



September 26, 2018

RE: University of Ottawa Terminates Agreement with SFUO

Concerning the recent statement made by the University of Ottawa giving 90 - days notice of termination and noting that they will no longer recognize the Student Federation of the University of Ottawa (SFUO) as the sole union for undergraduate students, we the executive committee are disappointed and disheartened at the steps that the University of Ottawa Administration has taken in attempts to control and interfere the way in which we govern and deal with our internal matters as a separate entity governed under the Non For Profit Corporations Act.

Since being informed of the recent allegations claimed by the past President, Hadi Wess; the Board of Administration (BOA) of the SFUO voted to conduct to a forensic audit which was unanimously voted upon on Sunday, August 12, 2018 (Board Meeting Minutes, Attachment 1). Since that vote the Constitutional Committee of the BOA worked tirelessly to create and distribute Request for Proposals (RFP's) to 20 of the most recognized forensic auditing firms in the city of Ottawa .The SFUO shared this document which includes the scope of the forensic audit with the University's representatives as they requested to be consulted in this process on August 28, 2018 with no response on the matter (email threads and RFP, Attachment 2 & 3). On Sunday, September 16, 2018 the BOA met for it's second official meeting where it was announced that PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) was chosen to conduct the forensic audit of the SFUO which is currently taking place. In (2) meetings between the SFUO and the University Administration.

During this same time since the first BOA meeting held on August 12th the President, Rizki Rachiq recused himself of all financial matters and signing authority, no longer enabling them to have access to any financial documents and oversight on behalf of the SFUO (Attachment 4). The current President and Executive Director also recused themselves from being the point of contact with the SFUO's governance legal counsel, so they would not be privy to the conversations regarding the allegations and the SFUO could make sound governing decisions and act accordingly with the available resources within our disposal. As of September 27, 2018 Rizki, Rachiq (President), Axel Gaga (Vice President, Operations), and Vanessa Dorimain (Executive Director) will be vacating their offices and have recused themselves of their mandated duties until the report from PWC is presented to the Board of Administration. This will leave the executive with (2): Paige Booth, Vice President External-Acting President, and Faduma Wais, Vice President Social.





We have not been perfect. We have made mistakes during this process, as this is not something any of us have ever dealt with in the past nor planned to deal with in the present. We recognize and apologize to you, the students about our lack of communication up until now. As an executive committee we tried to deal with the concerns of the University internally however we do not exist as a body because of the University. We are not here to please and gain the confidence of the University. We are here because of all of you. We will do better and commit to updating our student body in all steps of this battle from this point on.

It is becoming more and more apparent that the University Administration is taking an anti-union stance on this campus through discussions with other union representatives outside the SFUO and withholding student levies legally obligated to support the SFUO is proof of that. The implications of this termination are not complex, they are dangerous. Dangerous for us students, not only now but for years to come. What the University of Ottawa Administration is doing challenges the validity of a student's union to effectively organize on campus and fight for the rights of students. It compromises the positions of other unions on campus such as the Graduate Students Union (GSAED), Association of Professors of the University of Ottawa (APUO), Association of Part Time Professors of the University of Ottawa (APTPUO), CUPE 2626, etc. It is an attempt to set a precedence that should the University not deem an Association up to par with their expectations they should not rightfully exist here. We will start to see that other Universities across the Country follow the University of Ottawa's example and try to unrecognize all student and organizing unions alike from their own campuses at their first opportunity.

Unions on campus here at the University of Ottawa and across the country fight to improve the socio-economic struggles for students, and for post secondary education to be more accessible and inclusive for us all. As of now the Health Plan is covered for all students registered until August 2019. The U-Pass agreement is still in place with the City of Ottawa and we do not have any plans to layoff our employees.

To be very clear, the SFUO is not planning to vacate our offices or halt any of the services/programs we provide to students as requested. We own a stake in the University and are permanent tenants of the UCU Jock Turcot building. The University Administration was unclear and unresponsive in the past and what exact practices they would like to see from the SFUO and we will be vigilant in meeting with them in the next couple of months in attempts to come to a mutually benefiting resolution.

Although very open to working with the University of Ottawa on a new agreement we will prepare ourselves to operate with or without a new agreement. We fight everyday to keep our student movement strong and we will continue to fight for students.

2018-2019 SFUO Executive Committee

