



THOMPSON RIVERS
UNIVERSITY
FACULTY ASSOCIATION

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SENT BY EMAIL

February 16, 2022

Board of Governors
Thompson Rivers University
805 TRU Way
Kamloops, B.C. V2C 0C8

Dear Members of the TRU Board of Governors,

We are writing to inform you that on January 26th Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association (TRUFA) held a general meeting where a motion was passed to direct the TRUFA Executive to hold a non-confidence vote on the leadership of TRU President, Dr. Brett Fairbairn and TRU Board Chair, Ms. Marilyn McLean. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of the 100 members in attendance voted in favour of holding this vote. The TRUFA Executive conducted the anonymous vote between February 2nd and February 8th. The vote went out to 689 faculty members. What follows are the questions and the results from the membership.

1. Do you have confidence in the leadership of TRU President, Dr. Brett Fairbairn?

Yes 19.01% No 80.99%

384 votes (56% response rate)

2. Do you have confidence in the leadership of TRU Board of Governors Chair, Marilyn McLean?

Yes 17.15% No 82.85%

379 votes (55% response rate)

As you can see from the results of the vote, faculty have lost confidence in the ability of the TRU President and TRU Board Chair to lead the institution. The faculty's loss of confidence in the President and Board Chair are rooted not only in the events surrounding the ongoing investigations, but also in the university's response to COVID-19 and the general failure of TRU leadership to communicate any discernable strategy or plan for the institution and the problems we face.

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These results tell us that we have a serious problem at TRU. There is a lack of genuine acknowledgement of the concerns of the faculty and the TRU community. The lack of response to concerns expressed regarding the ongoing cultural safety of Indigenous Faculty members is unacceptable considering TRU's commitment to honour Truth, Reconciliation, and Rights. The miscommunication, lack of transparency, and timeliness in communicating process changes increase faculty anxiety and mistrust. TRU faculty demand better leadership at this critical juncture in the university's evolution.

Saying TRU is committed to a values-based culture is simply words without actions. TRUFA calls on the Board of Governors to take-action to address faculty concerns and to work towards leadership we can have confidence in.

We note that some members of the TRU leadership team have supported a narrative that any ongoing concerns were limited to elected officers of TRUFA and a small group of faculty. However, the results of the non-confidence votes show that this is not true. Concerns about the leadership of the institution is widespread and deep. The narrative advanced by some in leadership devalues the legitimate concerns of faculty and only serves to exacerbate the lack of confidence.

TRUFA is committed to improving the working environment of the university. We all need to address the current failure in leadership and find a way forward together.

Sincerely,

The Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association Executive Board

c: L. Rugg, President, CUPE 4879
A. Hernandez-Billy, President, TRUSU