An Agreement Review Committee (ARC) comprising members from Administration and the AASUA has been working together since December, 2011 to consider revisions to the Trust/Research Academic Staff (TRAS) Agreement. Over this past year, trustholders and trust/research academic staff have been consulted but we now feel we are in a position to provide the community with an update and to pose some specific questions for further consultation.

The following categories of changes are being discussed by the TRAS ARC:

1. **Editorial revisions**
   These changes are being made to: standardize terms used, numbering and format; correct misspelled words; utilize abbreviations; update references based on the Post-Secondary Learning Act and other legislation (e.g. FOIPP); remove references to General Faculty Council Policy; and update internal references within the document.

2. **Revisions to update language that is common across Academic Staff Agreements**
   The ARC is identifying those articles within the TRAS Agreement that are similar, or identical, to articles in other academic staff agreements. The method of reviewing these types of articles will be discussed by the parties in other committees which have been established, but those discussions are subject to and will come back to this ARC in due course for negotiation. Examples of these common articles are the Discipline and Grievance articles.

3. **Revisions discussed by TRAS ARC**
   There are a number of articles that TRAS ARC feel require revisions that are specific to the TRAS Agreement. These are listed below along with a brief description of the issues that have been discussed to date. Other articles may be discussed in due course. Only if all articles are agreed to shall the package of revisions be sent out to the Board for approval, and to members for ratification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Issues Discussed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6: Appointments | - Clarify that position description is required in advance of hiring  
- Review Job Families  
- Review use of Fixed Term and Renewable Term appointments  
- Clarify advertising requirements  
- Provide a more expedient appeal process |
| 7: Position Responsibilities | - Review processes for position description evaluation and changes in position responsibilities  
- Provide a more expedient appeal process |
| 12: Probation | - Re-organize to provide a better sense for the flow of the process.  
- Clarify roles of supervisor, trustholder and appointing officer  
- Clarify length and purpose of probationary period  
- Confirm role of AASUA in terminations during or at end of probation  
- Provide a more expedient appeal process |
| 13: Performance Review | - Enhance processes to clarify roles, objectives and end points  
- Re-organize to provide a better sense for the flow of the process  
- Clarify roles of supervisor, trustholder and appointing officer |
| 14: Unsatisfactory Performance | - Enhance processes to clarify roles, objectives and end points  
- Incorporate Unsatisfactory Performance into the Performance Review article to improve the flow |
| 15: Appeals | - Consider the requirement for a stand-alone appeal process if improving processes in individual articles |
| 17: Resignation | - Consider whether 2 weeks’ notice is sufficient |
| 32: Lay-Off | - Within constraints of funding sources, explore the current provisions for lay-off of Fixed Term and Renewable Term appointees |
Outstanding Questions for Consultation:

1. How is management typically structured within research teams? Who is providing the supervision (scientific, academic, and administrative) to TRAS members?

2. What are current approaches to mentoring and training of TRAS members?

3. What factors do you take into consideration when determining the length of the appointment contract for TRAS positions?

4. What changes would you like to see in terms of the appointment, promotion, retention and evaluation of TRAS members?

5. What opportunities, if any, exist for career development and progression for TRAS members?

By the end of January, 2013, both the Administration and the AASUA teams will be consulting key stakeholders (trust holders, senior TRAS scientists/researchers, and senior TRAS administrators) on the issues discussed to date and the outstanding questions for consultation. After consultation, the TRAS ARC will continue to negotiate proposed language changes and bring those forward. Following these negotiations, the proposed agreement will make its way through the governance processes of both Administration and AASUA to seek final approval.

The members of TRAS ARC are as follows:

**AASUA TRAS ARC Team**

- Ricardo Acuña, Chair
- Kathy Belton
- Rineke Steenbergen
- Brygeda Renke
- Natasha Wiebe

**Administration TRAS ARC Team**

- Judy Arnett
- Maryam Bagheritari
- Donna Herman, Co-Chair
- Jay Spark, Co-Chair
- Vivien Wulff

If you would like to provide written comments/suggestions please direct them to:

- Ricardo Acuña ([racuna@ualberta.ca](mailto:racuna@ualberta.ca)) and/or
- Donna Herman ([donna.herman@ualberta.ca](mailto:donna.herman@ualberta.ca))