



June 28, 2017

Dear members of the Selection Committee for the Vice-President, Research:

Thank you for reaching out to the APUO regarding the process underway for the Vice-President Research. We will make comments regarding the composition of the selection committee, the performance of the current Vice-President, Research and outline our expectations for the next person who is to take on this significant and impactful leadership role at our university.

APUO has previously expressed disappointment to President Jacques Frémont at not having APUO representation on the selection committee. In response, he encouraged APUO members on Senate to volunteer for positions on selection committees for senior administrators but in reality this is not a satisfactory solution to the issue of lack of representation. Firstly, there is no transparency regarding how the Senate itself nominates candidates from among its members for this and other selection committees and secondly, APUO members are far outnumbered by others on Senate such that it would be difficult, even impossible for a regular faculty member from APUO to be elected unless this person put a lot of effort into campaigning for the spot and managed to convince others on Senate that she should be elected.

Since this process is so burdensome to our members of Senate, APUO sought examples of policies and procedures from other Canadian universities. We found that the University of Ottawa is unique among its peers in having such weak representation from regular professors. For example, the University of Victoria policy states that one regular faculty member *from each faculty* will be elected by their peers to be on the selection committee for the Vice-President, Research. We note also that the University of Victoria encourages diversity on the selection committee for this critical position, stating that “when establishing the Appointment Committee, constituencies should encourage a diverse representation from the university community including women, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, indigenous peoples, people of all sexual orientations and genders, and others who may contribute further to the diversification of the university.”¹ The University of Waterloo similarly includes “...one senator of professorial rank from each Faculty, elected by a vote within that Faculty,” on its selection

¹ University of Victoria. *Procedures for the Appointment of the Vice-President Research* (2013), http://www.uvic.ca/universitysecretary/assets/docs/policies/GV0310_1019_.pdf

committee.² The same policies exist at Carleton University,³ McMaster University⁴, Simon Fraser University⁵ and others.

By contrast, the University of Ottawa policy states that:

The committee shall consist of:

- *The President, as non-voting chair;*
- *Three persons appointed by the Board from among its own members, one of whom shall be a student;*
- *Three persons appointed by the Senate from among its own members, one of whom shall be an undergraduate student (if the student member appointed by the Board is a graduate student) or a graduate student (if the student member appointed by the Board is an undergraduate student);*
- *One person from outside the University appointed by the Joint Committee of the Senate and the Board on the recommendation of the President; and*
- *Up to two additional persons appointed by the President, if deemed necessary by the President to ensure the committee's diversity or representation of key stakeholder groups.⁶*

This selection committee composition effectively leaves out the possibility of an APUO member representative, although APUO members ultimately will be most directly affected by the decisions and institutional strategies made by the Vice-President, Research. APUO concludes that this is very problematic in terms of fairness, but also that it is a unique procedure among similar institutions and is in dire need of revision.

Beyond the issue of the composition of the selection committee, APUO notes that the current incumbent in the role of Vice-President, Research has executed a number of problematic actions, the nature of which APUO would not want to see repeated. For example, the current incumbent - without consultation of APUO professors - closed the Institute of Population Health in 2015 despite repeated requests by members of Senate demanding that consultation take place. Also under Dr. Nemer's

² University of Waterloo, *Policy 68, Vice-President, University Research* (2014), <https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-68>

³ Carleton University, *Appointment Guidelines for Vice-President (Research & International)* (2014), <https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/VP-academic-and-research-April-2014.pdf>

⁴ McMaster University, *Selection Procedures for Senior Academic Administrators* (2002), <https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Governance/Other/Senior%20Acad.%20Administrators,%20Sel.%20Proc.pdf>

⁵ Simon Fraser University, *Search Committees for Vice-Presidents and Associate Vice-Presidents* (2006), <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp29.html>

⁶ University of Ottawa, *Procedure for Appointing a Vice-President or the Secretary* (2017), <http://www.uottawa.ca/administration-and-governance/procedure-appointing-vice-president-secretary>

leadership, the University of Ottawa's Canada Research Chair program has become less and less diverse in terms of Canada's designated equity-seeking groups. This is an injustice and an institutional embarrassment, and our reputation is declining because of it. Finally, Dr. Nemer accepted an unethical and illegal salary increase of 43% (more than \$100,000) in 2014. It is indefensible that Dr. Nemer's salary increased that amount during a period of budget restraint in the province of Ontario. Dr. Nemer has personally benefitted from the substantial surpluses that the University of Ottawa has banked over the last decade while austerity measures in much of the rest of the university have been thrust upon students, staff and professors.

APUO also objects to an overall lack of open dialogue regarding this position. The consultant hired to manage the selection process for Vice-President Research has sent requests to *individuals* who have been invited to share their thoughts. Such a process is neither transparent nor democratic.

This letter intends to inform you of some our primary concerns with the selection process. In short, we believe it would be in the best interests of the University for the APUO to have a representative on the selection committee and to have public consultation with the community rather than reaching out to individuals by email. Further, in keeping with APUO's work on diversity, equity and inclusion, we also encourage the selection committee to actively seek candidates who represent the diversity of Canada's population and our students.

With thanks,

APUO Executive