Dear President Benarroch,

I am writing to you today to express my support for my Professors, Instructors, Librarians, and Archivists represented by the University of Manitoba Faculty Association (UMFA), and their demands for binding third-party arbitration or a meaningful counter-offer in this salary re-opener.

My classmates and I are understandably upset by the disruption to our studies that job action would pose, but we understand that UMFA has been forced to take these extraordinary measures by your blanket refusal to negotiate honestly and in good faith. You have left them no option short of accepting what amounts to a pay cut by denying them salary increases to offset the ever-rising cost of living, and by denying them meaningful compensation for wages lost because of the administration’s collusion with the provincial government in its campaign of unlawful and unconstitutional interference in public sector collective bargaining.

You have publicly claimed to be committed to a “fair bargaining process”. My classmates and I call on you to be true to your word and to abandon the pretext that the pandemic prevents you from doing more than nothing. Both we and the public at large are aware of the University’s financial position, the 10% increase in enrolment in the summer and 3% increase in enrolments this fall, as well as the 9% increase in tuition revenues.

As the University’s biggest stakeholder group, my classmates and I call upon you to share these resources equitably with the individuals who are responsible for the University’s current financial good fortune, and the sustained good reputation of the University.

These are difficult times for everyone, but it is up to you to make the situation better, not worse.

Yours sincerely,

A. Student