Acadia University Faculty Association

May 22, 2026

Dear Henry Demone, Chair, and members of the BOG Executive,

Following the letter of April 8, 2026, this second letter is the Acadia University Faculty Association (AUFA) official response to the restructuring process that the Board of Governors (BOG) initiated March 2026. The restructuring process was initiated as a unilateral process that did not involve the Senate or consultation with AUFA. The Senate's jurisdiction over academic policy is enshrined in Acadia's statute, An Act Respecting Acadia University, 1995 Consolidation, section 12(3). The 17th Collective Agreement (CA) remains in effect until 2028. The Preamble of the CA suggests that Articles 0.01 and 0.02 be used as a guide for interpreting the agreement; AUFA is writing this letter in the spirit of this Preamble.

The Preamble states that the purposes of this agreement are "(a) to promote and maintain harmonious and well-defined relationships within the University by adhering to principles that are consistent with its overall objectives; (b) to ensure equity in the treatment of Employees through fair procedures which are published for all Employees; and (c) to provide means acceptable to both Parties for settling differences which may arise between them from time to time" (Article 0.01). This requires AUFA and the BOG "to work in cooperation towards developing the quality and effectiveness of the education provided by the University; (b) to encourage a climate of freedom, responsibility, justice and mutual respect in the pursuit of the above-mentioned purposes; and (c) to jointly pursue the above objectives with care and diligence" (Article 0.02). It is AUFA's position that Acadia's BOG has not operated in this spirit for the following reasons: it has not correctly identified the source of the problem, it does not have the authority of those making academic restructuring proposals, it has caused unfair duress for AUFA members, and finally, it has held in disregard the negotiated benefits in the CA.

First, AUFA considers the source of the financial problems that triggered the BOG restructuring process to be the Acadia Administration's failure to execute an effective recruitment strategy, run a cost effective senior administrative team, and develop new revenue streams. This is under the BOG's oversight responsibility. The financial problems do not stem from the educational policy of the university or the CA.

Second, AUFA recognizes that the authority and responsibility of the Acadia BOG over financial matters and the authority and responsibility of the Acadia Senate of academic matters are the foundational pillars of collegial governance named in the CA. Bicameral governance is a hallmark of Canadian universities, ensuring quality education and academic rigour. By not instructing the Administration to initiate a review of the "educational policy" of Acadia through Senate and in a time frame respectful of this process, the BOG has overstepped its operational role (section 7) and encroached upon the authority of Senate established in section 12(3), Act Respecting Acadia University, 1995 Consolidation. Senate should not offer a rubber stamp; AUFA considers Senate as integral to the process of developing the actual proposals and "educational policy." If the current process continues to bypass Senate, AUFA will work with current senators to explore avenues for asserting Senate's rightful role.

Third, the BOG proposal has forced AUFA members to participate under duress. The process has created considerable anxiety and insecurity amongst our members. The restructuring of the educational policy of the university is not part of the agreed upon workload of AUFA members. In this light, AUFA signed an Administration requested MOA allowing Heads more flexibility to complete their CA mandated roles. To be sure, these discussions are happening under the shadow of Bill 12 and Schedule H and the Administration's weaponization of Article 31.80 in the CA to ensure participation. If this is not the intent, suspending Article 31.80 for the life of the agreement, via the joint committee, could ease the anxiety of those members most affected by the proposed restructuring process. All in all, these anxieties led the AUFA membership to pass a motion condemning the proposal's process, timeline, and solutions (Special Meeting of April 27th). The BOG has a responsibility to provide a healthy work environment in which it is possible for AUFA members to perform their Academic work.

Finally, AUFA's main opposition to the restructuring proposals initiated by the BOG is that, by their nature, they undermine the negotiated benefits in the CA. Specifically, it undermines democratic control over working conditions (faculties and units) (Articles 10-17). For example, Department Heads and Interdisciplinary Program Coordinators are instrumental to the democratic control of our members' working conditions. AUFA will only negotiate these earned benefits at the bargaining table. Failure to respect the democratic control of the workplace undermines the academic integrity and freedom of its members to fulfil their negotiated obligations (Article 5). Given that the CA was signed in good faith on October 10, 2025, AUFA cannot support any proposal that would undermine such rights.

These are the issues that AUFA has identified and discovered at this time. The restructuring process has been so flawed that new issues may arise or may not yet be discovered. This letter is not an exhaustive list of problems. The current proposals offend the Collective Agreement as described above and in general would require numerous amendments that can only be made by agreement. The Collective Agreement in spirit and letter must be followed unless agreed otherwise.

The Preamble to the 17th Collective Agreement offers us guidance on how AUFA can participate in the collegial governance process with the BOG and Senate to support the successful pursuit of the mission of Acadia University adopted by both Senate and the BOG in 2006: "The mission of Acadia University is to provide a personalized and rigorous liberal education; promote a robust and respectful scholarly community; and inspire a diversity of students to become critical thinkers, lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and responsible global leaders." The BOG has made no meaningful collegial efforts with AUFA to fulfil the spirit of the Preamble so signed. As such, the source of the problem, the authority of those making academic restructuring proposals, the unfair duress that this illegitimate process has created for AUFA members, and finally, the undermining of negotiated benefits in the CA remain contested. The BOG's manufactured emergency is at odds with the government's commitment to the current funding levels through to 2027, at odds with the Act of Incorporation, and at odds with the agreed upon language in the current Collective Agreement. AUFA does not see the proposed solutions as addressing the source of Acadia's financial crisis. AUFA does not propose to wait until 2027 for any changes, but the current timelines are shockingly short (1-2 months) compared to the current funding lifecycle (2025-March 2027). This begs the question: Why must faculty and staff work under duress when it was not their lack of vigilance that led us here?

Sincerely,

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