

Minutes of the Mount Royal Faculty Association

Meeting date: December 18, 2015

Call to order: An Executive Board meeting of the MRFA, was held in Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta on December 18, 2015. The meeting convened at 12:00pm, President, Marc Schroeder, presiding.

Members Present:

David Clemis
Allison MacKenzie
Richard Sutherland
Shiraz Kurji
Brenda Lang

Tracy Powell
Brady Killough
Marc Schroeder

Members not present:

Jarett Henderson
Sabrina Reed

Order of the Day, 1:00pm

Guest, Jim Zimmer – Associate Vice President, Teaching and Learning

1. AVP Teaching and Learning Mandate and Relationship with Faculty

There are various different elements and responsibilities in this role which have been evolving over time. In addition to decanal responsibilities for Gen Ed and ADC, the AVP Teaching and Learning is responsible for and/or involved in periodic program review, indigenization of curriculum, internationalization of curriculum, collaborative degrees with college partners, dual Credit agreements with high schools, and the evaluation of teaching.

2. Dean Function for ADC and General Education

Adding decanal responsibilities to the AVP Teaching and Learning was an effective solution to concerns caused by the reorganization of Academic Affairs. Things are running smoothly in GenEd and ADC: no concerns have been brought to the MRFA.

3. Task Force on Student Evaluation of Learning

The Task Force has reviewed and synthesized recommendations from recent internal reports done on the evaluation of teaching, considered MRU's institutional criteria for competent and scholarly teaching, reviewed current literature related to effective teaching in higher education at the undergraduate level, and considered the pros and cons of SEI instruments being used at other institutions. With this groundwork, the Task Force is building a more effective SEI instrument which students will be able to knowledgeably respond to, and is seeking input from the MRU community at focus groups being held in December and January. The Task Force is also generating an inventory of additional, informal and optional ways faculty could get feedback on their teaching. This would not be included in their tenure binders but faculty could decide to use it as evidence in their teaching development.

4. Aligning Evaluation of Teaching with Tenure Criteria and Sessional Reappointments

The Task Force is considering this in the processes of redesigning the SEI instrument and in generating alternative informal methods of teaching evaluation.

5. Class Sizes and Instructor-Student Ratio at MRU

Our financial model, determined by our delivery model, is not sustainable. When looking at multiyear budget projections it is apparent that to maintain fiscal sustainability we may need to increase class sizes in some areas to sustain smaller classes where we really need them.

Class sizes and student ratios would intersect with the AVP Teaching and learning's role in terms of MRU's brand and ADC initiatives.

6. Academic Development Centre

The MRFA has no position on the ADC but does appreciate recent efforts made by ADC to increase faculty consultation.

Agenda - Approved

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Marc Schroeder to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2015 Executive Board meeting, as amended. Motion Carried.

Officers' Reports

President's Report

1. Updates:
 - a. MRFA Written Submission Regarding Labour Relations and the PSLA
The Ministry appreciated the MRFA's submission for its detailed analysis of the alternative options. Most submissions indicated a preference for staying in the PSLA: the MRFA was the outlier in that we were open to a move to the Labour Relations Code. The arbitrator is presenting the Ministry with the potential ramifications of each option and the government will make the decision. It is likely that the right to strike and lock out will be restored. The details of how this will be done and the related bridging processes are yet to be determined. We will need to prepare for this in our upcoming budgets and in negotiations. Before a strike or lockout occurs, we need to have established a significant strike fund and agreed to provisions for managing a strike or lockout.
 - b. MRFA Member Census
Richard, Marc, Chantelle, and Linda will complete the annual census by the end of January and the Executive Board will determine when to administer it
 - c. CAUT Council
Marc will distribute his notes to the Executive.
 - d. Update: SEIs for Contract Faculty
In accordance with the LoU signed by Marc and Kathy, contract faculty were required to specify which course evaluations would go to Chairs. If they did not restrict this, then all would have gone to chairs. The Association is not compelled to agree to this process again next year; so, the Board's team should be working to resolve this in bargaining.
 - e. Code of Conduct Review and Planning of Panel Discussion
The first meeting of the review committee is planned for the first week of January; so, the MRFA will plan a panel for the following week.
 - f. Annual Reports Ratification Vote Results and Next Steps
This passed with 83% of voters in favour. IT will be developing the software and members of the MoU Committee will be involved in this process.
 - g. Faculty Centre Survey Results (distributed previously and via email)
The FCM will review the results and report to the membership in January.
 - h. MRU Coalition
Plans are in place for advocacy week: March 7 – 11, 2016
 - i. Meetings with HR Regarding Investigation Procedures
Marc and Sabrina have provided advice to Human Resources in its revision of disciplinary policy procedures with the aim to ensure that procedures are fair and that they respect the principles of natural justice.
 - j. Hiring Updates
There is no outcome for VP SACL and the UA hiring committee is getting started.
 - k. Academic Plan Consultation Sessions
These were very poorly attended due to the time of year.
 - l. Contract Faculty Handbook
There will ultimately be a faculty handbook that deals with full time and contract issues. However, Human Resources is going to start with a contract faculty handout which will be sent out with all initial sessional appointments beginning in winter 2016.
 - m. MRU Town Hall & BAC
BAC was not consulted in the development of the updated budget.
 - n. Negotiations Notice

Marc submitted notice to David Docherty and Brian Piney. Ariane and Brady will need to agree to extend timelines due to training scheduling.

o. Other

A Motion to delay working group 5 was approved at GFC.

Treasurer's Report - Budget Update (att.)

Due primarily to salary overlaps and the leaving bonus payout, we will likely not have the surplus we have had in the past: it will be closer to balanced or may be a deficit. Shiraz will explain this at the AGM and also comment on budgeting concerns moving forward (i.e. we need more funds set aside in the case of strike and lock out)

Unfinished Business

1. Negotiation Issues - Faculty Displays of Solidarity during Negotiations
Deferred
2. Appointment to the Joint Committee on the Interpretation of the Collective Agreement
Deferred

Business Arising

1. Update on Interest-Focused Bargaining Training Opportunity (Thursday, Feb. 4)
The bargaining training will be Feb 4-5 and the extra day will be Jan 22 or 29.
2. Approval of MRFA Response to Version 2 of the Academic Plan (att.)
Motion THAT the Executive Board approve the submission on the Academic Plan on behalf of the MRFA subject to minor editorial revisions.
Moved: Brenda Lang
Seconded: Richard Sutherland
Discussion
Vote
Carried Unanimously

New Business

1. Faculty Centre Management Committee Recommendations
 - a. Policy Revision Approval – Staff Overtime Policy (att.)
Motion THAT the Executive Board approve the Policies and Procedures Manual as revised.
Moved: Allison MacKenzie
Seconded: Tracy Powell
Vote
Carried Unanimously
 - b. Faculty Centre Closure, December 19 - January 3, inclusive
Motion THAT the Executive Board approve the closure of the Faculty Centre from December 19 – January 3, inclusive.
Moved: Shiraz Kurji
Seconded: Marc Schroeder
Vote
Carried
2. Update on Outstanding Action Items and Executive Board Goals
Attached for information: follow up will proceed in January.
3. CAUT Elections:
This information will be included in the *Weekly Newsletter* and *News to Use*

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:05pm.

Communications Officer,
Mount Royal Faculty Association

Date of approval