

November 2020

Report to CAUT Council

The *Francophones' Committee* has met three times since the Fall 2019 Council meeting in Ottawa, specifically on December 9 (by telephone call), on March 6 and 7, 2020, and on August 20, 2020 (on Zoom). During this time, the team has functioned with two fewer members, but nevertheless managed to move forward with the files that are under way.

Preparation for the 4th Francophones' Conference—a general outline of the program was submitted to the Executive Director in December 2019. This outline having been favourably received, a proposal was finalized in March 2020. The events that followed did not, however, allow for presenting it to the CAUT Executive Committee in the spring, as planned. At its meeting in August, the Committee examined the various options that could be considered in light of the pandemic and chose to recommend postponing the Conference to 2022, rather than replacing it with a half-day virtual event.

Drafting of the two joint policy statements with the CAUT Librarians' and Archivists' Committee continued. In March 2020, the Francophones' Committee and the Librarians' and Archivists' Committee held a second joint work meeting to finalize the proposals for the *Policy statement on the wage gap between librarians working in French and those working in English within the same post-secondary institution* and the *Policy statement on bibliographic resources and support for programs offered in French*. The next step will be a review of the two texts by the CAUT Executive Committee, which could not take place in the spring as planned, after which the policy statements should be presented to Council.

The announcement that registrations had been suspended at the University of Alberta's Campus Saint-Jean, Laurentian University and Saint Paul University took up most of the virtual meeting of last August. One of the top priorities of the Francophones' Committee is to improve the provision of services and resources made available for courses and programs offered in French at francophone, bilingual and anglophone post-secondary institutions in Canada. Hence, a sense of urgency prevailed for all of the members.

A series of short- and medium-term actions were recommended to the Executive Director following this meeting, constituting a strong and concerted response by CAUT, in support of local and provincial associations, as well as other organizations that had already taken a position on this matter. Some of these actions have already occurred, and others are in the process of being carried out:

- CAUT sent letters to the Rectors of the University of Alberta and Laurentian University to denounce the reduction in programs offered in French;
- The Association also wrote to Minister Guilbeault (Canadian Heritage) and Minister Joly (Economic Development and Official Languages) to speak out against the situation and request a meeting;
- The suggestion to organize a webinar on the matter was welcomed, and CAUT plans to host an online forum and to invite colleagues from Laurentian University and Campus Saint-Jean, in order to discuss the situation, as well as the campaigns and steps that they have put in place in an attempt to reverse the situation.

Acknowledgements:

As Chair of the *CAUT Francophones' Committee*, I would like to thank the members of the Committee for their commitment throughout 2019–2020 and since then:

- George Akhras (Canadian Military Colleges Faculty Association) (2019–2020)
- Jacob Atangana-Abé (Association des professeurs de l'Université de Saint-Boniface)
- Amélie Hien (Laurentian University Faculty Association)
- Kamel Khiari (Association des professeurs, professeures et bibliothécaires de l'Université Sainte-Anne)
- Marc Lamoureux (Saint Mary's University Faculty Union)
- Carlo Lavoie (University of Prince Edward Island Faculty Association)
- Nathalie Pender (Memorial University of Newfoundland Faculty Association)
- Lynnda Proulx (La Cité collégiale / Ontario Public Service Employees Union)
- Valérie Dufour and Rosa Labocetta (Professional Officers for the Francophones' Committee)
- Yalla Sangaré (CAUT Treasurer), for his participation in the meeting of August 20, 2020

Report presented by
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