

ASSOCIATION DES PROFESSEUR.E.S DE L'UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA
ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSORS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

Ana Serrano, President and Vice-Chancellor, OCADU
Office of the President, OCADU
100 McCaul St, Toronto, ON M5T 1W1

Cc: Caroline Langill, Vice President and Provost Academic, OCADU
Cc: Jamie Watt, Chair, OCAD University Board of Governors and
Cc: Tony White, University Librarian

May 27, 2021

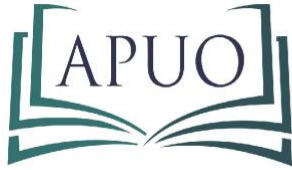
Dear President Ana Serrano,

On behalf of the Association of Professors of the University of Ottawa (APUO), I write today to express our grave concern with your University Librarian's recent decision to eliminate six professional librarian positions. We are also alarmed by the lack of collegial governance with which this decision was made.

The work undertaken by librarians is essential for universities to deliver the best possible education and realize their research potential. While two of the six positions remained vacant, we were troubled to learn that the four librarians whose work will be terminated as of June 1, had more than six decades of combined leadership, expertise, and knowledge in key areas, including Indigenous visual culture and decolonization, COVID-related initiatives, OCADU's innovative Learning Zone, digitization initiatives, and E-Learning. The Indigenization of our universities, the COVID-19 pandemic and the research opportunities it presents, and the identification of innovative learning and teaching methods are all among emerging priorities in academia. The decision to terminate these four librarians with important expertise in these areas is short-sighted and will undoubtedly bear long-term consequences on OCADU's capacity to meet student and faculty needs and to keep up with these fast-evolving areas of the post-secondary education sector.

Furthermore, we cannot ignore the unilateral way in which this decision was made. Collegial governance is an essential pillar of academia because it strengthens our institutions by tapping into the expertise and knowledge of those who make up our universities. By neglecting to consult librarians, professors, and students in the reorganization of your Library, you failed to consider the consequences of your decision on your institution's stakeholders and its capacity to pursue and disseminate knowledge.

Finally, as a labour union, we can't ignore the fact that the termination of four unionized academic librarians is a violation of the rights and protections provided by collective agreements. We are appalled by the blatant disrespect this decision demonstrates towards key partners within your institution, who have undoubtedly immensely contributed to OCADU's capacity to continue to fulfill its educational and research mandates amid the COVID-19 pandemic. As our universities continue to navigate the uncertainty brought on by the pandemic, and as we prepare



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for an eventual return to in-person activity, it seems unwise to deprive such valuable members of your community of meaningful employment, and students and faculty of the expertise they can provide in facilitating such a transition.

We urge your administration to reverse this decision and reinstate Alex Homanchuk, Daniel Payne, Marta Chufolinska, and Victoria Sigurdson immediately.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dimitri Karmis', is written over a faint, light blue horizontal line.

Dimitri Karmis
President of the Association of Professors of the University of Ottawa