

October 11, 2017

Dear Esteemed Members of the UBC Community:

Dr. Ono, President

Dr. Szeri, Provost and Vice-President, UBC Vancouver

Dr. Mathieson, Provost and Vice-Principal Academic, UBC Okanagan

Dr. Langton, President UBC Faculty Association

Dr. Johnson, Chair, Okanagan Faculty Committee

A year ago, faculty members in the Educational Leadership stream requested that Collective Bargaining prioritize the issue of changing titles for the two lower ranks of this stream. Specifically, we advocated for *Instructor* to be changed to *Assistant Professor of Teaching*, and that *Senior Instructor* to be changed to *Associate Professor of Teaching*. Our survey of Educational Leadership faculty members showed 97% support for this change (83% response rate, spanning both Vancouver and Okanagan campuses). These title changes align logically with the final rank available in this stream (i.e., Professor of Teaching), and would affirm the University's view of these positions as scholarly and valued alongside the traditional faculty stream. For details and a thorough rationale, please read the letter available at <http://www.facultyassociation.ubc.ca/bargaining/educational-leadership-titles/>

Many colleagues in the Educational Leadership stream have expressed disappointment and frustration with the outcome of no changes to titles from the last round of Collective Bargaining. Many colleagues are reporting feeling undervalued, unheard, and ignored because of the lack of progress on this topic. We felt it was important that you, as the highest leadership of this institution, are aware that these negative feelings are present among many faculty members in this group. A recent survey study showed that feeling integrated into the institutional culture is an important predictor of how teaching focused faculty, including

Educational Leadership faculty at UBC, value their positions.¹ We believe that the title change is a concrete way that this institution can signal to all 240+ Educational Leadership faculty that their contributions are valued.

Over the last five years, 28 faculty members have been appointed as *Professors of Teaching* for their well-established records of teaching excellence, educational leadership, and service activities. Since the early days of the *Professor of Teaching* rank, faculty in both streams, Heads, Deans, and the Institution have a much clearer sense of the value of educational leadership activities, and the role that Educational Leadership faculty can play in fulfilling UBC's teaching and learning mandate. We are concerned that further delay in updating the titles across the remaining Educational Leadership ranks will serve to diminish the progress already made.

The existence and maturity of the Educational Leadership faculty stream is a point of differentiation for the University of British Columbia among global public institutions. Members at the highest rank have national and international reputations in teaching and learning, and this institution's approach is being keenly observed and in some cases emulated among peers. National and international conversations about faculty who specialize in teaching and educational leadership are being influenced by the choices UBC makes. UBC is currently viewed as a leader in this area, and the group of faculty now being hired into junior ranks will catalyze even greater achievements in this core area of activity in the coming years. We urge you to signal to the UBC community and our institutional peers and collaborators that UBC values educational leadership and the faculty who choose this career pathway.

Along with Dr. Sunaina Assanand and a small group of fellow Instructors, I created the Instructor Network and its organizational group, the Instructor Network Leadership Team

¹ Rawn, C. D., & Fox, J. A. (in press). Understanding teaching focused faculty members' contributions and experiences: Working toward best practices for institutions and departments. *Research in Higher Education*. doi: 10.1007/s11162-017-9479-6. Retrieval from <http://rdcu.be/wro5>.

(INLeT) in 2009, before the *Professor of Teaching* designation existed. Since then, we have worked to connect colleagues across Faculties at Vancouver and Okanagan campuses. **As a signal of how important a title change is to many of our colleagues, we are formally changing the title of our grassroots community.** The change reflects how our ranks are now officially and collectively referred to in such documents as the Collective Agreement. As of October 2017, we are renaming our community **the Educational Leadership Network**. We are updating the title of our organizational group accordingly, and will henceforth be known as the **ELNET: Educational Leadership Network Engagement Team**. Please find more information about us and our events at <https://blogs.ubc.ca/edleadershipnetwork/>.

We are hopeful that the University will revisit this issue as soon as possible, even before the next round of bargaining. Please let us know how we can support and progress the conversation on these matters.

Dr. Catherine Rawn, Chair

On behalf of the Educational Leadership Network Engagement Team (ELNET)

UBC Vancouver and Okanagan