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As provided in the [UTFA Presidential Guidelines](#), below is communication #2 from Professor Zorić, candidate for UTFA President. The communications of the candidates reflects the views of the candidates rather than the Association.

Dear UTFA colleagues,

We listen carefully to the voices of faculty and librarians at U of T.

Our team prioritizes dialogue and in-depth consultation with UTFA members through large-scale bargaining surveys, town halls, department, constituency, and campus visits, focus groups, and small group conversations. It is from this deep engagement with the concerns of our membership that our responsive plan of action has taken shape. [It is also why our campaign has resonated so strongly with so many colleagues across our University.](#)

UTFA's Negotiating and other Leadership Teams have heard you articulate your priorities loudly and clearly. (Note that most of the following comments are amalgamations of members' comments that in some cases also span multiple years.) **Here, briefly, are 5 of your top issues, as we've heard you describe them to us:**

#1. 'The cost-of-living crisis' or 'Salary, salary, salary!'

- *Salary is a top priority.*
- *Inflation has eroded our salaries, and we're falling behind on PTR amounts, too.*
- *It's plain wrong that my spouse and I are still looking for Kraft Dinner on sale to make ends meet.*
- *I'm not willing to put up with salary stagnation as a sole income earner after decades as a prof at UofT.*
- *We do more and more admin work that's been downloaded on us as supports fail to keep pace, while the numbers and pay of senior admin just go up and up. It's not credible to say the university lacks the money to pay us fairly.*
- *The raises you negotiated for us are great, but they don't fully make up for the rising cost of living*

and erosion of our purchasing power.

[We're on it!](#) Also see [our detailed platform](#).

#2. 'The crushing burden' of workload, especially due to the 'workload creep' of 'ever-expanding service and teaching loads'

- *The rising needs of our students, particularly since COVID, online teaching, and mental health issues exploded, has fallen on our shoulders; students require so much support and too much of it is left to us to tend to. I'm still marking tests and assignments months or years after a course has ended.*
- *A chronic lack of funding for faculty lines and too few other administrative supports has translated into a crushing burden of impossible workloads in my department.*
- *I work 7 days a week and my family barely see me.*
- *Too many students expect constant email communication... The university bureaucracy should support us in pushing back against this image of us as customer service representatives.*
- *I waste way too much time and energy filling out forms and don't get to my research work until the evenings and weekends. I oppose having to do what I was hired to do 'after hours' when my workday was spent on admin tasks.*
- *Please challenge workload creep!*
- *I see how much more my teaching stream colleagues are teaching than I am as a tenure stream faculty. I'm glad UTFA is paying attention to this problem.*
- *Workload inequities across units, especially disparate teaching loads, are brutal.*
- *Our research supervision should count in our workloads; if we want students to have research opportunities (and we do) there should be more credit for this important work in our workload calculations.*
- *Service loads are high for all the tenured faculty in my division, and the only solution to overwork is to create more tenure track faculty positions.*

[We're on it!](#) Also see [our detailed platform](#).

#3. 'Protect tenured positions for the next generation of professors' and 'full-time librarian renewal' ... 'normalize security' instead of precarity

- *I feel like I can't say no to anything I'm asked to do. I end up being completely overworked, but I need to get my next contract.*
- *Precarity undermines academic freedom... the insecurity of continuing appointments must be addressed.*
- *We need much stronger job security within part-time and CLTA Teaching Stream contracts as the current model is unsustainable.*
- *We (part-time faculty) are supposedly 'professors', but we can be let go at any time without cause. We need more than titles, we need secure employment.*
- *Part-time faculty who teach 75% loads or more live contract to contract for the first six years. That's a long time of working hard and yet never really knowing what the next year will bring.*
- *I gave up time with my babies to make sure I still had my position by the next contract.*
- *Librarian positions must not be replaced by non-unionized professional/managerial positions when academic librarians retire.*
- *The possibility of termination without cause is terrifying.*

- *There is no good reason to deny our colleagues protection from arbitrary termination.*
- *The University Admin is normalizing precarious work, instead of normalizing security. UTFA needs to do the opposite.*

[We're on it!](#) **Also see [our detailed platform](#).**

#4. 'Housing supports need to be increased'

- *The negotiated ATB was extraordinary, but there is still a housing crisis and an extremely high cost of living.*
- *Housing supports should be available to all appointed faculty and librarians, not just a few.*
- *Toronto is horribly expensive. We should make enough money to find suitable housing.*
- *Affordability of housing for new faculty is critical--overly long commutes make it difficult for them to fully engage in university activities.*
- *Housing supports need to be increased on a large scale.*
- *Bring back the homebuyer benefit, or at least offer comparable alternatives for newer faculty and librarians, and those who were made promises that the university reneged on.*
- *Why is there such a disparity in the sharing of information? Why are some members not informed about housing options like forgivable loans while others are?*

[We're on it!](#) **Also see [our detailed platform](#).**

#5. Equal childcare, vision, dental, mental health, and other 'benefits improvements, for ALL, including retirees, on par with active faculty!'

- *Retirees were promised equal health and other benefits with active members throughout their careers. It is unconscionable to take that away.*
- *UTFA members all contributed to the health benefits parity between actives and retirees as an historical act of solidarity. I'm proud to see that solidarity continue.*
- *The benefit of giving access to things like software and library services to retirees who continue to participate in worthy causes at the university considerably outweighs their cost.*
- *Retirees are highly experienced academics that still have loads to contribute, and the time they spend as volunteers is a testament to how much they care about the University. Cutting off access to resources like MS 365 and online software support is a slap in the face after many years and even many decades of contributions.*
- *I applaud UTFA's continuing efforts to ensure retiree access to benefits and health care improvements are maintained. Please continue to fight for us!*

[We're on it!](#) **Also see [our detailed platform](#).**

The seriousness of these five issues (and others) underlines why the UTFA President must be [a serious and capable person with the requisite knowledge and skills](#). One of the best ways to directly compare the ability of the two candidates to deal with tough issues is to watch [the recent UTFA Presidential Candidates' forum \(debate\)](#), if you haven't already.

The two candidates and campaigns take divergent approaches: only Team Terezia is transparent and constructive, with a [detailed platform](#) built on clear evidence of [experience](#), [collaboration](#), and [achievement](#), including sector-leading salary and benefits improvements and the protection of retirees' equal access to health benefits improvements.

We hope we can count you among our supporters and that you will vote to re-elect Terezia for a final two-year term. Please see your UToronto email for your ballot and vote today!

Yours,
Team Terezia Campaign



Source URL (modified on Mar 25 2024):<https://www.utfa.org/content/prof-zori-utfa-presidential-statement-2>