Afternoon VIUFA Members,

I am incredibly lucky to be in a position to add my voice to the Presidential Search Advisory Committee. I'm currently the Vice Chair of the Arts and Humanities Faculty Council, the Chair of the Hiring Committee in English, and have served in various VIUFA roles (Associate Bargainer and Non-Regular Faculty Chair) in my time at VIU. As a professor in the Department of English, now for my eighth year, I see first hand the successes and the impediments our students are currently experiencing, and I bring a keen eye to any committee work that centres the student and their success.

For example, my role supporting the A&H Food Pantry is pivotal to my service work at VIU; my team and I shop weekly, receive, and pickup foodstuffs from Loaves and Fishes to distribute to students. This is service work that is incredibly satisfying to me and one that I feel called to do. It is a testament to our ability to see our students as humans who are also navigating food insecurity. While removing systemic barriers should always be our goal, supporting something as simple as a meal provides a moment of humanity—I deeply feel our search needs to focus on finding candidates that embrace the humanity of our staff, faculty, students, Snuneymuxw First Nation, and greater Nanaimo community.

Moreover, I feel emphatically that leaders must lead by doing and not simply in a performative manner. We model elements of support, empathy, and joy in the classroom, and I would look for those same capabilities in a University President.

Thank you to all VIUFA Members for taking part in this selection process for PSAC.

--Amelia Horsburgh