



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE

October 2, 2019

Professor Susan McCahan  
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs  
University of Toronto

Dear Professor McCahan,

I am writing in response to the request by the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) in regards to the March 6-7, 2018 external review of the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and its undergraduate and graduate programs. At its meeting on November 1, 2018, AP&P requested a one-year follow-up report addressing the progress on the outcome of the workplace review and initiatives to improve staff relations. The Faculty has worked with the Chair of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology to address the concerns of the AP&P committee.

Following the March 2018 external review, the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology has undergone a significant workplace review and has adopted a number of initiatives to address concerns raised. First, the Chair has worked with the Faculty to bring workshops on workplace civility to both faculty and staff. Both the staff and faculty workshops were very well attended, and in multiple faculty and staff meetings, the Chair has reinforced the messages of civility and inclusion, along with a clear message of the pathways and resources if new concerns arise. The Chair also underwent a full review of staff morale, meeting with all staff members individually and discussing any concerns and suggestions. The Chair has increased the lines of communication with staff significantly, including regular staff meetings and frequent email communication over the listserv. He also met with the Vice-Dean, Faculty, Academic Life & Equity, in August 2019, to discuss progress made on this matter and ways to further improve the climate in the unit. The Chair is also working closely with the new Associate Chairs and the staff to ensure smooth transition and open communication with the new leadership.

I feel confident that the changes initiated by the program and its faculty address the concerns of the AP&P follow-up request.

Sincerely,

Melanie Woodin  
Dean and Professor of Cell and Systems Biology

cc:

Stephen Wright, Chair, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Poppy Lockwood, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning and Strategic Initiatives, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Asher Cutter, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Issues and Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science  
Daniella Mallinick, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance  
Andrea Benoit, Academic Review Officer, Faculty of Arts & Science