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Salary, Benefit and Pension Agreement for the Academic Years 2007-08 and 2008-09

In the early morning hours of Wednesday, August 8, 2007, the University of Toronto Faculty Association and the University Administration reached a mediated agreement on salary, benefit and pension issues for the 2007-08 and 2008-09 academic years. Mr. Martin Teplitsky was the mediator.

Salary Increases

The agreement calls for across-the-board (ATB) salary increases of at least 3% for all university faculty members and librarians effective July 1, 2007 and July 1, 2008.

In addition, the current ATB agreement differs from prior across-the-board salary increases in two ways. First, it introduces a minimum dollar sum ATB for the bottom quartile in each salary stream, professoriate, teaching and librarian. For the professoriate the minimum ATB increases on July 1, 2007 and 2008 will be \$3060 and \$3150 respectively, even if 3% of their June 30 salary is less than these amounts. Similarly, the smallest increases awarded to members of the teaching stream will be \$2125 and \$2190; and the smallest increases awarded to librarians will be \$2020 and \$2080. Second, a lump sum base salary increase of \$585 will be made to all faculty and librarians on January 1, 2008 and of \$605 on January 1, 2009.

Normal progress-through-the-ranks salary (PTR) increases will be paid for both years of the agreement. The PTR increases for the 2007-08 academic year have already been implemented. On July 1, 2008 and July 1, 2009, the average above- and below-breakpoint PTR increases and the breakpoints will be raised by 3.5% (not 3.0%).

The minimum salary for a Librarian III will be raised to \$68,000 per year effective July 1, 2007.

The per-course minimum stipend for individuals represented by UTFA will be raised to \$14,000 on September 1, 2007 and to \$14,490 on September 1, 2008.

Pension Augmentation

Effective July 1, 2007 and July 1, 2008, the pensions of retired faculty members and librarians will be increased to reflect the full increase in the cost of living during the previous calendar year.

Benefits

Child Care.

Faculty members and librarians with children under 7 years of age will become eligible to receive up to \$2000 per eligible child per year to cover up to 50% of the cost of child care expenses. Eligible expenses will be subject to Canada Revenue Agency requirements. To make a claim, each January parents are to submit receipts for expenses incurred during the previous calendar year. The program will start in January 2009 for expenses incurred during 2008. A fund of \$1 million per year will be established to cover the cost of this benefit. Should there be more than \$1 million dollars worth of claims for any year, payments will be prorated. The University will publish detailed regulations for the plan.

Orthodontics

Effective July 1, 2008, the dental care plan will be amended to provide coverage for 50% of the cost of orthodontic procedures for faculty members, librarians, retirees and their dependents up to a maximum of \$2500 per individual per lifetime.

Hearing Aids

As soon as the benefit can be implemented, faculty members, librarians, retirees and their eligible dependents that have monaural hearing losses will become eligible to receive \$500 every three years to apply to the purchase of a hearing aid. Those with binaural hearing loss will be eligible to receive \$1000 every three years to purchase two hearing aids. The available funds can also be used to pay audiologist's fees.

Vision Care

As soon as the change can be implemented, the existing amount of \$250 per person every two years that is available to pay optometrist's fees will also be made available to apply toward the cost of eyeglasses and contact lenses.

Professional Expense Reimbursement Allowance (PERA)

The amount of the PERA will be increased to \$1125 on July 1, 2007 and to \$1250 on July 1, 2008.

Research and Study Days for Librarians

The annual number of research and study days for librarians will be increased from 8 to 10 effective July 1, 2007.

Working Groups

UTFA and the Administration have agreed to establish four joint working groups to consider issues relating to:

- i) Salary floors and salaries of professors outside the tenure stream,
- ii) Pension Plan Governance and Funding,
- iii) Benefits, and
- iv) Workload and Work-Life Balance.

The reports of these Working Groups will become matters for future negotiations, excepting that our current Mediator/Arbitrator remains seized on the issue of Pension Governance.

Commentary

We believe that the current agreement, which represents an increase of more than 4% in total compensation (combining salary and benefit improvements), is a good one for UTFA members. In addition to the 4% faculty also receive PTR increases. Because the annual ATB salary increases for 2007-08 and 2008-09 are greater than anticipated inflation, the current agreement maintains the trend established in the three previous agreements in which we are gradually making up for settlements in the 1990's when our salaries failed to keep up with inflation.

In his Arbitration award for the 2005-06 and 2006-07 academic years, Mr. Justice W.K. Winkler noted that faculty members at the University of Toronto are the highest paid in Canada and stated that the University's pre-eminence required that this continue to be the case. In preparing for the current round of negotiations, we reviewed information published by Statistics Canada, the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations and the Council of Ontario Universities. We found that salaries for the lowest paid 10% of faculty members at other universities have been rising significantly faster than salaries for the lowest paid faculty members at the U. of T. For that reason, in the current agreement we sought July 1 salary increases that are somewhat larger for the lowest paid people that UTFA represents than for others. To achieve this, we negotiated a minimum across-the-board salary increase for lowest paid quartiles of professors, teaching-stream faculty members and librarians; and we arranged for the small salary increases that will occur on January 1, 2008 and 2009 to be a flat amount for everyone that UTFA represents.

UTFA and the Administration agree on the importance of recruiting and retaining the very best young faculty. In this connection, we believe that the new childcare benefit is a particularly important achievement, especially because childcare costs hit early and heavily in a faculty member's career when salaries are relatively low.

For a number of years, UTFA has been trying to obtain orthodontic coverage as part of our dental care plan. We are delighted to be able to report success on this matter in the latest round of negotiations.

In closing, we must also acknowledge the important role played throughout by our chief counsel, Jeffrey Sack and our supporting cast which includes Hugh Mackenzie, Eric Comartin and Andrea Harrington.

Yours sincerely

The 2007-08 UTFA Negotiating Team.

Professor Tom Alloway, UTFA V-P for Salaries, Benefits and Pensions

Professor Joseph Boyle, Philosophy

Professor, George Luste, UTFA President

Senior Lecturer Janet Potter, (with Cynthia Messenger as alternate)

Professor Scott Prudham, Geography

Professor Mary Pugh, Mathematics

Emeritus Professor Peter Russell, Political Science

Professor Peter Sawchuck, OISE

Librarian Kent Weaver, (with Jeff Newman and Rea Devakos as alternates)

Note:

- UTFA Council ratified the agreement on August 23, 2007
- Business Board of Governing Council approved it on September 4, 2007
- Posted on the UTFA web site on September 5, 2007