

**Academic Liaison Committee
2011-2012 Annual Report**

Membership

The committee is currently chaired by Pat Kostouros, Academic Liaison Officer. Members of the committee for 2011-2012 include:

Name	Faculty
Patricia Kostouros (Chair)	MRFA (Child and Youth Studies)
Al Fedoruk	Science and Technology (BCIS)
Janet Monteith	Library
Kenna Olsen	Arts (English)
Janne Holmgren	Health and Community Studies (Justice)
Carlton Osakwe	Bissett (Finance)
Jane McNichol	Communications (Public Relations)
Jennifer Boman	Teaching and Learning (ADC)

Activities

Caucus

In the Fall of 2011 the ALC embarked on a study of bicameral governance. ALC members completed a brief review of literature related to university governance and informed ourselves about the role this committee could have in the MRU community in relation to the liaison function. It was clear through our readings that there is a place for this committee and the ALO position. However, we needed to find ways to liaise, as per our mandate, and position this committee as a communication hub for GFC members.

The ALC was meeting after the GFC package was distributed and flagged potential issue that might need to be highlighted at the GFC meeting. We quickly understood that flagging issues after the package was delivered may be too late to have an impact. Therefore, we considered various strategies for communication to take place sooner in the process and how this committee could enhance the exchange of information. We learned that some faculties were engaging in caucus, but that those meetings were feeding information to the GFC members of that faculty only, leaving limited opportunity for other faculties to understand and or consider any concerns highlighted by one particular faculty.

In an effort to avoid the potential silo building around particular faculties, the ALC discussed a caucus model. Early in 2012, the ALC undertook the process of caucus in a more purposeful way. While some faculties were already engaging in a caucus, not all faculties had done so, and when caucus was occurring, it was typically in response to the GFC agenda package. The ALC recognized the opportunity, through caucus structures, to potentially change the conversations at GFC from limited responses to the agenda to a more fulsome discussion since caucus would allow all GFC members to be informed about issues from all faculties. The intention was for ALC members to facilitate caucus meetings, not only in response to the GFC agenda, but to also

have members caucus about any issue related to GFC and bring those issues back to the ALC for discussion. Since all faculties are represented at ALC we could then understand issues from all faculties and highlight items discussed and disseminate back to GFC members (see attached).

Drop-In

ALC held drop in sessions for GFC councilors throughout the 2011-2012 term. These sessions were held Thursday afternoons from 2:30 – 3:30 prior to the GFC meetings. These sessions tended to have a low turnout (2-5 people), however, those who did attend were informed about the issues discussed at the ALC in relation to the GFC package content. Potentially, once the faculty caucus becomes part of the GFC culture, and there is an increase in attendance at faculty caucus, there will be limited need for the GFC drop in and these may be eliminated. Until that time however, we will continue with the Thursday drop in session, for those unable to attend their caucus or while the culture of caucus is still being developed.

GFC Overview

A GFC overview prepared by the Academic Liaison Officer was distributed in the MRFA weekly newsletter. ALC members have been supporting the work of GFC by attending GFC meetings, chairing or organizing caucus meetings and supporting the ALO in preparing the GFC overview.

Meetings

ALC met monthly throughout the year. At the meetings, ALC members identified and shared information on items of wider concern on upcoming GFC, GFC sub-committee, and faculty council agendas. We also discussed ways to support faculty caucus.

The ALC members plan to participate in the Committee Transition and Committee (Af) fair event May 3rd 2012.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and thank outgoing committee members Janne Holmgren, Kenna Olsen, Jane McNichol, and Jennifer Boman for their contributions to ALC during their tenure with the committee.

Bicameral governance and caucus at MRU:

The Academic Liaison Committee (ALC) has undertaken a brief review of literature as it pertains to shared governance and has surfaced a variety of potential strengths and weaknesses of a bicameral system. For example, the relationship between faculty and administration needs to include trust and open dialogue so that informed decision making is possible, the decision making process must be authentic and move beyond rubber stamping, and that a true shared governance model will seek input in a variety of ways. In this review it was also clear that

governance and committee meeting processes take skill and a management model will not necessarily create a shared space.

Bicameral governance allows for balance and sharing of responsibilities between the Administration of the University and the Academic Faculty. GFC acts as the venue for discussion and final decision making on academic matters. Given that the bicameral governance model is relatively new at MRU there may be an opportunity to engage in capacity building, in particular, for those faculty interested in governance but with limited experience. In addition, many faculty members would appreciate dialogue about academic issues but may not have the opportunity for input. Not all faculty members are comfortable with the GFC formalities nor are they always comfortable with speaking to the larger faculty body. However, it is important that we gather voices from around the campus community and make sure that all voices have an opportunity to be heard in the ways that are most comfortable for them, when appropriate. If we are to support a true shared governance model then places and spaces for faculty input should be provided.

At the October, 2011 GFC meeting Dr. Docherty was asked a question from the floor regarding caucus and how he sees this as possible at MRU. Dr. Docherty noted that caucus was a useful process and gave opportunity for faculty members to have meaningful input and dialogue so that GFC does not become a rubber stamping body. In addition, Dr. Docherty mentioned that caucus has the potential to create silos and therefore, if caucus is not used appropriately then factions between faculties have the potential to erupt.

To that end, the ALC proposes to make caucus a formal function within each faculty. The proposed model suggests that each member of the ALC will act as the chair of the caucus for their faculty (or will ensure the role is filled). Faculty members will meet at the proposed caucus time and share their academic concerns which will then be brought back to the ALC via the committee members. Essentially, the ALC acts as the communication hub between faculties. Our hope is that this communication hub will decrease the potential silo of faculty issues and increase information flow and informed decision making.

While it is likely to take some time to move forward with caucus, the goal is to drive the agenda from the faculty level rather than respond to the GFC executive agenda once it has been created. By driving the agenda, faculty has an increased voice at the GFC level, and authentic shared governance will continue to emerge.

The ALC members also discussed that caucus not be exclusive to only GFC members. All faculty members should attend caucus if they desire regardless of GFC status. We recognize that the role of the GFC member is to make their own decision; however, input from their faculty members will allow for informed decision making. We understand there is potential for block voting based on caucus and that is not the intention and therefore, returning with concerns to the ALC will decrease this likelihood. The intention is to open up dialogue to those who may otherwise stay silent and to communicate broadly.

The initial discussion considered the inclusion of staff and potentially students in caucus. However, since that initial conversation, it has been noted that there may be some hesitation by faculty to include these constituents. Therefore, the ALC member will make it known to staff and the faculty council student rep that if there are questions on academic issues they want addressed, that the ALC member will bring them to the committee on their behalf.

Proposed model:

ALC member → attends or chairs their faculty caucus to discuss potential concerns or questions related to academic matters → ALC member returns to ALC to share from caucus → ALC compiles shared concerns, and decides on direction (e.g., question from the floor, written question, or not an academic concern) → Academic Liaison Officer, or designate follows up with the appropriate action.

Pat Kostouros
Academic Liaison Officer

**Communications Committee
2011-2012 Annual Report**

The Communications Committee has met on roughly a monthly basis throughout the year in order to continue to improve the communications of the MRFA. In particular, we have organized and hosted two brunches for all Departmental Communicators in order to ensure communication between the Association and the membership at the departmental level. We have sought to deliver key messages about MRFA business through our communicators throughout the year and to augment meeting attendance through this channel. The Committee's budget has been spent on brochures about the MRFA for the membership, in order to purchase a new, all-purpose banner for MRFA events, and in order to purchase a new camera for the purpose of recording events. Finally, the Communications Committee, in collaboration with the Grievance Committee, planned an information session on the grievance process for all Department Communicators, which took place on the 1st of May. This session was designed to help provide better and more accurate information about the function and process of grievances within departments across campus.

Respectfully submitted,
Kit Dobson, Secretary

Diversity Committee 2011-2012 Annual Report

Mandate:

As a standing committee of the Mount Royal Faculty Association (MRFA), the MRFA Diversity Standing Committee shall advise the Faculty Association on principles and best practices in:

- continuing to build a more diverse faculty, academic, and institutional community;
- supporting and representing diverse groups more effectively;
- identifying gaps in policy, support, and services appropriate to the mandate of the committee.

Authority:

The Diversity Standing Committee is a standing sub-committee of the MRFA under section 10.12 of the MRFA Bylaws.

The committee may review the charter, and make changes and amendments as necessary, and submit revisions to the MRFA Executive for approval.

It is not within the mandate of this standing committee to deal directly with specific diversity/equity-related complaints from individuals.

Membership:

The MRFA Diversity Standing Committee shall consist of:

- Seven (7) Regular Members of the Association in good standing, specifically the MRFA Second Vice-President (ex officio), and six (6) elected representatives.
- For the 2011/2012 year our membership included:
 - **Tim Haney**
 - **Michael Hawley**
 - **Ricardo Hoar** (Chair)
 - **Scott Murray**
 - **Kari Roberts**
 - **Isha Sharma**
 - **Qasim Syed** (MRFA Second Vice-President (ex officio))

Activities:

In accordance with our charter, we chose to focus most of our efforts around on one suite of issues this year, namely:

- Identifying existing barriers (and the absence of language) around recruitment, employment, and promotion policies and procedures
- Evaluating other MRU policies concerning diversity
- Drafting a diversity statement which we believe articulates diversity more completely.
- Making recommendations to the MRFA executive regarding where this diversity statement should be applied to best address the identified barriers.

The diversity committee therefore began the year by evaluating research on diversity statements from other Canadian Universities. We also consulted with the MRU Human Rights officer Stephanie Stone, Alberta human rights legislation and the Faculty of Arts diversity statement. Building on the latter, we created a diversity statement of our own that was as *inviting* to potential applicants as possible. Our final statement was:

Mount Royal University hires on the basis of merit, and is strongly committed to fostering diversity as a source of excellence, intellectual and cultural enrichment, and social strength. We, therefore, welcome applications from those who would contribute to the further diversification of our faculty and their scholarship including, but not limited to, Aboriginal people, women, persons with disabilities, and persons of any sexual orientation or gender identity, ethnic, national or socio-economic background, religion, belief, family status or age.

This statement was brought forward to Dean's Council for their adoption on February 1, 2012. There was discussion of our rationale, and it was well received. We have not heard back regarding its adoption.

We also participated in the newly renamed University Diversity Plan Development Committee, providing our input into that process in the form of invited attendance by the Chair at one meeting and ongoing participation by Scott Murray as the MRFA representative in the committee. That committee's work is ongoing and will include, among other initiatives, a town hall community consultation on diversity issues to be held during intersession. Although the MRFA Diversity Committee is separate from the University Diversity Plan Development Committee, being informed of the steps being taken toward the development of a university-wide diversity plan does allow us to focus our efforts appropriately. This feedback caused us to focus more on tangible outcomes for the year in the form of the updated diversity statement for use in hiring.

We expect the committee's work next year will look at, amongst other issues, whether we need an equity policy, integrating feedback from any university wide surveys we may consider, and moving forward in our mission to build a more diverse faculty, scholarly, and institutional community.

Educational Grants Committee 2011-2012 Annual Report

The Ed Grants Committee members for the 2011/12 year were Nathan Ackroyd (chair), Joe Anderson, Ben Kusi-Sekyere, Antoine Eche, and Rafik Kurji, the MRFA Treasurer. The Committee has two vacancies for the 2012/13 term as both Nathan and Joe have completed their terms. Ben and Antoine will continue for another year.

Under the terms of the Collective Agreement, the MRFA Educational Grants Committee allocated \$60,000 in scholarships for dependents (16.7) and \$64,000 in Tuition Refunds for faculty members taking credit courses and/or completing graduate studies at other institutions (18.3).

1 Faculty Educational Grants

In 2011/2012, the Educational Grants Committee, in conjunction with Chantelle Anderson, MRFA Executive Assistant, was responsible for the allocation of a total of \$64,000 in Tuition Refunds, divided into two pools. The Educational Grants Committee received applications for 31 Educational Grants from Mount Royal Faculty. Twenty-two awards were granted from Pool 1, reserved for full-time faculty who are pursuing terminal degrees in their field. Applicants received 47% of their requests, totaling \$47,000. Nine awards were granted from Pool 2, reserved for all part-time faculty and for full-time faculty taking credit courses not related to their terminal degree. Applicants were awarded 46% of their requests, totaling \$17,000.

2 Scholarships for Dependants

In conjunction with Chantelle Anderson, MRFA Executive Assistant, the Committee reviewed scholarships for dependents of faculty members for Spring and Fall 2011 and Winter 2012 semesters. \$3,000 was allocated to 4 applicants in Spring 2011; \$27,000 was allocated to 16 applicants in the Fall 2011; we currently have 15 applicants for reimbursement for Winter 2012 however at time of writing this allocation has not yet been made as we await receipt of final grades.

3 MRFA Student Scholarships

The Committee will meet in June to allocate six scholarships of \$1000 each to a student in each of six major faculties/schools.

My deepest appreciation goes to Chantelle Anderson for her detailed work preparing and organizing materials for our committee, and who was a delight to work with.

Respectfully,

Nathan Ackroyd, Chair
Rafik Kurji, Treasurer
Joe Anderson
Antoine Eche
Ben Kusi-Sekyere

FACULTY EVALUATION COMMITTEE 2011-2012 ANNUAL REPORT

MEMBERS

Antoine Eche, Olive Fast, Bev Mathison, Halia Valladares Montemayor, Alain Morin, Verna Raab, BobUttl

MANDATE

The committee's mandate is described as follows: "The Committee shall recommend policy on pre-tenure, post-tenure, term certain and part-time evaluation, shall monitor the evaluation process, and shall provide information to Regular Members on evaluation. The Committee shall investigate and maintain current research information to inform its work and to enhance evaluation processes for all MRFA members."

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MRFA FEC SEI Faculty Survey

The previous FEC surveyed faculty regarding SEIs. The response rate was much higher than expected and nearly all respondents provided many open ended comments on the MRU SEI process. A cursory reading of the comments revealed that faculty had many concerns about the SEIs. Accordingly, MRFA Executive requested that the FEC conducts quantitative content analysis of faculty responses to identify the issues of concerns to the faculty. A subgroup of the previous FEC -- Gary Koroluk, Halia Valladares Montemayor, Martin Haworth, Verna Raab, Bob Uttl -- and Alain Morin first developed a coding scheme, revised it several times, established coding reliability, and then coded over 1,400 comments. Bob then analyzed the data and the current FEC prepared a report for the MRFA Executive and members [Uttl, Eche, Fast, Mathison, Montemayor, Morin & Raab, 2011, *MRFA FEC Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) Survey*, http://mrfa.net/files/MRFA_SEI_Survey_3.pdf]. The report was presented to the membership at the MRFA General Meetings on November 30, 2011, and January, 30, 2012, as well as posted online for those unable to attend the meeting.

MRFA FEC Review of SEI Literature and Practice

The FEC has also reviewed the literature on SEIs as well as faculty teaching evaluation practices elsewhere with the goal of improving reliability and validity of SEI instrument itself, interpretation of SEI scores, and summative decisions based on SEI scores. The FEC has examined many sources including a recent review of SEI research and practice by Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (Gravestock & Greenleaf, 2008), a recent meta-analysis investigating relationship between SEIs and student learning (Clayson, 2009), numerous research articles, CAUT recommendations, institutional practices (e.g., University of Victoria, University of Alberta), and some of the most well known SEI systems (e.g., IDEA, ETS SIR II). The 79 page review [Uttl, Eche, Fast, Mathison, Montemayor, Morin & Raab, 2011, *Student Evaluation of Instruction/Teaching (SEI/SET) Review*, http://mrfa.net/files/MRFA_SEI_Review_v6.pdf] was presented to the membership at the MRFA General Meetings on November 30, 2011, and on January 30, 2012, as well as posted online for those unable to attend the meetings.

Review of Online vs. Paper SEIs

The FEC has reviewed the literature on and other universities experiences with online vs. paper (in class) SEIs. Based on the review, the FEC has recommended transition to the online SEIs.

MRFA Executive/FEC SEI Recommendations

Based on the MRFA FEC SEI Survey results and the review of the literature and teaching evaluation practices, the FEC made a number of recommendations to the MRFA Executive. The FEC and MRFA Executive then distilled these into the MRFA SEI recommendations (MRFA, 2012, *MRFA Recommendations Regarding SEI Processes and Forms*,

[http://mrfa.net/files/FEC_Recommendations\(1\).pdf](http://mrfa.net/files/FEC_Recommendations(1).pdf)). One more recommendation was added during the MRFA March General Meeting (the diversity considerations). The MRFA members then voted on these recommendations and passed all of them, with many of them endorsed by over 90% of the respondents (MRFA, 2012, *MRFA Recommendations Regarding SEI Processes and Forms*,

http://mrfa.net/files/MRFA_SEI_Recommendations.pdf).

Other Activities

The FEC has also met with the representatives from the Counselling Department and discussed possible changes to their evaluation forms.

Respectfully submitted,
by Faculty Evaluation Committee

**MRFA Ethics Committee
2011-2012 Annual Report**

The Ethics Committee received two formal complaints both of which were dismissed. We also received a handful of enquiries and proposed a few minor changes to the bylaws adopted last spring.

Negotiating Committee 2011-2012 Annual Report

As this academic year corresponds with a “full” round of negotiations, the Negotiating Committee was extremely busy in the fall preparing for this process. The team held numerous Open Houses and actively solicited the opinions of our membership. Our focus in the fall term was to develop questions for the General survey as well as questions for the Time Log survey. The key results of these two surveys were presented at the April Regular Meeting and copies of these results are available on the MRFA website. Each of these sources of information helped identify and formulate our official Statement of Interests.

In January, as per the collective agreement, we participated in a two-day joint training session on interest-focused bargaining with the Board’s team. We exchanged Statements of Interests on January 31st and started negotiations on February 10th. With the exception of the exam period, we have been meeting regularly – two or three times per week. While recognizing that much of the discussion necessitates confidentiality, we have kept members informed by our reports at the Regular Meetings as well as through our negotiations bulletins. Similar to last year’s round, the atmosphere around the negotiating table has generally been courteous and respectful, in spite of our differences. At this stage, we have come to agreement on a number of smaller items but the larger items of salary and workload – identified as the two top priorities by faculty – have yet to be discussed in depth. The Negotiating Committee is hopeful that we will have a package available for ratification before the summer break.

Once again, as MRFA’s delegate on ACIFA’s (Alberta Colleges & Institutes Faculties Association) Negotiations Advisory Committee, I attended the biannual meetings (Edmonton in November and Calgary in March). As I mentioned in last year’s report, even though Mount Royal’s interests diverge considerably with respect to some of the Colleges, it is still useful to sit on this committee. Grant MacEwan recently ratified their collective agreement and the discussions with their chief negotiator were particularly informative.

I also sit as an ex-officio member on the Professional Affairs Committee (PAC). This has been a successful year with a workshop in September, a Round Table Discussion in April, and our annual Committee (Af)fair session in May.

Finally, in addition to the above and attending the bi-weekly Executive meetings, I sat on the Grievance committee as well as the ad hoc committee on workload issues. Once again, it has been a busy year and I’m looking forward to privilege of serving the Association next year.

Respectfully submitted,

David R. Sabiston, 1st Vice-President

Professional Affairs Committee Report

2011-2012 Annual Report

I am pleased to submit this annual report for your perusal at the successful completion of this academic year as your 2nd Vice President. In fact, this is the final year of my second 2- year term in this position. So first and foremost, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the expression of your trust by electing me first in 2008 and then re-electing in 2010. In return, I have done my best to serve the emerging professional needs of the faculty arising from our continuing transition from a college to an undergraduate university by chairing the Professional Affairs Committee (PAC) and serving ex-officio member on the Diversity Committee. When I started, PAC was a brand new committee with no precedent to follow. With your cooperation, hard work by PAC members and the Executive's support, today it is a successful and fully functional committee of the MRFA.

The Professional Affairs Committee (PAC) has mainly focused on those emerging professional needs of the faculty which are generally not addressed adequately by other avenues in the university. PAC has worked earnestly to foster professional excellence in the Mount Royal Community. PAC's complete mandate is given below.

“The Professional Affairs Committee (PAC) shall recommend, develop and offer opportunities for faculty development and training in the areas of academic governance, parliamentary procedure, faculty leadership, conflict resolution and mediation, labour relations, and professional conduct.

The committee shall foster professional excellence within the MRFA community. Professional excellence encompasses the ability to model leadership behaviours and collegiality, to take an active role in academic governance, and to act in accordance with the MRFA bylaws and the processes established in the Collective Agreement.”

In the time I have served on PAC, structurally it has consisted of eight (8) members: the Second Vice-President (Chair) and First Vice-President (ex-officio); 3 members (2 tenured) were elected for 2 years in even-numbered years, 3 members (2 tenured) were elected for 2 years in odd-numbered years. The current membership of the current PAC is given in a table which can be found at the end of this report.

In light of the framework of its mandate, PAC's activities for this year included the following:

- On September 20, 2011, PAC co-sponsored with the Social Committee a social event titled “Who's New at the Zoo..U to introduce new faculty to the MRFA. The event took place at the faculty Centre. Prior to the program, PAC encouraged new faculty to come, and older faculty to bring new people from their departments to this program. There was a good turnout at the program and PAC Chair also gave a brief presentation welcoming new faces and met a number of new faculty members. This program was a great example of two MRFA committees working together in harmony to serve the membership.
- On September 6, 2012, PAC organized an expert-based workshop on peer collaboration and review. The workshop was co-sponsored by MRU's Provost and

Vice President Academic. Dr. Dan Bernstein from the University of Kansas (KU), an internationally renowned scholar on the chosen topic, was the presenter at this workshop. A booklet containing useful information was especially prepared and distributed to the participants. MRU President Dr. David D Docherty also welcomed the presenter at the workshop lunch.

PAC members worked very hard in collaboration with the presenter over an extended period of time to make this workshop relevant and useful to our members in the current MRU context. Based on the evaluations, the workshop was a great success. Majority found the workshop useful, timely and relevant and they would recommend it to others.

As the process of promotion to full professor was in its infancy when this workshop took place, a dinner meeting with the presenter was organized the day before the workshop at the request of the Provost and VP Academic. The meeting was attended by MRFA President and PAC Chair along with the Provost and the VP Academic and resulted in some very useful discussion for the institution.

- On December 9, 2011, a very successful workshop on the Robert's Rules of Order was organized at the Moot Court. The workshop was facilitated by Robert James, PRP and had a special focus on GFC. This was the fourth annual workshop organized on this topic by PAC. Building on past experience and suggestions of the faculty, this was a highly interactive workshop based on Mount Royal needs and scenarios. To enhance the usefulness of the workshop, the format of the workshop was decided after consultation with Dr. Lee Easton, Speaker of the MRU GFC. Based on evaluations, the workshop was very well received by the faculty who attended the workshop. The workshop was open to Administration as well. Associate Vice-President, Academic and Associate Dean of Arts also attended the workshop. Gerry Cross, MRFA President, also spoke briefly at the workshop about the importance such workshops. The workshop was co-sponsored by the MRU Provost & VP Academic's office.
- Most of what the MRFA accomplishes as a professional organization is the result of involvement of its members with the MRFA. Therefore, it is essential to give new faculty an opportunity to connect with and get to know the MRFA committees. To serve this purpose, at the time of writing of this report, a program titled A Committee (Af)fair is planned for Thursday, May 3, 2012 at the Faculty Centre. Though the program is of a special interest to new faculty but it is open to all faculty members. This program is a regular yearly feature of PAC. Last year this program was attended by about sixty faculty members and was found very useful by the participants based on the evaluation conducted at the end of the program.
- MRFA's fiscal year is different from MRU's academic year. If I were to report on the basis of the fiscal year, I would like to include two important workshops dealing with the dynamics of human interaction in the university setting that PAC organized in May 2011. The first was an all day workshop titled Communication, Conflict, and Change in the Academic Workplace: Pattern for Success in an evolving Landscape which took place on May 5, 2011. This workshop will be presented by Bill Wartens

from Wayne State University, USA. The second workshop titled Why can't we all just get along? Incivility and hostility within academia was presented by Loreleigh Keashly from Wayne State University, USA and took place on Monday, May 9, 2011. A lot of work went into preparation of these workshops. Both workshops were open to both faculty and administration. Based on evaluations, both workshops were very successful. Both workshops were co-sponsored by the MRU Provost & VP Academic's office.

- In early 2012, PAC conducted a survey regarding specific interests in a variety of topics for workshops and presentations which could be organized solely by PAC or in collaboration with other MRFA committees like the Professional Development Committee. More than 200 faculty members completed the survey. In response to the results of the survey, PAC is organizing a Round Table Discussion titled Community, Collaboration & Cooperation on the three most chosen topics on April 30, 2012. The three most chosen topics are: Meaning of Professional Excellence in a University, Challenges in Assessing Students, and the Paradox of Research: Challenges to Teach and Research in the MRU model. The discussion on these topics will be moderated respectively by Dr. David Sabiston, Dr. Stefan Sikora and Professor Deborah Smillie.

As 2nd VP, following is brief account of some of my other activities:

- I am ex officio member of the Diversity Committee (DC). A report of the Diversity Committee has been submitted separately by its Chair Ricardo Hoar.
- Participated in the MRFA Executive meetings with the Dean of Arts Candidates in Feb. 2012
- Participated in the MRFA Executive meeting with the search consultant for the VP University Advancement
- Participated in the Association Governance Workshop on January 5 and 6 at MRU. This workshop was arranged by the MRFA and delivered by CAUT. This was one and a half day workshop on building a stronger association. Major topics included the roles and responsibilities of members of the Executive, negotiations, committee structure, and engaging the membership
- Served as the MRFA delegate to the ACIFA Professional Affairs Committee and participated in its meetings in Calgary and Edmonton
- Served as a member on the ACIFA 2012 Award for Innovation in Teaching Application Review Committee

I would like to close by extending my sincere thanks to all members of the Professional Affairs Committee, the Diversity Committee, the MRFA executive, and Gerry Cross, MRFA President for their support. I also would like to reiterate my warmest thank to all MRFA members for their trust and support. The report would remain incomplete without thanking the administrative staff (Chantelle and Darlene) for their warm, consistent and competent support in many different ways.

I hope you find this report helpful.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Qasim Syed

2nd Vice-President

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Professional Development Committee Annual Report 2011-2012

Members: Katharine Barrette, Rod Corbett, Enrique Avila-Lopez, Janet B Miller, Elaine Mullen, Jodi Nickel, Jennifer Pettit, Melanie Rathburn, Alice Swabey

Activities 2011-2012

The following professional development activities have been offered by the MRFA Professional Development Committee for the year 2011-2012:

Spring Retreat: “CONNECT: Colleagues, Students, Community” – May 15th & 16th, 2012

This year’s Spring Retreat for faculty will be held at the Delta Lodge at Kananaskis. We have over 160 faculty currently registered for the retreat, offering 22 concurrent sessions and three plenary sessions including keynotes Dave Meslin and Calgary Mayor Neheed Nenshi on Day 1 followed by a Pecha Kucha on Day 2. Presentations by MRFA members, guests and even some faculty-student collaborative teams make for exciting program offerings. The event once again promises to be a fun and informative opportunity for faculty to meet, share and learn from each other.

February Professional Development Day 2012:

“An Inquiry Into the Future of the Book” - February 22rd, 2012

This year’s PD event was a half-day panel presentation featuring several faculty and two students speaking on the future of books, textbooks and e-publishing. Panelists included Richard Harrison from English, Randy Connelly from Computer Science, Alice Swabey from the Library, David Clemis from History and students Michaela Kemp (B.A. English) and Shiv McFarlane (B.S.C. Computer Science).

Attendees included nearly 60 members who had the opportunity to participate in group discussions and have a Q & A with the panelists, followed by lunch in the Faculty Center.

Get Cracking - Breakfast Discussion Series 2011-2012:

Four Get Cracking breakfasts were held in the Faculty Centre on Friday mornings and included Mediterranean-style breakfasts and good, hearty discussions. Attendance was excellent and included new and familiar faces. Topics included:

- *Etextbooks*
 - October 14th, 2011
 - 25 faculty attended
- *Taming your email!*
 - November 18th, 2011
 - 19 faculty attended
- *Full Professors?*
 - February 17th, 2012
 - 20 faculty attended
- *Budget Cuts?*
 - March 23, 2012
 - 14 faculty attended

“PD Pages - Books & Banter & Beverages” – October 13th, 2011 & January 24th

We kicked off the first year of our successful faculty bookclub with discussions of the books:

- *Drive: the surprising truth about what motivates us* by Daniel H Pink
- *The Spirit Level: why equality is better for everyone* by Richard Wilkinson & Kate Pickett

Approximately 15-20 attendees stopped by to have a drink and informally discuss these books and how they relate to our work as faculty. Free copies of the books were given to early registrants and the conversation was lively!

“Let’s Chat About Some Apps” – January 13th, 2012

The MRFA PD Committee hosted this roundtable show and tell of the best apps in use across the institution for teaching, productivity and more. Attendees brought their devices and apps and a list of the apps was shared amongst participants as well as those who could not participate but expressed interest. Approximately 20 members attended.

“Text Education” – March 22nd & 28th, 2012

Two roundtable discussions on student reading at MRU, challenges, concerns, suggestions and strategies were hosted by Margy MacMillan, Karen Manarin and Cari Merkley. Demand for registration was so high that the second date was added, in total 45 members participated in these excellent discussions.

ACIFA Innovation in Teaching Award Nomination:

This year the MRFA PD Committee was proud to support the nomination of Dr. David Finch for the Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association Innovation in Teaching Award. The nomination was a wonderful representation of Mount Royal; David’s innovative and client-focused approach to transforming the course *Marketing 4259* into a fully-functioning marketing agency, *Marketing 4259 Inc.* creates an unparalleled experiential learning opportunity for his students, both in the classroom and beyond. In addition to providing students with real-world, high-stakes experience of working collaboratively, facing challenges, and developing professional confidence, Dr. Finch has worked to secure internships with client companies, each client selecting one student as an intern to support the implementation of the project. We were all very impressed, as was ACIFA; he was the runner-up for the award and we are very proud of our nominee.

Looking Ahead 2012-2013

The Professional Development Committee continues to provide a variety of PD opportunities each year to MRFA members, including the annual retreat, workshops, panels, discussion groups and more. Participation in MRFA PD events continues to grow as we have seen an increasing numbers of existing faculty members at events throughout this year. We look forward to more outreach to our newer faculty colleagues, as well as opportunities to expand our reach with new themes, topics and professional development offerings in the coming year. We continue to work collaboratively with other groups such as the Academic Development Center and with colleagues across the institution to foster excellence in teaching, offer professional development opportunities, and to bring new and existing faculty together to discuss important and emerging issues informally. Our work continues to highlight the achievements, expertise and knowledge of Mount Royal faculty and to foster our institutional culture of collegiality.

Respectfully submitted,
Katharine Barrette, Chair, MRFA PD Committee

Social Events Committee 2011-2012 Annual Report

Committee Members

Jocelyn Rempel
Jennifer Hooper
Brian F Fleming
Darlene Windrem
Becky Wilson
Marlene Kingsmith
Patricia Kostouros

Social Events

The committee hosted a total of nine events this year.

September 30: Who's New at the Zoo: this event was organized in association with the MRFA Professional Affairs Committee (PAC). The purpose of this kick-off event was to facilitate and encourage activities and the development of peer collegial relationships amongst both new and seasoned faculty in a relaxing and supportive environment.

October 28: Halloween Hoopla: this event incorporated a Halloween theme. Activities included the "House of Horrors" as well as a pumpkin-carving contest.

November 18: Mix and Mingle with the New President: This event was hosted to allow faculty members to get to know the new president of MRU, David Docherty, in a comfortable, informal setting. It was a 'classy' event and a classical duet (cello and violin) was hired for the evening.

December 9: MRFA Holiday Party: the MRFA traditional seasonal adult faculty event to wrap up the Fall semester.

January 31: Welcome Back: this event was a low-key event, to welcome faculty back after the holiday break.

February 10: The Tenure Show: The tenure celebration is an annual event and the theme mimicked "The Tonight Show" to accommodate the new format of introducing the newly tenured. The Chairs were asked to submit a list of top five accomplishments or facts for each faculty member granted tenure, prior to the event. The tenure show hosts used this information to formally recognize the newly tenured faculty. This took place in the Lincoln Park Room (LPR). As they left the stage their chair was able to congratulate them and give them a gift of a 'Tenure Show' mug and Good Earth gift certificate. Memorable remarks were provided to the newly tenure by David Docherty, Robin Fisher and Gerry Cross. Following the formal ceremony, celebrations of the newly tenured faculty achievements were continued in the Faculty Centre. Beer and wine was kindly provided with the compliments of the MRFA Faculty Association and the office of the VP Academic.

March 16: St. Patrick's Day Celebration: This event was a spin on the luck of the Irish. With St. Patrick's Day the following weekend, the evening included green beverages, and casino fun. AcesRWild, was hired for the evening, and they brought dealers, poker, black jack tables and fun money. Every person was given \$20,000 of fun money when they entered into the faculty centre. They had the choice of using this to buy raffle tickets for the many prizes, or to play casino games and potentially increase their earnings to buy even more raffle tickets. This event was very well attended and the excitement over the raffle tickets and prizes was astounding.

April 13: Race to the Finish Line, End of Class Bash: This April event was hosted on the last day of classes with the purpose to encourage a time of peer support and rejuvenation before marking and extensive end of semester obligations arose. The event included an Amazing Race, where teams of three to four people were required to find various clues around MRU. Prizes were given to the top three teams.

May 25: Annual Keg Drain: This event is a traditional final Social Event of the academic year. The event will include golf at Buffalo Run in the earlier afternoon, followed by a BBQ and the keg drain at the Faculty Centre. Light snacks will be provided.

Events Summary

The events were all well-attended and made full use of the faculty centre's facilities. This year's committee focused on organizing varying events involving food, off campus activities, prizes and music. The themes were chosen to peak faculty interest and engage faculty that do not normally participate in the events. Offering events based around music, food, beverages and prizes seems to have provided opportunity for relaxation, socialization, and collegial development for faculty members. Faculty seem to have indicated their approval in terms of excellent attendance at the events as well as through providing both formal and informal feedback to the social committee members. The committee is attempting an off campus golfing event in May, and a good turnout is anticipated based on informal feedback from faculty thus far. Each off campus event should be reviewed annually to determine its success (i.e. well attended event, appropriate timing of the event etc.). The committee was able to provide a number of prizes at the events this year. Some of these prizes included lunch or coffee cards for the Faculty Centre. This was a successful strategy to encourage the use of the Faculty Centre. This also encouraged faculty members to bring new faculty members to the faculty centre for lunch or coffee.

As faculty schedules are increasingly diverse and even unpredictable at times, the committee attempted to facilitate scheduling and planning through providing a 'save the date' poster at the beginning of each semester and then followed through with providing individual monthly posters as means to publicize. This appeared to have been a successful method. Therefore "save the date" advance posters should be continued in the future. While committee members assumed the task of manually distributing printed posters to departments, Chantelle Anderson played an integral role in publicizing and ensured that all faculty were reached via emailing posters to all faculty and highlighting upcoming events in MRFA bulletins.

The committee was exceedingly grateful for the support of the MRFA executive and the VP Academic office whom provided donations for the tenure event. This provision supported the culture of collegiality, not to mention conviviality, that the MRFA and University are committed

to encouraging. We also are grateful for assistance from the MRFA Professional Affairs committee, who contributed refreshments served at the first event.

Much of these events' success depends on the food and beverages, which were dependably purchased, prepared and delivered efficiently and economically, and with great dedication and cheerfulness by Darlene Windrem. Chantelle Anderson also helped greatly with her organization and experience.

Budget

Brian Fleming assumed the treasurer role and in collaboration with Chantelle, has kindly kept track of our expenditures; an itemized list may be obtained from Brian or Chantelle. Out of a budget of **\$15,000**, we have spent \$11,039.56 as of March 31st. With the end of the fiscal year at MRU changing from April 30th to March 31st, the committee had one less month to spend the \$15,000. The committee had a balance of \$3,960.44 remaining in the account that will not be carried forward to next year. It is recommended that the committee budget the full use of the \$15,000 for events occurring until March 31st of each year. This will ensure that all monies are used each year. Please refer to the SEC ledger, which details all expenses for each event. The expenses for this year also included a gift from the social committee acknowledging Darlene's hard work (\$300 gift certificate to Oasis Spa) and Chantelle's continued support.

Because all of the events (excluding the formal ceremony of the Tenure celebration which took place in LPR, no cost associated) occurred in the Faculty Centre, the main expenses were for food, beverages, prizes and entertainment. We did not have large expenses associated with renting sporting or other venues, and catering costs were kept low, primarily due to Darlene's hard work. Darlene did hire a colleague to help with the Tenure Celebration and the Holiday event as these two exceptionally large events required tremendous preparation. A small monetary gift was provided to this colleague. The Social committee did not have to pay for beverages for the September or Tenure event due to generous donations acknowledged elsewhere in this report. The one golfing event that will take place in May will be expensed using the 2012-2013 budget. Depending on the number of faculty that attend and the feedback received, the committee may want to consider a repeat of this event, or consider other options for recreational activities that allow faculty to socialize off campus.

Future Considerations

Tenure celebration: this is probably the most important event hosted and organized by the MRFA social committee. This year, after feedback from the Executive Committee, the social events committee decided to change the format of the tenure celebration. Rather than each Chair introducing the newly tenured, two faculty members were asked to host the event and introduce them individually. The Chairs were asked to submit a top five list for each of the newly tenured in their department, and the hosts used this information to develop an individualized introduction. A stage was set-up in the Lincoln Park Room, and was set-up similar to that of a talk show. After the newly tenured was introduced on the stage, they were able to walk off the stage, be congratulated by their chair and given a small gift from the social events committee. There was a lot of positive feedback with respect to the timing of the event. The total timing of

the event was approximately 45 minutes, with 20 newly tenured being introduced. The committee did not receive any formal feedback with respect to the new format of the event and would recommend a similar format for next year's event.

Calgary Corporate Challenge The Calgary Corporate Challenge, in which MRU traditionally participates begins about the time that faculty have returned for the Fall term. The social committee may want to think about a reception or other event that helps publicize and organize teams for the corporate challenges.

Final Comments

The committee would like to thank the faculty who came and supported these events, the MRFA executive and the MRU President's and Vice President's Office for their participation in and donations for specific events, to Gerry Cross for his continued support, to Chantelle Anderson for her organizational skills, to Darlene for her hard work, and to the remainder of the social committee members for their utmost dedication.

Respectfully submitted,
Jocelyn Rempel
Chair, MRFA Social Committee.

**First Report of the Workload Committee
To the MRFA Negotiating Committee and Executive**

Members: Katherine Boggs, Earth Sciences
Gerry Cross, MRFA President
Lee Easton, English
Shane Gannon, Sociology
Don Haidey, Business
Brett McCollum, Chemistry
Heather Russell, Nursing
David Sabiston, MRFA First Vice-President

One of the goals set by the MRFA Executive for the year was to establish an ad hoc workload committee to advise the Negotiating Committee and the Executive on the workload implications of the transition to a university. This report is based on the two initial meetings of the committee. Workload is used throughout to refer to teaching workload. The report lists the unscheduled workload at Mount Royal that committee members are aware of, suggests ways in which workload credit could be received for such work, and makes several recommendations to the membership regarding workload.

Types of Unscheduled Workload at Mount Royal

- 1) The university administration is attempting to reduce the number of hours of instruction in courses to three, except for science courses which may have a lab. This often means eliminating a tutorial, but not always, because there are courses with more than three hours of instruction that do distinguish between lecture and tutorial. The administration argues that such reductions would not increase workload because, for example, if the number of classroom hours is reduced by 25%, then adjustments must be made to the course in order to reduce instructor and student workload by a corresponding 25%. But course design does not begin with the number of hours of instruction available and then proceed to determining how much and what type of content can be covered in the given number of hours; rather, a delivery model appropriate for the course content is chosen. Therefore, there is often a reluctance to remove content for fear of harming the integrity of the course or in order to maintain equivalency with courses at other universities (where graduate students may be responsible for some components).
- 2) Last year the Dean of one Faculty asserted that, for certain courses with four hours of instruction, a choice must be made between reducing them to three hours of instruction or increasing class sizes to save an equal amount of money. Faculty responsible for some of these courses decided that the fourth hour of instruction was required to maintain the quality of the course and chose to increase class sizes. Will there be pressure for these courses to be reduced to three hours of instruction in the future?
- 3) Science faculty are concerned about workload credit for science labs. Currently, full-time faculty get full workload credit for labs because they are not listed under other forms of teaching in the definition of Scheduled Instructional Course Hour (SICH) given in Article

1.24: "any officially scheduled 50-minute class requiring the employee to be present and teaching, without assistance, a group of students. Credit for other forms of teaching, including but not limited to practica, open laboratories, studios, directed study, computer-assisted instruction, team-teaching, rehearsals and productions shall be assigned by the Chair in consultation with the members of the academic unit, and is subject to the approval of the Dean". Part-time faculty do not receive full workload credit because they are paid at the part-time laboratory instructor rate which is 45% of the part-time lecture/tutorial rate. There is also a full-time laboratory instructor appointment with a salary scale lower than that of other faculty (see Article 6).

Another aspect of this issue is that there is great variation in the real workload associated with labs and in the expertise required to teach them – some are tightly coupled with the lecture, while others in multi-section junior courses can be taught effectively by someone other than the lecture instructor. Therefore, flexibility in instructor assignment is required, and the Collective Agreement currently provides this.

- 4) The amount of work involved in supervising senior research projects in the sciences depends on both the student and the faculty member. A project can require up to 4 to 5 hours per week, and typically averages at least 3 hours per week. If the project is within the faculty member's research interests, then it can be argued that the work is at least partially scholarship. However, in this case, the faculty member generally devotes more time to the project.
- 5) The amount of work involved in supervising an honours thesis depends on both the student and the faculty member, but is estimated to average 3 hours per week in meeting and marking time.
- 6) In the English Honours Seminar course (ENGL 5110), students write a conference paper as well as a longer paper. The English Department is exploring whether the instructor could receive additional SICH for the course in recognition of being the first point of contact for reference letters and associated support for students who are planning on graduate studies.
- 7) There are an increasing number of Directed Readings courses in the Faculty of Arts. They are intended to be in the faculty member's research area but, in practice, it is often student interest which determines the topics.
- 8) SICH is an imperfect measure of real instructor workload, which depends on a number of factors including the level of the course and whether it is a core course in a program. For a core course, the assessment may be determined by the department and be greater than for an optional course or a general education requirement. For example, a department may require three essays in a core course and allow the instructor to determine the assessments in a course that is not core. This could be compensated for by limiting enrolment in a core course to fewer students or by increasing the SICH assigned.

- 9) Coordinators of nursing courses with a clinical component are responsible for up to 300 students and as many as 40 clinical instructors and sites. The work of a coordinator includes hiring and orientation of new instructors, site visits, dealing with student complaints and clinical instructor issues, and being on call during evening and weekend clinicals. There are approximately nine such courses running every semester and the up to 48 SICH reassigned time granted to the coordinator is inadequate. Therefore, the coordinator is forced to take time away from other commitments such as scholarship. Much of the coordination work could be performed by support staff.
- 10) There is an ongoing pattern of faculty going beyond their contractual workload commitments for the success of their program. The example given below is not an issue because the faculty members involved enjoy working with their students in case competitions and are committed to the success of their program, but it is not possible to continue adding more work without taking something away.

In the Bissett School of Business, coaching a group of about four students for a case competition can take 40 hours and then one is away for the weekend when the competition is held. This work counts as service and faculty choose to do it based on their interests. But, on the other hand, these competitions are considered important for the reputation of the School and so there could be pressure to participate. List A reassigned time has occasionally been granted for this work in the past. Some business schools do not participate in these competitions and others incorporate them into a course.

Recommendations of the Workload Committee

- 1) The **Credit Curriculum Approval policy (POL 550-1)** defines editorial changes to be “non-substantive changes that do not alter or affect the substance of curriculum, programs, or policies” and states that the originator of the curriculum submission is responsible for determining whether a change is substantive or editorial. Substantive curriculum changes must be reviewed by Academic Program and Policy Committee and approved by General Faculties Council.

Recommendation: That members use the substantive change process if reducing the number of instructional hours in a course will result in curriculum change.

- 2) But what should a department do where it has been determined that all options for changing the curriculum to accommodate a reduction in instructional hours would compromise the student learning experience and learning outcomes to an extent considered unacceptable?

Recommendation: That the MRFA Executive works to ensure that there is a comprehensive conversation in the university about the pedagogical and workload implications of reductions in instructional hours.

- 3) Instructional workload for faculty on the TS and TSS work patterns is specified by ranges centered at 384 SICH and 288 SICH, respectively. A department is required to maintain an average based on these figures (see Article 14.6).

Recommendation: That the department average be used to equalize real workload, to the extent possible.

- 4) The definition of SICH in Article 1.24 states that "Credit for other forms of teaching, including but not limited to practica, open laboratories, studios, directed study, computer-assisted instruction, team-teaching, rehearsals and productions shall be assigned by the Chair in consultation with the members of the academic unit, and is subject to the approval of the Dean".

Recommendation: That Chairs assign SICH credit for other forms of teaching at the rate of 16 SICH for 3 hours of work per week. The rationale for this conversion factor is as follows:

Faculty on the TS work pattern are required to teach an average of 384 SICH annually, or 192 SICH per semester. A multiplier of 16 is used for semester SICH and so 192 SICH is $192 / 16 = 12$ classroom hours per week. A multiplier of 3 is then typically used to estimate real workload, i.e. 3 hours in class entails 9 hours of real workload when preparation, marking, student support, and maintaining currency are taken into account. A multiplier of 3 is also used to determine deemed hours for Employment Insurance. For example, if a part-time faculty member teaches 192 SICH, or 12 hours per week, in the winter semester and then applies for Employment Insurance, they are deemed to have worked $12 * 3 = 36$ hours per week for the purposes of determining eligibility for EI.

The workload credit of 16 SICH for 3 hours of work per week derives from reversing this conversion: if 36 hours of work per week equates to 192 SICH, then 3 hours per week is one-twelfth of that and equates to $3 / 36 * 192 = 16$ SICH.

Recommendation: That Chairs and faculty report the results of attempting to assign SICH credit for other forms of teaching to the MRFA Executive.

- 5) Article 14.1 of the Collective Agreement specifies that "The instructional load of full-time employees shall be assigned by consultation between the Chair and the members of each academic unit, following consultation with the Dean". The range of SICH that faculty on the TS and TSS work patterns teach are given in Articles 14.4 and 14.5, respectively. The department average is defined in Article 14.6 and the procedures governing reassigned time for List A, advising, and coordination are specified in Article 14.9. A grievance (see Article 20) can be initiated if any of these articles are contravened. Article 14.12 describes the workload appeal procedure that a faculty member who is dissatisfied with the workload responsibility assigned, including any reassigned time approved or denied, may use to appeal such assignment.

Recommendation: That members use the grievance procedure or the workload appeal procedure, as appropriate, including where they believe that the SICH assigned for other forms of teaching under Article 1.24 does not fairly recognize the workload involved.

- 6) The committee also makes a recommendation to itself.

Recommendation: That the workload committee examine the relationships between the various forms of instruction, in particular the range of activities involved in laboratory and clinical instruction, with a view to developing workload equivalency ratios based on lecture/tutorial SICH. There are several places in the Collective Agreement where such ratios would be useful; for example, the normal maximum instructional load for part-time faculty of 192 SICH per semester given in Article 14.15.

Other ways to measure workload

- 1) When workload is measured by number of courses, the Collective Agreement often lists factors affecting real workload that are to be considered in the assignment of courses. For example, the Assignment of Teaching Article in the St. Thomas University Collective Agreement states: “It is expected that each Department shall ordinarily assign those courses within the Department which its members are to teach. In so doing, the Department is responsible for ensuring that there is a reasonable balance between small and large classes and that there is an equitable distribution of workload among members of the Department taking into account independent study courses, Honours thesis supervision, the varying demands of alternative teaching and evaluation methodologies. Whenever possible, there shall be prior consultation with Employees on the assignment of teaching duties.”
- 2) The attached [workload form](#) used in the Ontario college system attempts to quantify some of the factors affecting real workload.
- 3) At Vancouver Island University, a faculty member who supervises an undergraduate research project is credited with 1/32nd of an annual workload for each student undergraduate research project. Directed Studies courses are taught on a voluntary basis in addition to a faculty member’s assigned workload, the courses are restricted to a maximum of five students, and the faculty member receives a stipend of \$250 for each student in a 3 credit Directed Studies course.
- 4) Also at Vancouver Island University, faculty members with a seven section or equivalent workload assignment, which includes one or more upper level sections in an academic year, receive a one course release for scholarly activity. When class sizes are increased within prescribed guidelines, the Collective Agreement provides that: “Where a department's reconfiguration results in an increase in student numbers, seventy three (73) percent of the money generated by the increased tuition shall be used exclusively for funding teaching release or research activity as jointly determined by the Dean and the

department. The money generated in a year may be carried over for use in a subsequent year.”

- 5) At Brock University, unscheduled teaching such as graduate student supervision is increasing. The Collective Agreement tried to deal with this in the past through departments developing Normal Department Workload Standards, which were to articulate partial course equivalents for unscheduled teaching responsibilities and set an upper boundary for a reasonable amount of unscheduled teaching. This did not work and they are now developing an evidence-based definition of unscheduled teaching, along with proposals for course release and/or overload pay and an arbitrated dispute resolution mechanism if the department and the dean cannot agree.

Discussion Paper on Faculty Association Organization
Presented at the 11 May 2012 Annual General Meeting
by the MRFA Executive Board

This year a Faculty Association Organization Sub-committee of the Executive was struck to consider changes to the Executive and Standing Committees that would make the Association more effective and representational. The sub-committee members were Gerry Cross, Kit Dobson, Elaine Mullen, and Cliff Werier. Elaine replaced Pat Kostouros, who withdrew when she accepted the MRFA appointment to the Child Care Centre Task Team.

The sub-committee first reviewed the organization of selected university faculty associations and examined pertinent CAUT policy statements. After discussing which ideas would be beneficial for the MRFA, the sub-committee formulated several recommendations to the Executive. The Executive decided to recommend revised versions of these changes for implementation this year and to present the remaining work of the sub-committee as ideas for longer term restructuring of the MRFA in this discussion paper.

Should the President's Position Continue to be Full-time?

Unlike most university faculty associations, the MRFA President is fully released from normal duties (half paid by the Board and half paid by the Association). As the work of our association is presently structured, the President's position is busy and time-consuming, so if we wish to reduce the President's reassigned time, then some of the responsibilities of the position must be shifted elsewhere. The principal advantage of such a change would be that a president would continue to teach (or work as a counsellor, educational developer or librarian) and/or do research and, therefore, would remain better connected to his or her academic department than is currently the case. Faculty considering the possibility of serving as President may be more likely to put their names forward if they were able to stay better connected to their departments and disciplines, by continuing with some teaching and/or scholarship, as applicable.

The principal disadvantages of changing the status quo relate to the amount of work that needs to be done, and the fact that the full-time nature of the position sends a signal to faculty and administration that our organization is serious about its mandate and that our President is always available to deal with issues as they arise, and in a timely fashion. Because the MRFA President is also the grievance officer, the Collective Agreement gives her or him responsibility for leading the grievance process at every stage.

Many associations have a separate Grievance Officer who usually sits on the Executive and often chairs an elected grievance committee. Some grievance committees include a representative from each Faculty. A Grievance Officer deals with more than actual grievances. Members have questions about the Collective Agreement ranging from requests for clarification about a particular article to general questions of the nature, "Is there anything in the collective agreement about this?" Sometimes members want to discuss whether to initiate a grievance, but more often they seek advice on how to deal with a problem. The more general issues sometimes result in a grievance, but often they do not. As well, the grievance procedure is not the only dispute resolution mechanism. Members are sometimes reluctant to initiate a grievance for fear of being seen to be confrontational, and then other means of resolution must be explored. The new

Grievance Officer position would take some of these responsibilities away from the President, especially those which relate to advising before the actual launching of formal grievance procedures.

The Faculty Association Organization Sub-committee discussed converting the Second Vice-President position to a Grievance Officer and moving some of the President's reassigned time to this position, but decided that how the work would be split between the two positions required further study to ensure that service to members would not be impaired. A partial step was taken by reconfiguring the Second Vice-President position into a Vice-President, Policy who will assist the President in monitoring university policy changes and in processing Step 1 grievances. It is proposed that the President and the Vice-President, Policy meet weekly to discuss the President's work during the previous week and how it could have been split between the two positions. Hopefully, this will enable us to make more informed recommendations about how the President's responsibilities and reassigned time could be divided between the two positions in future.

Association Staff

The MRFA has only one staff position, the Executive Assistant, dedicated to Association business. Our Faculty Centre Coordinator manages the Faculty Centre but is not involved in the work of the Executive Board or with our committees, except to serve as a member of the Social Events Committee and the Faculty Centre Management Committee. The sub-committee did not investigate staffing levels at comparable associations, but suspect that we are understaffed for such an active association and that this has not become apparent because we are fortunate to have such an efficient Executive Assistant. Indeed, four years ago, the Executive discussed creating a half-time bookkeeper and clerical support position.

The Association will increase its staff at some point and we need to start thinking about the options now, particularly since some of them involve staff performing work that is currently done by the Executive Board.

Some associations have a grievance or Labour Relations Officer staff position with responsibilities for contact administration. Typically, the Executive makes decisions such as authorizing legal advice, advancing a grievance to arbitration, and filing policy grievances, while the staff person is responsible for all other aspects of grievance handling and for advising members on the interpretation and application of the collective agreement.

An Executive Director (a non-faculty support position) is even more common. Many of the larger associations send both their President and their Executive Director to CAUT Council meetings. The duties of an Executive Director depend on the number and type of other staff positions. It is likely that an MRFA Executive Director would be responsible for managing the Faculty Centre and our other staff, would be the first point of contact for member inquires (handling some and redirecting others), and would serve as a grievance officer. The MacEwan University Faculty Association has recently appointed an Executive Director.

Reassigned Time

From time to time, the Executive has discussions about whether the amount of reassigned time is adequate. There should be a base amount for all members in recognition of the responsibilities of the Executive Board as outlined in Article 8 of the Bylaws and to provide time to prepare for meetings and to fully participate in decisions made by the Executive. Beyond this, the time required depends on the other responsibilities of the position.

An attempt was made to record the amount of time that members of the Executive spent on Association work in 2010-2011. No changes to reassigned time were made except for a modest increase in the honorarium paid to the Part-time Member Representative for work on the Executive Board and on the Negotiating Committee. Both are equivalent to 64 SICH, greater than the 48 SICH reassigned time allocated to other positions. The principle is that part-time members are paid only to teach, whereas full-time members have service as part of their workload responsibilities and the Collective Agreement stipulates that participation in the Mount Royal Faculty Association, its processes and committees is a form of service.

This year was particularly time-consuming for members of the Executive, as in some months we met almost weekly for over two hours. In addition, Executive members are often on two or more sub-committees that meet regularly. Some members of this year's Executive felt strongly that the reassigned time for Executive duties was inadequate, and that they were not able to do their duties comfortably because of the stress created by increased workload. The MRFA needs to consider seriously the possibility that reassigned time may have to double in the near future. Such a change could result both in increased productivity and morale.

The Relationship between the Executive and the Negotiating Committee

Our Negotiating Committee reports directly to the membership, with the formal connection to the Executive being through the two common positions of Vice-President, Negotiations and Part-time Member Representative. The Negotiating Committee uses the results of a membership survey, other input from members, a submission from the Executive based on issues that have arisen during administration of the agreement, and external comparisons in developing its Statement of Interests. This statement, which lists the articles the MRFA wishes to open for negotiations, outlines our objectives for the current round and is exchanged with the Board's statement at the beginning of negotiations. CAUT recommends that a mandate for negotiations be approved by the membership before negotiations begin. Some may perceive this as being incompatible with interest-focused bargaining, but it would really only be a different way to develop the Statement of Interests.

The Bylaws state that the committee "shall report regularly to the Executive Board and to the membership of the Association on the progress of its deliberations," and it can consult with the Executive on strategy during negotiations; however, negotiations are confidential and members of the Executive typically don't know anything about the proposed agreement until it is presented to the membership at a Special Meeting. CAUT recommends that the relationship between the Negotiating Committee and the Executive be altered so that the Executive can hear more details about the negotiating process from the Negotiating Committee periodically and be

involved in providing advice directly to the Negotiating Committee during negotiations, if needed.

CAUT also recommends that the Executive select the members of the negotiating committee, rather than have them be elected by the membership, to make sure that the most experienced, skilled and committed individuals are assembled as a team. Historically, we have been able to get results similar to what would be achieved through Executive appointments by informal recruitment before elections. For example, there has always been an economist on the committee. Nevertheless, there are risks in electing the committee. On the other hand, some members may think that Executive appointment would place too much power in the Executive.

MRFA Vision and Mission Statements

Proposed statement to be used everywhere except on the website:

Vision

Progressive educators pursuing excellence.

Mission

The Mount Royal Faculty Association provides a collective voice for faculty, promotes tenure and academic freedom, advocates for the highest standards of professionalism in higher education, and upholds the values of diversity, equity and human rights.

Website formatting:

Vision

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Mission

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- provides a collective voice for faculty;
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- advocates for the highest standards of professionalism in higher education; and
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