had already been working on several Association grievances and had taken part in various files in mediation and arbitration, and is able to step in and gear up quickly. Our members are fortunate Sherri agreed to accept this role.

For the immediate term, Sherri will continue to work on Teaching Stream issues in addition to her new responsibilities, with additional support from me and fellow Executive member Leslie Stewart Rose.

As has been UTFA's recent practice, the Executive will bring its decision forward to Council for an affirmation vote at its next meeting on February 16th.

Sincerely,

Terezia

Terezia Zorić

President