

## Renan Levine

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**From:** Renan Levine  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 27, 2024 6:35 PM  
**To:** CRO2024  
**Subject:** Re: Prof. Zorić - UTFA Presidential Statement #2

Dear Professor Bondy,

Thank you for your response to this complaint.

Does this mean that all of those quotations are publicly available from UTFA? I would like to see the source material.

The defense that UTFA materials were not improperly used by Prof Zoric seems to rest on the claim that the information either is, or should be, publicly available to all members. That is an empirically testable question: if true, one should be able to point me to the source materials, and my campaign can use those materials as did Professor Zoric's campaign. If they are not presently available, then it is information that only the incumbent has access to!

I am skeptical about the factual basis of these claims.

I served on Council. Have you seen Council minutes in the last few years? According to your email, you should have received them from your representative. So, you will see that UTFA Council minutes have been stripped bare. Little records of any discussions are included. One cannot find Executive Committee or Council minutes on the website. Neither my predecessor as Council Representative nor my successor has ever shared minutes from Council. Is that different from your representative? I will ask your DLSPH colleagues if they have ever received such minutes!

One of my campaign concerns is that survey results, like from the survey UTFA just conducted - consisting of a small number of open ended questions - are never released. The last AGM was 11 months ago. If quotations from the latest survey are to included in the next AGM report, then they are yet to be released to the membership and remain UTFA information that only the UTFA President has access to.

The email included raw quotations, not summaries. Providing a report of feedback, like to council in an oral presentation is not the same as the raw data or original quotations. If the underlying data has never been widely released under the present administration, I have never seen them. The only survey results I recall ever being disclosed were ones that I conducted despite criticism for conducting and releasing the full data.

I serve on the Apportionment committee. They asked for member feedback. They shared the feedback from roughly twenty members with the committee, but only to the committee! The email mentions the bargaining committee. If there is information from that committee then, I'm sorry, but the deliberations of the bargaining teams minutes have never, ever been disclosed.

I ask for evidence that the quotations are from publicly available info, as you claim, and /or you reconsider this decision.

Yours,  
Renan

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**From:** CRO2024 <cro2024@utfa.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 27, 2024 5:36:30 PM  
**To:** Renan Levine <renan.levine@utoronto.ca>  
**Subject:** Re: Prof. Zorić - UTFA Presidential Statement #2

Professor Renan Levine,

I am writing in response to your complaint dated March 26, 2024.

Your interpretation of materials that are prohibited is not consistent with the 2024 UTFA Presidential Election Guidelines (the Guidelines). UTFA as an organization produces many reports (verbal and written) and shares information with the membership and the public. Where the content of those reports have been made readily available to members participating in town hall meetings, Annual General Membership Meetings, and through broadcast circulation, are in the public domain. Even discussion at Council meetings is available to members as it is expected that Council representatives will share the information with their constituents.

You cite Article 11 "candidates may not use UTFA equipment or materials to support their campaigns, notwithstanding #14 below." You may have misinterpreted the guideline as prohibiting you from using information in UTFA materials that you have seen yourself in your own campaign. Either candidate may make reference to UTFA publications/communications and written and verbal reports, discussions at UTFA meetings including AGM, and Council meetings including updates about committee work. Such material available to UTFA members include information from focus groups and surveys where illustrative quotes have been shared with members. Upon review of the content you identify, there is no information to suggest that a violation of Article 11 has transpired.

Notwithstanding that there has been no violation of Article 11 of the Guidelines, please note that with respect to your suggested remedies, I do not have that authority under UTFA's Constitution, By-Laws and the Guidelines.

I appreciate your patience in this regard.

Sincerely,

Professor Susan Bondy  
Chief Returning Officer

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**From:** Renan Levine <renan.levine@utoronto.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 27, 2024 4:26 PM  
**To:** CRO2024 <cro2024@utfa.org>  
**Subject:** RE: Prof. Zorić - UTFA Presidential Statement #2

Dear Professor Bondy,

I'm afraid that it is almost a full business and a half since I received an update from you on this time sensitive matter. I think the violations in the second email from Professor Zoric of clause #11, and the potential violations of clause #10, are serious violations that were not committed inadvertently. Given the stage of this campaign, the issues are also time sensitive since this election campaign almost over.

Would it be possible to talk on the phone about this matter so I might receive an update as to where your investigation stands and how you might proceed? My cell is 647-721-3456 and I expect my family and I will be eating early (around 5 pm), so I will be able to talk afterwards.

Yours,  
Renan

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**From:** CRO2024 <[cro2024@utfa.org](mailto:cro2024@utfa.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 26, 2024 12:13 PM  
**To:** Renan Levine <[renan.levine@utoronto.ca](mailto:renan.levine@utoronto.ca)>  
**Subject:** Re: Prof. Zorić - UTFA Presidential Statement #2

Professor Levine,

We have received your complaint, and we are taking appropriate action in order to respond in a timely manner. I will provide you with updates as they become available.

Sincerely,

Professor Susan Bondy  
Chief Returning Officer

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**From:** CRO2024 <[cro2024@utfa.org](mailto:cro2024@utfa.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 26, 2024 9:28 AM  
**To:** Renan Levine <[renan.levine@utoronto.ca](mailto:renan.levine@utoronto.ca)>  
**Subject:** Re: Prof. Zorić - UTFA Presidential Statement #2

Professor Levine,

Professor Bondy has asked that I send the following response on her behalf.

I am asking the UTFA staff to respond on my behalf, just to let you know that I am teaching until 11 today. I will be able to address correspondence in the CRO account as soon as I return to my office at DLSPH. I am really sorry about the timing.

Sincerely,

Nellie De Lorenzi for Professor Susan Bondy

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**From:** Renan Levine <[renan.levine@utoronto.ca](mailto:renan.levine@utoronto.ca)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 26, 2024 8:46 AM  
**To:** CRO2024 <[cro2024@utfa.org](mailto:cro2024@utfa.org)>  
**Subject:** FW: Prof. Zorić - UTFA Presidential Statement #2

Dear Professor Bondy:

The UTFA Presidential Election rules, as passed by UTFA Council in 2024, include the following prohibition:

11. Candidates may not use UTFA equipment or materials to support their campaigns, notwithstanding #14 below. I am writing today to lodge a complaint about the contents of email as they use quotations collected by the association for non-campaign association purposes. Those quotations are UTFA materials that should not have been used to support either campaign.

The beginning of the email explains how the UTFA leadership collects feedback from membership, and then states that the negotiating team has heard member priorities. The following list is the “top issues” as heard by UTFA’s negotiating team over many years. This clause, which I assume is accurate, provides revealing evidence. The quotations included in the email was information collected by UTFA over many years (far outside the current campaign period), and used by UTFA’s negotiating team. The result is a long list of quotes describes as members comments provided, not to the campaign, but to the association. As a result, all of this information was UTFA materials.

One can use several tests as to whether UTFA material was used unfairly in this email:

1. **Was the information collected as part of UTFA work separate from any campaign?** Those quotes, if collected as part of normal surveying of members, would never have carried notifications or warnings that the quotes could be used for presidential campaign purposes – the information was ostensibly collected by the association to aid association work, and provided by the membership for those purposes, not for campaign work. As a result, the responses are possessions of the association.
2. **Is the information held by the association and used by the association to further non-campaign related goals?** In this case, the answer is an emphatic, ‘yes.’ This information was collected to aid in association work in negotiations, and the email explicitly claims that the information was used by the negotiation team.
3. **Do both candidates have access to the same materials?** No. Best I can tell this information, these quotes, are not available on the website for anyone, especially a opposing candidate, to find and read. Only one candidate had access to the materials, as a result of her incumbency status. I do not have access to such information to even be able to check to see if the quotes are representative or if there are priorities or concerns that are not presented here. I, nor the members, cannot check the veracity of the information because the information is held by the association with access restricted only to staff and select members of the negotiating team (at most).

This last point is crucial: all of the rules restricting UTFA’s resources, including the use of email lists, staff and equipment, is designed to ensure that UTFA as an organization does not take a side in the outcome of the election and the incumbent does not unfairly use their power and authority over UTFA and its staff for political purposes. The use of information collected by UTFA outside of the campaign, for association purposes unrelated to the campaign, and explicitly described by the incumbent as used by the negotiating team clearly falls within these parameters. Material held by UTFA was provided to only one campaign.

Prior to Professor Zoric’s acclamation in 2020, the then- president of UTFA, Cynthia Messenger, was elected in two contested elections. So, she would have personal experience on precedents governing UTFA elections. She messaged me: “If those comments come from UTFA surveys, then they are offside. Perhaps you should write to the chief, returning officer, and ask about the source of those comments and whether it is acceptable for candidates to use UTFA files and UTFA bargaining materials in their campaigns? Didn't used to be legitimate.”

The rules regarding UTFA resources have not changed. Clause 11 (as quoted above) makes clear that UTFA materials cannot be used to support the campaigns outside of the processes used to send the three emails during the voting period (#14). These quotations either represent UTFA materials or the incumbent has misrepresented their provenance. In contrast to the campaign violation that you informed me about on Sunday night, this could act could not be an accident. The email was a deliberate strategic decision, and indubitably the product of much time spent (by unknown persons) collecting and editing the information over “multiple years.” Obviously, if UTFA staff were engaged in such activities, or UTFA staff prepared reports including these quotations that the incumbent could draw from, then the

violation would be even more egregious and also violate clause #10 of the election rules (Candidates may not use UTFA staff to work on or support their campaigns, notwithstanding #14 below).

I request that you take corrective action. Since this email went out to every member with a campaign violation, then at a minimum a notice should be sent using the identical list that a campaign violation occurred and sanctions should be taken, including a requirement that Professor Zoric's campaign website include a notice that a violation occurred that voters should be made aware about. The burden of proof that clause #10 was not violated should be shouldered by Professor Zoric's campaign, and, if found to be the case, this should also be disclosed to the recipients of the email, and a reminder sent to staff.

Thank you for your prompt but careful consideration of this issue.

Yours,  
Renan

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**From:** UTFA <[faculty@utfa.org](mailto:faculty@utfa.org)>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 25, 2024 6:52 PM  
**To:** Renan Levine <[renan.levine@utoronto.ca](mailto:renan.levine@utoronto.ca)>  
**Subject:** Prof. Zorić - UTFA Presidential Statement #2



utfa.org  
fb.com/utfa  
@utfa

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As provided in the [UTFA Presidential Guidelines](#), below is communication #2 from Professor Zorić, candidate for UTFA President. The communications of the candidates reflects the views of the candidates rather than the Association.

Dear UTFA colleagues,

***We listen carefully to the voices of faculty and librarians at U of T.***

*Our team prioritizes dialogue and in-depth consultation with UTFA members through large-scale bargaining surveys, town halls, department, constituency, and campus visits, focus groups, and small group conversations. It is from this deep engagement with the concerns of our membership that our responsive plan of action has taken shape. [It is also why our campaign has resonated so strongly with so many colleagues across our University.](#)*

UTFA's Negotiating and other Leadership Teams have heard you articulate your priorities loudly and clearly. (Note that most of the following comments are amalgamations of members' comments that in some cases also span multiple years.) **Here, briefly, are 5 of your top issues, as we've heard you describe them to us:**

**#1. 'The cost-of-living crisis' or 'Salary, salary, salary!'**

- *Salary is a top priority.*
- *Inflation has eroded our salaries, and we're falling behind on PTR amounts, too.*
- *It's plain wrong that my spouse and I are still looking for Kraft Dinner on sale to make ends meet.*
- *I'm not willing to put up with salary stagnation as a sole income earner after decades as a prof at UofT.*

- *We do more and more admin work that's been downloaded on us as supports fail to keep pace, while the numbers and pay of senior admin just go up and up. It's not credible to say the university lacks the money to pay us fairly.*
- *The raises you negotiated for us are great, but they don't fully make up for the rising cost of living and erosion of our purchasing power.*

[We're on it!](#) Also see [our detailed platform](#).

## **#2. 'The crushing burden' of workload, especially due to the 'workload creep' of 'ever-expanding service and teaching loads'**

- *The rising needs of our students, particularly since COVID, online teaching, and mental health issues exploded, has fallen on our shoulders; students require so much support and too much of it is left to us to tend to. I'm still marking tests and assignments months or years after a course has ended.*
- *A chronic lack of funding for faculty lines and too few other administrative supports has translated into a crushing burden of impossible workloads in my department.*
- *I work 7 days a week and my family barely see me.*
- *Too many students expect constant email communication... The university bureaucracy should support us in pushing back against this image of us as customer service representatives.*
- *I waste way too much time and energy filling out forms and don't get to my research work until the evenings and weekends. I oppose having to do what I was hired to do 'after hours' when my workday was spent on admin tasks.*
- *Please challenge workload creep!*
- *I see how much more my teaching stream colleagues are teaching than I am as a tenure stream faculty. I'm glad UTFA is paying attention to this problem.*
- *Workload inequities across units, especially disparate teaching loads, are brutal.*
- *Our research supervision should count in our workloads; if we want students to have research opportunities (and we do) there should be more credit for this important work in our workload calculations.*
- *Service loads are high for all the tenured faculty in my division, and the only solution to overwork is to create more tenure track faculty positions.*

[We're on it!](#) Also see [our detailed platform](#).

## **#3. 'Protect tenured positions for the next generation of professors' and 'full-time librarian renewal' ... 'normalize security' instead of precarity**

- *I feel like I can't say no to anything I'm asked to do. I end up being completely overworked, but I need to get my next contract.*
- *Precarity undermines academic freedom... the insecurity of continuing appointments must be addressed.*
- *We need much stronger job security within part-time and CLTA Teaching Stream contracts as the current model is unsustainable.*
- *We (part-time faculty) are supposedly 'professors', but we can be let go at any time without cause. We need more than titles, we need secure employment.*
- *Part-time faculty who teach 75% loads or more live contract to contract for the first six years. That's a long time of working hard and yet never really knowing what the next year will bring.*
- *I gave up time with my babies to make sure I still had my position by the next contract.*
- *Librarian positions must not be replaced by non-unionized professional/managerial positions when academic librarians retire.*
- *The possibility of termination without cause is terrifying.*
- *There is no good reason to deny our colleagues protection from arbitrary termination.*
- *The University Admin is normalizing precarious work, instead of normalizing security. UTFA needs to do the opposite.*

[We're on it!](#) Also see [our detailed platform](#).

#### #4. 'Housing supports need to be increased'

- *The negotiated ATB was extraordinary, but there is still a housing crisis and an extremely high cost of living.*
- *Housing supports should be available to all appointed faculty and librarians, not just a few.*
- *Toronto is horribly expensive. We should make enough money to find suitable housing.*
- *Affordability of housing for new faculty is critical--overly long commutes make it difficult for them to fully engage in university activities.*
- *Housing supports need to be increased on a large scale.*
- *Bring back the homebuyer benefit, or at least offer comparable alternatives for newer faculty and librarians, and those who were made promises that the university reneged on.*
- *Why is there such a disparity in the sharing of information? Why are some members not informed about housing options like forgivable loans while others are?*

[We're on it!](#) Also see [our detailed platform](#).

#### #5. Equal childcare, vision, dental, mental health, and other 'benefits improvements, for ALL, including retirees, on par with active faculty!'

- *Retirees were promised equal health and other benefits with active members throughout their careers. It is unconscionable to take that away.*
- *UTFA members all contributed to the health benefits parity between actives and retirees as an historical act of solidarity. I'm proud to see that solidarity continue.*
- *The benefit of giving access to things like software and library services to retirees who continue to participate in worthy causes at the university considerably outweighs their cost.*
- *Retirees are highly experienced academics that still have loads to contribute, and the time they spend as volunteers is a testament to how much they care about the University. Cutting off access to resources like MS 365 and online software support is a slap in the face after many years and even many decades of contributions.*
- *I applaud UTFA's continuing efforts to ensure retiree access to benefits and health care improvements are maintained. Please continue to fight for us!*

[We're on it!](#) Also see [our detailed platform](#).

The seriousness of these five issues (and others) underlines why the UTFA President must be [a serious and capable person with the requisite knowledge and skills](#). One of the best ways to directly compare the ability of the two candidates to deal with tough issues is to watch [the recent UTFA Presidential Candidates' forum \(debate\)](#), if you haven't already.

The two candidates and campaigns take divergent approaches: only Team Terezia is transparent and constructive, with a [detailed platform](#) built on clear evidence of [experience](#), [collaboration](#), and [achievement](#), including sector-leading salary and benefits improvements and the protection of retirees' equal access to health benefits improvements.

**We hope we can count you among our supporters and that you will vote to re-elect Terezia for a final two-year term. Please see your UToronto email for your ballot and vote today!**

Yours,

Team Terezia Campaign



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[View as a Web Page](#)