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Faculty, vote YES on the librarian/archivist MOS ratification!

Positive, progressive change that improves librarian/archivist T&P
Many substantial improvements to a forty-year-old document
Careful attention to candidate's rights
Better mechanisms for appeals • Clearer criteria at every stage
Your colleagues voted in favour of it

Thank you for reading the memorandum of settlement (MOS) about the proposed new language in *Criteria and Procedures for Promotion and Continuing Appointments of Professional Librarians and Archivists* (CPPCAPLA), which is the T&P document for librarians and archivists. Our process doesn't involve Senate, so you may have never read it before or noticed that we get continuing appointment instead of tenure (though we'll still say T&P here). The changes are so thorough that to really understand what was bargained you'll need to compare it to the current language at the back of the smaller YUFA booklet.

Why vote yes?

1. Your librarian and archivist colleagues voted in favour of it in a non-binding poll. (It was 22–17, which isn't overwhelming, but a firm majority voted yes.)
2. The current language is essentially unchanged since 1978 and very out of date. The proposed language gives a much improved description of our work today.
3. It includes guidelines (Appendix B of the MOS) that are our equivalent of your unit standards, to explain to candidates and committees what the criteria mean. This is the first time we've had anything like this. More transparency benefits everyone.
4. It ends our anomalous practice of having one committee handle everything and uses file preparation and adjudication committees like you do. Currently our candidates prepare their own file which is then reviewed and adjudicated by the same body.
5. Pregnancy and primary caregiver leave provisions are added.
6. A clear and fair process for appeals is established.
7. A clear and fair process is set out for when a recommendation to deny is made, including for the first time defining the terminal year.
8. A clear and fair process for letters of reference is given.
9. It expands the types of work that count for Professional Contributions and Standing (PC&S) beyond just papers and presentations to include other modes of scholarship and debate and critique as valid contributions to the discourse.

Why are some librarians and archivists opposed?

Proposed language in 3.2.1 (h) and 3.3.1 (f) requires that PC&S work to be evaluated for T&P be "around professional practice in librarianship/archivy" ("archivy" is for archivists what librarianship is for librarians) or is in "disciplines in so far as they relate to librarianship or archivy." We know three reasons why some of our colleagues think this is a problem.

First, that it means work they included in their own files—work that added to the universe of disciplinary knowledge, and made them a better librarian or archivist—wouldn't count. However, no one yet has given a sensible example of how that might happen. Saying “I did X and it was fruitful research and helped my work as a librarian because A, B and C, and now you're saying I couldn't count it because it's not related to librarianship” is self-contradictory, but that's the argument we've heard.

Second, that the terms “librarianship” and “archivy” may be restrictive because they are not defined. We think the lack of definition is actually helpful. Other Canadian collective agreements say “library and information studies” is the *only* field of PC&S that librarians and archivists can engage in. The new language allows for more than this, as long as there is some connection to librarianship and archivy.

Third, they genuinely think that research on any subject, even entirely unrelated to librarianship and archivy, should count for T&P. The equivalent for you would be that your unit standards say people can get tenure or promotion without their research having any connection to your discipline. Not an inter- or trans-disciplinary relation: no connection at all. A computer science professor may do philosophy on AI or robot ethics, but should they get tenure for work on Byzantine commentaries on Aristotle? Economics is important to social work, and someone in Social Work might publish in economics journals, but should they get promoted for a decade of work on hyperinflation? These extreme examples are the only equivalents we can imagine to this argument.

What about academic freedom?

You may be told our academic freedom—perhaps yours!—is at risk. But nothing in CPPCAPLA alters Article 10, where academic freedom is defined and protected. You'll see an email from James Turk (formerly of CAUT) about this. It appears he saw just a few lines of new language, not the whole document. Penni Stewart (former CAUT president, former YUFA president and chief steward) reviewed the collective agreement and the MOS and concluded that academic freedom is well protected in the agreement and that this is unaltered by the MOS. She also noted that 18.17 (our version of your 18.08) says our work includes “research and scholarship.” Penni was speaking as an outside expert, not on behalf of YUFA, but we trust her opinion.

Adjudicating committees and deans may interpret the criteria in ways we don't like, as can happen with your unit standards. You may be told of even more dangerous possibilities the new language purportedly opens up. Whatever happens, we remain protected by grievable language both old and new and YUFA will work in everyone's defense.

Can the Dean of Libraries use the language against librarians and archivists?

Like yours, our dean has done some things that YUFA had to take up formally, but T&P is a collegial process and our dean's role is the same as yours (compare the new 5.1 to your F.3.3.1). You may be asked to vote no because the new 4.2.2.3 (e) talks about performance reviews, but this is old language (see 4.2.1 (iii)) that we couldn't get removed. It has never even been used and has provisions that make it unlikely it ever could.

Vote YES on the librarian/archivist MOS ratification

York University Libraries is going through a restructuring that is causing stress and anxiety. The dean is making many changes, including to things like vacation day carry-over, but the proposed CPPCAPLA language is separate. Moreover, T&P is a collegial process, and the other changes secured in bargaining help strengthen that process and effectively work to *limit* the power of a dean to make arbitrary decisions about one's career progression. This vote is not a referendum on the current Dean of Libraries!

YUFA got a legal opinion—what did that say?

YUFA keeps all legal opinions strictly confidential.

What did the Employer say?

In response to concerns of some colleagues, YUFA asked for clarification about what counts for PC&S. The Employer's answer and YUFA's reply are on YUFA's web site.

A key sentence in the answer is that it "is the Employer's position that the scope of PC&S activities to be considered in the adjudication for advancement, continuing appointment and promotion remains unchanged under the revised criteria." In other words, everything that used to count would still count. The Employer does not see the new language as adding new restrictions, and has confirmed that position in writing.

YUFA's reply said it "wishes to likewise clarify its understanding, as YUFA also sees no change in scope. YUFA's position is that discipline-based PC&S activities (subject-based in the extant language) can and do inform the practice of librarianship and archivy -- the two can be intrinsically related -- and that PC&S (professional development in the extant language) has always included consideration of discipline-based (subject-based) scholarship and not only research related to librarianship and archivy." The Employer said, "Thanks."

If someone is ever denied advancement, continuing appointment or promotion because their colleagues deemed their work to be not related enough to librarianship or archivy, this exchange could be used in an arbitration. As would forty years of past practice.

What happens if it's voted down?

We continue to use the current language (which means the four hires this summer lose the improvements), but aside from that, no one knows. YUFA could approach the Employer and see what can be rescued, but there's no guarantee they would want to go back to the table. And if they did, what would they want in exchange?

**This is not a referendum on the Dean of Libraries
Your librarian and archivist colleagues voted in favour
Respect collegial decision-making**

Vote YES on the librarian/archivist MOS ratification

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