



Tuesday, November 9th, 2021.

The Association welcomes the report from the Committee on Academic Freedom. The report seeks to chart a path forward to balance freedom of expression, academic freedom, the advancement of equity, diversity and inclusion, and the all-important elimination of systemic discrimination on campus.

The Committee's key findings are a necessary corrective to the damage caused by institutional censorship over the past year, in particular the Committee's warning against the "*exclusion of words, works or ideas in the context of respectful academic presentations and discussions whose educational goal is to promote the dissemination of knowledge.*" The senior administration's failure to support the academic freedom of its professors, both internally and publicly, has created a climate of self-censorship and fear of reprisals.

The report's recommendations are therefore a first step in the right direction to restore trust at uOttawa. However, the continued exclusion of part-time professors from the highest level of academic governance means that it is impossible for them to participate in the important and collegial discussions and decisions surrounding the implementation of the report's recommendations, even though contract faculty teach half of all courses and over 60% of students in any given academic year.

The lack of job security for the majority of contract professors also imposes serious constraints in practice for the exercise of academic freedom. Meanwhile, Professor Lieutenant-Duval, who has applied to teach courses for the Fall term, cannot even get an answer as to why she was not selected to teach.

The senior leadership now has an opportunity to do what is right in light of the Committee's findings, which is to assume responsibility and apologize, rather than what is convenient. Otherwise, the search for justice for members like Professor Lieutenant-Duval will be a process that is unnecessarily slow, excruciating, and harmful.

The Association also wishes to recognize the important work and contributions of Professor Tansy Etro-Beko as a member of the Committee on Academic Freedom on behalf of all part-time professors and the University of Ottawa academic community.

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