



Bulletin

Accountability at Coady International Institute?

Last week, all employees of the Coady International Institute (Coady) were asked to attend a meeting where they were told by University administration that there was a need for a significant reduction in the number of employees at Coady. All employees including our Members were presented with a voluntary severance package. If an insufficient number of employees take the voluntary severance package, involuntary layoffs will be implemented – given the employee profile, involuntary layoffs appear inevitable.

The explanation provided by University administration for the reduction in employees is one of a “financial crisis”. This crisis has occurred because Global Affairs Canada (GAC) did not approve funding of approximately \$3M for 2019 resulting in the discontinuation of the “flagship” diploma program. The lack of funding is made more acute by the recent (i.e., last week) realization that several million dollars in funding that was recognized and accumulated in Coady’s financial reports over the last few years is not collectible.

GAC had previously indicated that their funding approach was changing – advanced warning of that change had been communicated for a number of years previous to this GAC decision. Coady administration, in fact, would have been aware of the change for some time. GAC has invited Coady to resubmit the

application in February for 2019 funding. The invitation to resubmit suggests that the initial submission prepared by University administration did not address the changes required by GAC.

The resubmission timeline for GAC funding is coincident with the timing of the completion of both of the voluntary and involuntary layoffs at Coady. These layoffs which have been labeled as a “restructuring” of Coady will be finalized before the outcome(s) of the resubmission for funding is known. In the meantime, the proposed layoffs will require a cash expenditure of a minimum of eight weeks in salary for the severance payouts - cash that could be used for the payment of salaries. The unwillingness to bridge salary costs while making severance payouts until funding outcomes are known suggests that the University’s administration is taking advantage of this “financial crisis” to make pointed staffing changes (e.g., previously labeled “unhappy” employees) at Coady that would have otherwise been unacceptable and unnecessary.

The brunt of the consequences of this “financial crisis” is not being shouldered by the University’s administration who is ultimately responsible for securing funding, rather, StFXAUT, NSGEU and professional staff Members are being held accountable - through job loss - for actions out of their control or influence.