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President Serrano,

On behalf of the members of the Acadia University Faculty Association, we would like to add our voices to the many academic associations and unions across the country in expressing our concern regarding the restructuring plan for the OCADU Library and the termination of four senior librarians. We recognize that academic libraries need to change and adapt to meet the needs of their communities; in fact, Acadia University successfully flattened its organizational structure in the library many years ago by moving to the liaison model of librarianship without having to terminate librarians or staff. Every librarian liaises directly with faculty and students to provide personal and valued services to our community regardless of rank and years of service.

During a recent external review of a university library of similar size, it was noted by faculty and students that materials do not need to be available in the library as long as there are experts available to help faculty and students find and acquire the essential materials for their research and work. The value of a library is mainly in its people, most often librarians, who can locate materials; distill, decipher, and analyze research requests; provide programming that engages community, including addressing equity, diversity, and inclusion and ensuring that decolonization of our collections, services, and classification systems happens.

Librarians and library staff across the country are exhausted from these unending attacks and disregard for the services we provide and to propose these changes under the guise of decolonization in the midst of a historic pandemic lacks empathy and is harsh and thoughtless. Faculty and students seem to understand the value librarians bring to a university; it is inexplicable why administrators (often former faculty members) do not. Once again librarians are forced to spend time writing letters and defending our colleagues and profession, instead of focusing on our own programming, services, and research.

AUFA urges the OCADU administration to reconsider its current restructuring plan for the library and associated units, to rescind the layoff notices to our colleagues, and to restart the restructuring process with a collegial and truly consultative process with all of OCADU stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Richard
Academic Librarian
AUFA Member at Large

Andrew Biro
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