

## **Report for the Mount Royal Faculty Association Annual General Meeting 2012**

*Submitted by Ricardo Hoar (Chair)*

### **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.