

January 24, 2018

Office of the President
Peter MacKinnon Building, Room 210
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, SK

Dear President Stoicheff,

Re: Indigenous Women – Tenure and Promotion

The University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association Committee on Women’s Issues (USFA CWI) met earlier last year and hosted a luncheon for its members titled “Indigenous Women – Tenure and Promotion.” The event attracted faculty from across the University (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous), and representing all ranks. During the lunch the committee invited Indigenous faculty members to speak about their experiences at U of S. We were honoured to have four speakers volunteer their time and share with the group. The conversation ran much longer than the actual allotted time with calls from both the speakers and the audience for follow-up discussions and action. Most notably women in the room were disturbed and concerned by the situation at the university (all four of our speakers were denied either tenure and/or promotion at different times in their careers and have a felt discriminated against in terms of their research and scholarly achievements – all of which they believe is directly related to their Indigenous identity). Further, they were not alone, and many others in the room expressed either witnessing, or being subject to, similar circumstances. At the end of the lunch attendees wanted to know – “now what”?

In response to this question and to demonstrate the CWI’s support for our Indigenous female colleagues, we have crafted this letter with the hope that the circumstances described in the CWI lunch are brought to the attention to the office of the President, University of Saskatchewan administrators, and general faculty. In addition, we have summarized some of the recommendations expressed at the meeting for guidance and reference as the University moves forward in meeting its mandate of Indigenousization and in the spirit of Reconciliation.

We believe that the President will be just as distraught by the information highlighted at this luncheon as those in attendance and look forward to seeing his leadership to address these troubling circumstances.

SUMMARY OF CIRCUMSTANCES:

- Indigenous Female Faculty:
 - o are asked to sit on multiple committees to represent an Indigenous voice, but are held to the same standards as their colleagues who are not called upon for the same kind of service.
 - o often conduct scholarly activities that are community-engaged research and are not supported, nor recognized, by decision-making bodies for tenure and promotion.
 - o are recognized for their achievements outside the university community, but they are not recognized or valued within their own institution.
 - o often feel marginalized within the university.
 - o are unable to meet standards for tenure and promotion due to their extra academic service and commitment to their communities.
 - o enter into their tenure track job as single mothers which has a direct effect on their ability to produce and meet standards.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

GENERAL

- Faculty should be informed about equity issues on campus before making decisions about tenure and promotion.
- Stronger balance in the teaching-research-service faculty load language in the collective agreement.
- Hyper-attentiveness to Aboriginal representation on governance and hiring committees.
- Support new faculty with reduced committee loads and more support to their service requirements.
- Standards for promotion and tenure need to be revised to valorize scholarship that reflects Indigenous knowledge production and output.
- Eliminate “tokenism” of Indigenous faculty in terms of Indigenizing the academy.
- Offer courses for discrimination (race, gender, religion) and bully culture in academia, for students and faculty.
- Each department should have their code of collegial conduct, which includes descriptions of discrimination and racism, and procedural steps for those being discriminated against and role and responsibilities for senior administrators in the event of a filed grievance of discrimination.

ADMINISTRATION

- Senior leaders should be well-read in texts of incivility, discrimination, racism and collegial methods.
- Senior leaders need to be aware of the strategies that are used to prevent minorities from moving forward in their career for tenure and promotion, salary increases and merit.
- Senior leaders must take a proactive stance against discrimination and uncollegial behaviour. Grievances of discrimination and racism should be taken seriously and dealt with immediately.

The CWI thanks you for your attention to this matter. If there are any questions or you require any additional information, please feel free to contact our committee at any time. We can be reached by telephone at 306-966-5609 or by mail to Room 20 Education, 28 Campus Drive, Saskatoon, SK, S7N 0X1.

Sincerely,

Susan Fowler-Kerry, CWI Chair, College of Nursing
 Yelena Bird, School of Public Health
 Courtney Quiring, College of Pharmacy & Nutrition
 Soo Kim, School of Physical Therapy
 Kathryn Labelle, Department of History
 Gabriella Mangano, Department of Geological Sciences
 Julia Montgomery, Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences
 Melanie Morrison, Department of Psychology
 Linda Wason-Ellam, Department of Curriculum Studies

cc: Senator Lillian Dyck

cc: Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann, Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement