



November 15, 2021

Dr. Florentine Strzelczyk
Vice-President (Academic)
Memorial University
St. John's, NL

Re: Indigenous Cluster Hire

Dear Dr. Strzelczyk,

The MUNFA Executive Committee continues to hear from Academic Staff Members (ASMs) who are concerned with how the Indigenous Cluster Hire (ICH) has and continues to unfold. I am writing to bring forward these concerns and to follow up on past correspondence regarding the ICH.

In Spring of 2021, MUNFA wrote to the administration with concerns relating to the ICH. These included significant delays between the application deadline and candidate files being provided to Academic Units, the subsequent rushed timelines for Search Committees, the misdirection of candidate files, modified screening and selection criteria after the application deadline, and a general lack of clarity on the ultimate selection criteria and overall process. We further discussed these concerns with the administration at a meeting on June 16, 2021, where the Parties agreed to hold a debrief on the process to ensure future targeted/cluster hires do not encounter the same issues. The MUNFA Office has not been contacted to schedule such a debrief session. Most recently, MUNFA has heard from ASMs at Grenfell Campus who are dismayed at the fact that the successful ICH candidates have predominantly been recommended for the St. John's Campus despite Academic Units at Grenfell recommending candidates. Given the fact that over 27% of Grenfell's student body self-declare as Indigenous, and as the campus is situated in the territories of one of the largest bands in Canada, the lack of allocation of at least one full time ICH position at Grenfell is quite concerning and inequitable.

MUNFA also filed an Association Grievance relating to the failure to ensure all ICH candidates were provided a meeting with a MUNFA representative as part of the search process. On October 13, 2021, the administration provided MUNFA with the names and contact information of the candidates recommended for ICH. On October 26, 2021, MUNFA withdrew the Association Grievance but requested clarity on the process in the event a recommended candidate declines the position. We have yet to hear further from the administration on this matter and would again request clarity from the administration here.

Given the concerns raised at our initial meeting of June 16, 2021, along with further concerns that have been brought to MUNFA's attention, we request that a debrief meeting be scheduled before the end of November. We look forward to hearing from your office with possible meeting dates.

Sincerely,



Dr. Josh Lepawsky
President, MUNFA

cc: Geoff Williams, Director – Faculty Relations
Dr. Sean Cadigan, Associate Vice-President (Academic)