**Survey Unit 1 Summary**

**General Membership Meeting**

**February 1, 2018**

**Introducing the Project:**

During the month of December 2017, an end of term membership survey was distributed to Unit 1 (Teaching Assistants and Internally-Funded Research Assistants) members via email. The survey consisted of nine (9) demographic questions and fifteen (15) survey questions (ranging from multiple choice, checkbox answer, short answer and long answer). The survey questions fell under the categories of either workload, TA supervisor interactions or overall TA experience. This document will provide you with a brief summary of the survey results.

The purpose of conducting surveys in the union is to better understand the working conditions and concerns of our membership. The aim is to use the surveys as data for both our Class(Room)Struggle Campaign (addressing the importance of providing more class supports for TAs and CIS) and our next round of collective bargaining in 2019. Alternatively, surveys are can be effective tool to reach out and engage with members at a wider capacity.

**Overview of Findings:**

We received a total of 218 respondents for the survey (about 11% of the Unit 1 membership). While this number does not reflect the whole membership, these results offer a glimpse of some TA concerns faced in the Local.

The majority of respondents in the Unit 1 survey are satisfied with their TA experience in their respective departments. However, around 20% of respondents raised concerns with regard to their working conditions which are reoccurring issues for Unit 1 members in our Local.

1. **Workload:**

**Overwork**: About ¼ of respondents expressed working on average beyond 10 hours a week fulfilling TA duties. Similarly, about ¼ of respondents said “yes” to their workload going beyond the hours allotted in their assignment of duties. About 20% of respondents who said “yes” to this question were assigned to two (2) or more courses to TA.

**Turn-Around Time in Grading:** On a scale from 1 to 5, about 20% of respondents ranked the turn-around time for collecting, grading and handing back assignments as low (1 or 2).

**Number of Student to TA:** Based on the sample size, 6.28% of TAs had 0-19 students while 9.7% had over 100 students under their responsibility. On average, respondents in the survey had either had 20-39 students (24.6%), 40-59 students (25.6%) or 60-90 students (26%).

These varied results demonstrate disproportionate ratios of students assigned to TAs at Carleton. The number of students assigned to TAs is based on what course(s) they are TA-ing for, the type of TA-ship(s) they have (i.e. tutorial-based or grading-based), and how many TA-ships they have in a semester.

1. **Interactions with TA Supervisor**

**Meeting with TA Supervisor:** While almost 90% of respondents said “yes” to discussing their assignment of duties with their TA supervisor prior to the beginning of their TA assignment, only 1/3 (31.5%) of respondents said “no” to revisiting their assignment of duties during the mid-point of the semester with their TA supervisor. Almost 50% of the respondents who said “no” to revisiting their assignment of duties with their TA supervisor said “yes” to working beyond their allotted hours of work.

Mid-point meetings are essential to maintain proper communication with the TA supervisor and make them aware of the hours their TAs have spent on in their assignment.

**Respecting Assignment of Duties and TA Schedule:** 12.6% of respondents said “yes” to being asked by their TA supervisor to go beyond their assignment of duties. A little over 50% of the respondents who said “yes” to this question said “yes” to working beyond their allotted hours.

When asked to describe what these additional duties consisted of, many respondents said that they were asked to grade extra assignments or final exams. Respondents also expressed how the additional duties were either not outlined in their assignment of duties form or the TA supervisor underestimated the amount of time it would take to perform certain tasks.

Most respondents said “yes” to their TA supervisors being respectful to their schedule. However, 3.7% of respondents said “no” and 12% of respondents said “sometimes.” Out of the respondents who said either “no” or “sometimes” to their TA supervisor being respectful to their schedule, almost 40% said “yes” to being asked to go beyond their duties in their TA assignment.

1. **Overall TA Experience:**

**Overall Experience:** When asked to comment about overall TA experience, the majority of TA expressed positive responses. However, there were still many TAs who addressed issues related to workload, lack of communication and/or organization from TA supervisor and discrimination.

**Discrimination in the Workplace:** From the sample size, 6.4% of respondents said “yes” and 5.5% of respondents said “maybe” to experiencing discrimination, stereotypes, abuse and/other aspects of human rights related harassment and violence as a Teaching Assistant. Drawing from the demographics of gender identity in the survey, 93% of the respondents who said “yes” to the question identified as female and 7.1% chose not to specify. 58.1% of respondents who said “maybe” to the question identified as female. The remaining 33.2% respondents were male and the other 8.3% respondents chose not to specify. Unfortunately, the sample size was too small to accurately determine if discrimination occurred among other minority groups.

**Future Considerations:**

We plan to launch another membership survey to both Unit 1 and Unit 2 members in the middle of the Winter 2018 semester to assess ongoing concerns. We intend to achieve a larger sample size through promoting the survey during middle of the term compared to the end of the term. Questions will also be modified to be more specific and concise so we can ensure to achieve more accurate results from respondents. We will be taking suggestions from members at the Unit 1 Caucus meeting on how to improve the survey on **February 9, 2018 at 3pm (UC 279).**