



VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



June 10, 2020

VIA Email: Andrew Petter, President (outgoing) – sfu_pres@sfu.ca
Joy Johnson, VP Research & President (incoming) – vpres@sfu.ca
Sandi de Dominico, AVP Human Resources – sandi_domenico@sfu.ca
Jon Driver, VP Academic – vpacad@sfu.ca

Dear Mmes. Johnson and de Dominico, Mr. Petter, and Mr. Driver,

This letter is sent in support of research assistants (RAs) of Simon Fraser University who won an historic campaign to unionize with the Teaching Support Staff Union in 2019.

In November 2019, SFU signed a Memorandum of Agreement of Voluntary Recognition mandating that the University,

- 1) Recognize all RAs as its employees,
- 2) Provide the Union with a list of RAs, and
- 3) Commit to a set of deadlines with respect to bargaining for a Collective Agreement, originally set to commence May 1, 2020.

SFU has since failed to live up to its obligations outlined in each and every of the terms outlined above, leaving research assistants in an uncertain and precarious position in the midst of a major public health crisis. In attempting to exclude key employee groups from the RA category and delaying the process leading up to collective bargaining, the University has broken its word, demonstrating an alarming disrespect for its students and workers.

SFU's actions are an affront to workers' rights everywhere and threaten to discredit the University's reputation with the communities that it claims to engage. That SFU has admitted fault for its violations and are willing to engage in mediation at TSSU's insistence is an encouraging step. We urge the University to remain committed to a just unionization process and an expedient timeline to commence collective bargaining.

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In short, we join the RAs of SFU in demanding that the University honour the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement of Voluntary Recognition and commit to commence collective bargaining with TSSU without further delay.

Thank you,



Stephen von Sychowski
President, VDLC

cc: VDLC Executive Board
Research Is Work! Campaign – researchiswork@tssu.ca

svs/eb

