



November 12, 2015

Dr. Patrick Deane
President and Vice-Chancellor
McMaster University
1280 Main Street West,
Hamilton, ON., L8S 4L8

Dear Dr. P. Deane:

The Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians / Association canadienne des bibliothécaires académiques professionnels (CAPAL/ACBAP) fully supports the efforts of the McMaster University Academic Librarians' Association (MUALA) to achieve a fair and equitable settlement that recognizes the academic status and associated rights of academic librarians.

The proposals tabled by McMaster University in the recent round of bargaining fail to accord librarians the same rights long held by academic librarians employed at other universities across Canada. These include policies that uphold collegial processes in appointment procedures, established peer processes for promotion, and the recognition of a broad range of academic service contributions which librarians undertake on a daily basis for their community.

The university's desire to eliminate the use of a search committee in the appointment process violates basic principles of academia, such as, merit, equity, collegiality and transparency. In fact, the elimination of a search committee in the appointment of academic librarians is an outright denial of academic processes. The university's failure, once again, to support the academic rights and contributions of professional librarians at their institution is viewed as unacceptable by CAPAL/ACBAP. The university's proposal will serve to strengthen discretionary powers and biased judgment over academic values. The employer's effort to substantially dilute promotion and evaluation criteria and processes critically undermines the primacy of peer review in assessing professional and academic performance, while the employer's proposal to limit members' rights to participate in MUALA activities impinges on members'

freedom of association, a fundamental right in Canada's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

The proposals pose serious threats to the academic freedom and professional autonomy of librarians at McMaster University. The inadequate proposals manipulate and exploit the minority status of the librarians and reveal the gender inequities so frequently seen in our profession. This undermines not only the professional practice of academic librarians at McMaster University, but also the professional practice of all academic librarians working at Canadian universities. McMaster University's statement on academic freedom affirms academic rights and privileges and states that, "...This freedom extends not only to members of the University faculty, but to all who are invited by faculty to participate in its academic fora." And yet, academic librarians are being denied a collegial process that upholds these principles. We wonder why?

CAPAL/ACBAP is a national organization representing academic librarians and the profession of academic librarianship in Canada. Our mission is to promote, advance and support the profession of academic librarianship for the advancement of research, teaching, and learning at accredited post-secondary institutions and to further the professional interests of our members. We believe that our academic communities are enriched when academic librarians are respected, supported and recognized as equal academic partners in the building of excellent teaching and research communities.

Respectfully,
CAPAL/ACBAP Board of Directors

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cc: Laura Banfield, President McMaster University Academic Librarians'
Association