

MOUNT ALLISON FACULTY ASSOCIATION

May 19, 2021

Ana Serrano, President and Vice-Chancellor
OCAD University
Toronto, Ontario

Via email: aserrano@ocadu.org

Dear President Serrano:

On behalf of the 200 members of the Mount Allison University Faculty Association (MAFA), I am writing to urge you and senior OCADU administration to reconsider your decision to eliminate six librarian positions.

We call on you to adopt and respect a collegial process that involves librarians, faculty, students, and the broader community. We have serious concerns about the elimination of six librarian positions under the guise of a structural re-organization that has occurred without a collegial process of consultation with faculty, students, or the librarians who have lost their jobs.

We are disappointed that the University Librarian, Tony White, and the OCADU administration have decided to terminate the employment of four academic librarians. Combined, the four librarians have more than six decades of expertise and knowledge – a loss that is irreplaceable. Despite years of exceptional service, they were given their layoff notices on May 5, 2021 and will officially lose their jobs as of June 1, 2021. We are also concerned about the decision to eliminate two unfilled librarian positions at OCADU.

We recognize that change can be necessary in response to developments in research and creative activity, curriculum, and evolving technology. However, we believe that this unilateral move to eliminate six professional librarian positions is contrary to practices in Canadian academic libraries and violates several academic principles, including collegial governance. Short-term gains can result in irrevocable long-term losses. Any successful re-structuring of academic libraries must value the knowledge of librarians and include them meaningfully in the process. It must ensure there is continuity and growth without disrupting academic support for the community.

Collegial governance must form the basis of a successful re-structuring because everyone involved can be informed, share ideas, and ultimately produce the best results. Libraries are at the core of any post-secondary institution. They are a necessity for academic support for students, accreditation, and the public purposes of the university.

mafa

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We urge you to re-consider your decision.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Erin Steuter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot at the end.

Erin Steuter, Ph.D.
President