

December 2, 2021

Dr. Paul Mazerolle  
President and Vice Chancellor  
University of New Brunswick

Dear Dr. Mazerolle,

I write today to express AUNBT's concern regarding the proposed Provost position at UNB. Our concerns are primarily process related. We are pleased there have been opportunities for feedback thus far and urge you to continue to conduct meaningful consultation, with a focus on adapting plans in response to input, and to commit to open and transparent decision-making as you move forward in these discussions.

I take this opportunity to detail AUNBT's concerns with respect to this process and wish to emphasize the following:

1. Our members have been at the front lines of the UNB response to COVID-19 and this has had serious implications for their work. It is important to continue to provide multiple venues for engagement with this important issue, which may be fruitfully extended to include participation of faculty councils and other UNB community fora. Further, some of our members have commented that they have not been able to participate in the town halls and would like information to be presented to them in other contexts such as email, information posted to a website, etc., for their review and consideration.
2. As I noted, we are encouraged by the ongoing efforts to hold campus-wide, open meetings to discuss these issues and we hope that this continues. We understand that recent meetings and discussions have shifted away from community-wide and faculty-oriented formats, and we hope this represents a broadening of the approach and not a trend towards a more narrow, administrative-focused stage of consultation.
3. Changes to senior administrative structures have implications for the *UNB Act*, which is a Public Act of New Brunswick. As such, it can only be revised by the Legislative Assembly in accordance with the procedures for revising Public Acts. In recognition of the requirement for broad-based community support in the context of such revision, AUNBT and UNB, in recent years, worked closely to find an effective means of reaching agreement around certain revisions to the *Act* in order to increase prospects for ensuring public and government support for proposed *Act* revisions.

4. The changes that are currently being contemplated have implications for the Collective Agreement between AUNBT and UNB. It is important to recognize that in order for discussions and plans that occur outside of collective bargaining to materialize, they must be dealt with by the parties at the bargaining table. That said, we are pleased to discuss contractual implications and to consider areas of agreement at any time and, given the timelines you have discussed in public town halls, such discussions should be prioritized and occur at our earliest mutual convenience.
  
4. We support your plan to meaningfully involve Senates and, in particular, your stated goal of each Senate having an opportunity to accept or reject proposals for change.

In terms of the substance of proposed changes to administrative structures at UNB, we have heard wide-ranging views from our members. While AUNBT does not have a formal position on any particular proposal, we offer the following broad insights noting that while such a model has not been proposed, we would not favour an outcome that:

1. increases the number of administrative positions at UNB;
2. requires increased resources be allocated to administration and away from the academic mission;
3. decreases access to collegial decision-making by faculty or creates additional hierarchies or administrative layers between our members and administration;
4. creates differential access to services, decision-making structures, or resources by members from either of UNB's main campuses, or
5. erodes collegial process or academic freedom in any way.

I appreciate the opportunity to express AUNBT's concerns about, and broad insights on, the process for the proposed Provost position and the potential implications of that position.

Sincerely,



Melissa White, Ph.D.  
President,  
Association of University of New Brunswick Teachers (AUNBT)