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Faculty Association of
the University of Waterloo

Lecturers Town Hall Meeting

Spring 2022 and Policy 76-77 Updates

March 24, 2022, 2:30–4:00 p.m., Microsoft Teams

On March 24, 2022, FAUW Lecturers Committee (LC) hosted a virtual town hall meeting for UW Lecturers on Microsoft Teams. The focus of this meeting was spring 2022 updates; the most recent developments of Policy 76 (Faculty Appointments) and Policy 77 (Tenure and Promotion of Faculty Members) revisions, both with regard to the teaching stream faculty at the University of Waterloo (UW), and the LC status. The meeting was attended by 70 lecturers.

Introduction and reminders

Su-Yin Tan, LC chair, welcomed all new and long-standing lecturers. After delivering the territorial acknowledgment, she briefly introduced the committee, its main goals, and its members. In its capacity as a FAUW standing committee and an advocacy group, the LC represents the fastest growing group of faculty (which almost doubled its membership between 2009 and 2021) and acts as a liaison between the FAUW lecturers and the FAUW Board of Directors. The committee is particularly dedicated to ensuring a clear and equitable career path for lecturers in light of inconsistencies in the terms and conditions of employment, teaching loads, and career progression across faculties, departments, and even units. Hence, the LC has continuously focused on the revisions of Policy 76/P76 since 2015.

Tan informed the attendees about the three openings on the committee, including one for Arts, one for Math, and one for Engineering. She encouraged those in attendance to nominate a lecturer who is likely to actively contribute to the lecturer community or to self-nominate. She also reminded everyone about the ongoing elections to the FAUW board and about the need for nominations from the Faculty of Science.

Spring 2022 updates

Tan reminded the attendees about the recent provincial government's decisions to lift both the vaccination and mask-wearing mandates, and the recent memo from Vivek Goel, UW President, aligning the UW approach with that of the province. She also referred to the recent FAUW poll on the discontinuation of these requirements. The response rate to this poll was 45%. Seventy-two per cent of the respondents expressed their preference for maintaining the vaccination requirement and 54% for continuing the face-masking mandate for spring 2022.

Tan expressed her concern that the UW administration had not considered the results of this poll in their decision making, and she highlighted some procedural issues such as the lack of consultation between the administration and the FAUW board. She emphasized that a very unfortunate result of these issues is inadequate protection of immune-compromised faculty members as well as those with young children. The affected faculty can refer to the Academic Freedom and Tenure (AF&T) Committee with requests for accommodations.

Policy 76/77 updates

History and process

First, the LC chair summarized the developments up to August 2021. Policy 76 (P76) was open for revisions at the end of 2014, and now, after over seven years, the process is nowhere near the end yet. The first Policy Development Committee (PDC) has failed: its chairs changed a couple times, some of its members retired, and its recommendations have not been considered. Because of the support from the Faculty Relations Committee (FRC), at the beginning of 2021, a new PDC was struck and given a new direction: the focus on revisions of P76 as well as of Policy 77 (P77) regarding the teaching stream faculty. The renewed PDC was tasked to complete the draft revisions by the end of August 2021. However, by that due date, the two members of the Administration and two FAUW representatives on FRC reached tentative agreement on only a few points, so it failed to achieve its objective. Tan noted the meaning of that result: step 1 in the policy revision process has not been completed since the end of 2014. She referred the attendees to a chart outlining the UW policy revision process and briefly explained this process.

Then, Tan went over the most recent developments. In September 2021, the LC organized a town hall on P76-77 updates and strategies moving forward, and FAUW submitted to FRC a bottom-line statement, which had been reviewed by the LC. After that, FRC worked on the major points of disagreement. During the FAUW general meeting in December 2021, the concerns about inadequate representation of lecturers on FRC (one out of ten members) were raised, but they were dismissed. On December 23, a joint memo from Lori Curtis, FAUW president, and James Rush, Waterloo vice president academic and provost, was disseminated to the FAUW members. This email summarized the main points of agreement reached by then. However, after the Christmas break, the administration started renegeing on some of these points, in particular on teaching workloads and the Professional and Pedagogical Development term. The memo received in February 2022 by the FAUW board related to that was confidential, and FRC required that LC not be consulted on the content of the memo.

The crux of the problem related to the proposed PPD terms is that teaching stream faculty would be expected to engage in scholarship of teaching and learning and demonstrate its expertise in pedagogy in order to advance through the ranks. However, the Administration is now trying to renege on the two-course reduction allowing this group of faculty adequate additional time for this pedagogical engagement. Were this revision accepted, the status quo would not be maintained—the teaching stream faculty would be required to do more within six consecutive terms to meet the new expectations for performance evaluation and progression through ranks. The two-course reduction within six consecutive terms would still apply, but only

to faculty from Arts and the School of Architecture, who currently teach seven courses annually.

Contract renewals

Tan reported that the LC heard of contract renewals being affected by the joint memo from December 23, 2021. Specifically, the reported cases included:

- some definite-term lecturer (DTL) contracts not being renewed;
- continuing lecturer (CL) status not being awarded;
- workload weights being changed; and
- teaching loads being changed.

The LC chair added that one reason for such developments seems to be chairs' and deans' speculations that faculty hired at the rank of Lecturer for a long time will have to be made permanent. Some lecturers were also erroneously told that CL contracts would no longer be offered. Some chairs started making changes to teaching loads or to workload distribution (e.g., from 80% teaching and 20% service to 60% teaching and 40% service).

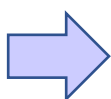
Tan emphasized that during the process of policy revisions, the current policies still apply, so the original P76-77 conditions should still hold.

After an informal poll with the attending lecturers, she found out that eleven of them were up for a contract renewal. No additional cases of lecturers being negatively affected by the recent P76-77 developments were reported. For individual help with such cases, Tan recommended contacting LC or AF&T directly. Diana Skrzydlo, current Math Teaching Fellow, added that the Math Faculty has a document clearly outlining the process of transition from a DTL to a CL contract, although the process is not always followed by all the chairs. Skrzydlo gave FAUW access to this document. Engineering has a similar document as well.

Lecturers Committee status

Tan outlined a few issues that the LC has been facing in fulfilling its mandate:

- no voting rights for its chair on the FAUW board
- only 3 out of 10 members of the current Board being lecturers
- only 1 out of 10 members of FRC is currently a lecturer
- the above two points meaning that **lecturers can be easily outvoted by tenured and tenure-track faculty at both the FAUW board and on FRC this year.**



Lecturers can be easily outvoted by tenured and tenure-track faculty.

- Administration and FAUW confidentiality prevent the lecturer reps on the board and FRC from sharing motions and votes
- some efforts unrecognized: many reports, recommendations, blog posts produced by LC but not all make it to the intended audience, e.g., the FAUW board, FRC, membership, etc.
- communication barriers between the LC and UW lecturers
 - communications going through FAUW;

- no permission to contact the members directly; and
- access to the updated list of members recently discontinued.

During the fall 2021 FAUW general meeting, the motion to recommend that the FAUW president appoint the director representing lecturers to FRC for the period of P76/77 negotiation was passed. However, the president did not endorse the motion. The board motion to review committee voting rights and engage in its governance review passed as well. However, due to the FAUW staff shortage, no substantive progress in this regard has been made yet.

Overall, LC is a strong lobbying group, but because it is not at the negotiation table, it does not have access to the details of the current P76-77 revision developments.

Relations between FAUW and the University administration

Tan described the nature of challenging relations between the faculty and administration:

- working conditions:
 - outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement and UW policies,
 - negotiated by FRC: 50% FAUW & 50% admin representatives, and
 - not based on a workload policy;
- challenges to filing grievances and accessing legal counsel; and
- lack of access to organized job action—the relationships not bound by the Ontario Labour Relations Act.

FAUW itself faces challenges in its relations with the Administration and membership because of its:

- dependence on
 - the employer – its finances tied to those of UW and
 - slow policy revision process, with no dispute resolution procedure;
- limited scope of negotiations: only policies mutually agreed upon by FAUW and the admin can be open for negotiations;
- no legal obligation to bargain in good faith;
- no set timelines and deadlines;
- unnecessary and problematic confidentiality clauses binding the FAUW reps on FRC; more beneficial to the Administration than to faculty; more extreme than those at other universities; and
- ratification of policies by FAUW membership not required.

Live poll

Tan reminded the attendees that FAUW is one of the handful of non-certified faculty associations in Canada and reiterated that our relationship with the administration needs to be modernized. The decision about the certification cannot be made by LC, but should be made by the FAUW members. Still, the committee would like to determine whether the lecturer membership is interested in exploring certification to gain a stronger position for negotiations.

As a step in this direction, a live poll question has been prepared to guide the LC in choosing one of the following options:

- dismissing certification;
- pursuing efforts towards certification; or
- providing grounds for further discussion.

If the membership is interested in the LC exploring the idea of certification, potential events the committee can facilitate may include:

- information gathering and fact-finding about certification
- session(s) for the membership about certification, with support from OCUFA/CAUT
 - benefits vs. risks
- a panel discussion on this topic with both proponents and opponents of certification

After those introductory comments, Tan displayed the poll question:

“Do you support the Lecturers Committee exploring various unionization models as possible means for strengthening our ability to negotiate our terms and conditions of employment?”

and Paul McGrath conducted the poll.

Three answer options included:

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Fifty-nine attendees participated in the poll, and the following responses were collected:

- Yes: 45 votes (76%)
- No: 8 votes (13%)
- Not sure: 6 votes (10%)

Open discussion and wrap-up

After summarizing the poll results, Tan invited those in attendance to pose questions and/or share comments. There were quite a few, and a few themes emerged.

- **Reasons for the changes in the admin’s stance on lecturers’ bottom-line asks**
 - ❖ Q1: What pressure contributed to the change of James Rush’s approach to the PPD term for lecturers in December?
 - ❖ A (Tan): There was no traction on this issue during the PDC meeting in spring and summer 2021. However, since September that year, LC has applied a more aggressive approach to communications with its membership through a town hall, blogs, and consultations about the P76-77 updates and the possibility of certification. This might have caught the provost’s attention. The fact that the new UW president

came from UofT, which has had a teaching stream professoriate since 2015, could have played some role too.

- ❖ Q2: What happened between December 2021 and the beginning of 2022 to lead to the admin reneging on its “promise” of teaching load reduction and PPD terms without workload redistribution?
- ❖ A (Tan): The reasons are not clear to the LC. However, Tan speculated that the December 23, 2021 memo was premature. FRC had come to some agreement in December, but could have faced strong push-back from deans, chairs, and directors. Three out of the six deans sit on FRC. They might have spotted some problems with the two-course reduction for the PPD term. The administration reps on FRC might not fully understand the diversity of lecturers at this University.

▪ **Workload reduction for lecturers**

- ❖ Q1: “I don’t understand why those who teach every term would get a teaching reduction, while those who don’t, don’t?”
- ❖ A (Tan): The workload reduction without the redistribution of the teaching load does not seem to be an option on the table now. However, during the PDC 2021 negotiations, the administration stance on sabbaticals for lecturers was a definite “no.” Hence, a new Professional and Pedagogical Development (PPD) term was proposed instead, and requesting it for the full-time teaching stream faculty was FAUW’s compromise.
- ❖ Q2: “Was it insistence on the PPD term that killed the PDC?”
- ❖ A (Tan): The decision to prioritize such a term without the need to redistribute the teaching workload was based on the consultations with lecturers across Faculties.
- ❖ Comment (Wolczuk): The 2021 Lecturer Survey also indicated that the majority of the respondents did not use the existing one-in-six term as a non-teaching term because of the inability to redistribute the workload over the other terms. Moreover, if progression through the new teaching stream professorial ranks is to be based on a clear demonstration of leadership in pedagogy and development, application, and sharing of new teaching tools are to be expected, adequate time resources are required.
- ❖ Comment 1 from the floor: Time for PPD terms is not an issue. Lecturers have time to participate in conferences. However, financial supports are needed. FPER does not seem adequate. An ask for workload reduction can weaken our case.
- ❖ Comment 2 from the floor: Friendly chairs and deans can be asked for assistance in setting up a PD fund for lecturers. Such additional funds have been set up in Stats & Act Sci, and Math.
- ❖ Comment 3 from the floor: Lecturers teaching full load often experience burnout and cannot find a sufficient time to maintain work-life balance. Taking holidays with family members is often a challenge. Hence, some time like a PPD term without the need to redistribute the workload would be extremely helpful.
- ❖ Comment 4 from the floor: Attending conferences is likely feasible for quite a few lecturers currently, but deeper-level engagement in scholarship and pedagogy

involving considering innovated teaching approaches and developing curricular materials related to these new approaches is a very time-consuming task.

▪ **Alternative approaches to moving forward**

- ❖ Comment 1: “At UofT, not everyone chooses to go to the teaching stream.” Perhaps UW lecturers should also have the flexibility to either remain lecturers or progress through professorial ranks for the teaching stream.”
- ❖ A (Tan): The grandfathering process has been proposed for the current lecturers. However, maintaining the rank of Lecturer and introducing new professorial ranks for the teaching stream would not eliminate the existing problems faced by this faculty group. Two separate streams for the same group of faculty would lead to divisions.
- ❖ Q1: What do lecturers think about a more incremental approach to making changes and improving work conditions?
- ❖ A (Tan): Such an approach is not a bad idea, but it seems possible at certified institutions, where every two years there is another round of bargaining, so making smaller-scale adjustments is possible on a regular basis. This is not an option at UW. Here, step 1 of the policy revision process has taken over seven years now and is not complete yet.
- ❖ Comment 1: Step 1 of this revision process is the longest. The other ones should not take long.
- ❖ A (Tan): The approval of the revised policy by the Board of Governors may not take long, but the deliberations at FRC and public consultations can take a while.
- ❖ Q2: Should we consider a unified faculty model?
- ❖ A (Tan): This model has been implemented at a few comparator institutions (e.g., at McMaster). However, it seems not to be an option for UW.

▪ **Future communications between lecturers**

- ❖ Q: In light of the communication constraints faced by LC, how will the lecturers get together in the future?
- ❖ A (Tan): LC is committed to hosting more town halls and other meetings in the future. However, because FAUW events have to go through FAUW channels, some lecturer-focused events may not be FAUW sanctioned, and more informal meet-ups will likely take place.

▪ **Lecturers as faculty members**

- ❖ Q1: Do lecturers think of themselves as faculty members or as different from the other faculty? “Are we one team of faculty members or not?”
- ❖ A (Tan): Lecturers are faculty members, so they should be treated in a similar way to tenure-track colleagues, and hence, they should have parallel work conditions. LC has been advocating for the full recognition of lecturers as faculty members. An

equivalent question (about the perception of lecturers as faculty members) could be asked to professorial colleagues.

- ❖ Comment from chat: "We may be 'faculty' but we are not all treated the same way."

Tan ended the meeting by thanking the attending lecturers for their time, questions, and comments.