



Academic Liaison Committee 2010-2011 Annual Report

Background

The Academic Liaison Committee (ALC) was created by the MRFA in 2008. Its mandate is as follows:

- to foster and facilitate communication between the various faculty councils and the GFC;
- to increase the understanding between the MRFA general membership and the GFC;
- to inform the GFC representatives of MRFA academic related concerns; and
- to advocate on issues of academic importance to the MRFA after actively seeking general faculty opinion.

Membership

The committee is currently chaired by Cari Merkley, Academic Liaison Officer. Members of the committee for 2010-2011 include:

Name	Department
Cari Merkley (Chair)	Library
Israel Dunmade	Environmental Science
Wenhua He	Math Physics and Engineering
Kenna Olsen	English
Janne Holmgren	Justice Studies
Carlton Osakwe	Financial Services
Jane McNichol	Public Relations

Activities

ALC held eight drop in sessions for GFC councilors throughout the fall. The intent of the sessions were to provide faculty with an opportunity to share ideas and discuss upcoming GFC agenda items with individuals from other departments and faculties. In response to feedback received last year, we scheduled two drop in sessions the week of GFC meetings – one on Mondays from 3:30-4:30 pm and one on Tuesdays from 9:00-10:00 am. Drop in sessions were advertised through direct emails to GFC councilors and through the weekly MRFA newsletter. Attendance at the drop in sessions was very low, and after careful consideration, the committee decided not to continue with the sessions in the Winter term.

A GFC summary written by the Academic Liaison Officer with contributions from the committee was distributed in the MRFA weekly newsletter in September, October, November, December, January, March and April, with plans to do the same in May.

ALC met as a committee six times 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 the future of the committee, and its composition.

The ALC also participated in the Committee Transition and Committee (Af) fair events.

Goals for 2011-2012

In a report to the MRFA executive in April 2010, the committee made the following request:

The Academic Liaison Committee is still looking for the best way to fulfill its mandate. Both the committee and GFC continue to experience growing pains as the new governance structure becomes embedded in institutional culture.

As such, the ALC would like the opportunity to implement some of the above suggestions in the 2010-2011 year, with the understanding that the committee and its role within the organization be fully evaluated by the MRFA Executive in Spring 2011.

Attempts to revamp the pre-GFC sessions were not successful. The committee, in consultation with the MRFA executive, decided to propose that a reconfigured version of the group continue. Among the proposed changes is a restructuring of the committee membership so that it is representative of all faculties. Members of the committee will also be expected to attend GFC meetings regularly as guests (see Appendix for the proposed bylaw changes). It is expected that the committee, with its new chair (the newly elected Academic Liaison Officer), will revisit its mission in the coming academic year.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and thank outgoing committee members Israel Dunmade, Wenhua He, and Carlton Osakwe for their contributions to ALC during their tenure with the committee.

Appendix – Proposed Bylaw Changes

PROPOSED REVISIONS TO MRFA BYLAWS

10.9 ACADEMIC LIAISON COMMITTEE

10.9.1 The Academic Liaison Committee shall consist of eight (8) Regular Members of the Association in good standing. The Academic Liaison Officer will chair the committee. Each of the remaining seven (7) committee members shall represent an area with a Faculty Council. A faculty member from each of the following areas will be elected to serve a term of two (2) years in odd numbered years: the Bissett School of Business, the Faculty of Science and Technology, and the Library. A faculty member from each of the following areas will be elected to serve a term of two years in even-numbered years: the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Communications Studies, the Faculty of Health and Community Studies, and the Faculty of Teaching and Learning. MRFA Regular Members will be eligible to vote for candidates in all areas, regardless of their own Faculty Council affiliation.

10.9.2 The Committee shall serve to communicate among the various Faculty Councils and the General Faculties Council to support the Academic Liaison Officer and shall facilitate the exchange of information related to academic governance and academic policy, especially where they affect academic freedom, the Collective Agreement, and the work of Regular Members.

10.9.3 Committee members who are not members of General Faculties Council shall be expected to regularly attend council meetings as guests.

10.9.4 The Committee shall prepare an annual report reflecting the types and extent of activities which have been carried on during the year.

ORIGINAL WORDING OF THE BYLAW

10.9 ACADEMIC LIAISON COMMITTEE

10.9.1 The Academic Liaison Committee shall consist of seven (7) Regular Members of the Association in good standing, at least three of whom shall be tenured: the Academic Liaison Officer who shall be Chair; (3) three to serve a term of two years and to be elected in odd-numbered years; and (3) three to serve a term of two years and to be elected in even-numbered years.

10.9.2 The Committee shall serve to communicate among the various Faculty Councils and the General Faculties Council to support the Academic Liaison Officer and facilitate the exchange of information related to academic governance and academic policy, especially as these touch on academic freedom, the Collective Agreement, and faculty work.

10.9.3 The Committee shall prepare an annual report reflecting the types and extent of activities which have been carried on during the year.