

**Section 10: Communications Policy** (December 3, 2010; last amended 2 June 2014)

a) Aims

- i) The aim of MRFA communications with members is to facilitate the exchange of appropriate information related to the activities and responsibilities of the Association.
  - (1) The primary communications channels are:
    - (a) The MRFA website and other online media such as Facebook,
    - (b) Weekly and monthly MRFA newsletters,
    - (c) Email as necessary to communicate time-sensitive or important information,
    - (d) and Department Communicators.
- ii) The aim of MRFA communications with the administration of the University is to express and defend the views and values of the Association in a clear, firm, principled and respectful way.
- iii) The aim of MRFA communications with other Associations or professional bodies is to represent the views and values of the Association, to engage in mutual growth and education, and to ask and offer mutual support as necessary.
- iv) The aim of MRFA communications with the media is to express with clarity the views and values of the Association on matters which affect the interests and rights of the Association (as both a labour and professional organization of faculty), or the interests of the University and post-secondary education more broadly. To effectively accomplish this aim, the MRFA shall produce press releases as deemed necessary.

b) Authority

- i) The Membership by resolution may direct the Executive Board or its Officers to convey particular messages.
- ii) The Executive Board may direct the President or other Officer to convey particular messages.
- iii) The President is authorized to speak on behalf of the Association in any relevant context, and to represent an Association position or view, subject to direction from the Executive Board or membership.
- iv) The Executive Board may authorize Officers or other individuals to speak on behalf of the Association, and to represent an Association position or view.
- v) On difficult or controversial issues that may be divisive among the membership, Association positions or views must be determined and communicated advisedly, with significant consultation with members.
- vi) Chairs of Association committees or their designees may speak on behalf of their committees and represent their committee's views.

c) Distribution

- i) E-mail
  - (1) Purpose: communicating time-sensitive or important information as determined by the President and Communications Officer of the Association.
  - (2) Faculty distribution lists and contact information are gathered and prepared by the Association solely for the purpose of facilitating the Association's communication with members. As a FOIP consideration,

such information must be gathered with regard to the privacy of members, and distribution lists are reserved for the exclusive use of the Association for authorized communications with members. The Association does not provide direct access to its distribution lists.

- (3) The Association shall distribute announcements of events sponsored by its standing committees to the membership when requested. There shall normally be a maximum of one announcement and one reminder per event.
  - (4) Members may request that particular messages be conveyed by the Association. The President and Communications Officer are empowered to determine whether such requests should be honoured, considering the relevance to the membership or the Association's activities, and which communication channel shall be used to disseminate the information. Requests to convey members' retirement announcements have standing approval.
  - (5) Where an affiliated organization (such as ACIFA) requires contact information for the provision of services to MRFA members, such organizations may be granted access to the information at the President's discretion.
- ii) Website and other online media
- (1) The purpose of the website is to communicate and archive all information pertaining to the Association that would be of interest to the membership. This includes, but is not limited to, Association bylaws, policies and forms, committee business and events, meeting minutes, reports and contact information. Moreover, the website and other online media are means to communicate targeted information or general interest information, such as event and University announcements, Professional Development opportunities, and/or external information relevant to Association members.
  - (2) Members may request that particular messages be put on the website or other online media. The President and Communications Officer are empowered to determine whether such requests should be honoured.
- iii) Newsletters
- (1) Newsletters are emailed to Association Members.
    - (a) Monthly Report: details the business of the Association in the previous month.
    - (b) Weekly Bulletin: lists upcoming events that are of general interest to Association members.
- iv) Department Communicators
- (1) In accordance with the Bylaws, the Communications Committee shall annually recommend to the Executive Board the appointment of a member, from each department, to serve as Department Communicator. In formulating the recommendations, the Communications Committee shall consider potential appointees based on level of engagement with the MRFA, attendance history at MRFA meetings, past support for and understanding of MRFA initiatives, and any other criteria deemed relevant. The recommendations shall normally be presented to the Executive Board in May of each year, after the annual MRFA Committee elections have taken place.

- (2) In accordance with the Bylaws, the Communications Committee shall annually provide the Department Communicators with a list of expectations and duties. These expectations and duties shall include those listed in the Bylaws at a minimum. The Communications Committee, in consultation with the President, may include additional duties in accordance with the mandate of the Communications Committee. The list of expectations and duties shall normally be provided between August 15 and 31.
    - (3) The President and Communications Officer are empowered to determine which messages will be communicated via this medium.
  - v) Press Releases
    - (1) Purpose: communicating time-sensitive or important information to the media and the general public regarding matters pertaining to Post Secondary Education.
    - (2) The initial draft of a press release may be developed by the MRFA Advocacy Committee or the MRFA Executive Board. As the MRFA's external representative and media liaison, the MRFA President shall be involved in drafting all press releases. The President, in consultation with the Communications Officer, is empowered to determine whether and at what time a press release will be distributed.
    - (3) The MRFA shall maintain a media contact list to be used for the distribution of press releases.
- d) Entitlement to Communications
  - i) Social and Honorary Members and other appropriate individuals or associations are entitled to receive Association information related to social activities.
  - ii) Regular Members, Associate Members and Members Emeriti are entitled to receive Association information related to social and professional development activities and services of the Association.
  - iii) Regular Members are further entitled to receive Association information related to any statutory role of the Association, including bargaining, financial statements, and other business to be considered by the Association.
- e) Position Papers
  - i) The Executive Board may from time to time develop Position or White Papers or other correspondence related to the Association's activities. The Executive Board may advance and publish these as Association positions for the MRFA, the University or external audiences as appropriate, with due consideration for consultation with Regular Members.