

Report for the Mount Royal Faculty Association Annual General Meeting 2013

Submitted by Kari Roberts (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 2012/2013 year our membership included:
 - **Liza Choi**
 - **Mohamed El Hussein**
 - **Carmen Nielson**
 - **Kari Roberts (Chair)**
 - **Stefan Sikora**
 - **Renaë Watchman**

Activities Summary:

1. The Diversity Committee (DC) established a BlackBoard site to facilitate communication of Committee work between existing members; since the composition of the DC fluctuates on a rotating basis, this will hopefully enable greater continuity between successive Diversity committees.

2. The DC recommended to the MRFA Executive a minor amendment to the Diversity Committee Charter; the need for Executive representation on the Diversity Committee (formerly the Second VP)

was abolished. It was recommended that overall Committee membership remain at seven (7), with all Committee members being elected from the membership at large.

3. The DC was pleased to host a roundtable discussion entitled, "Women and Advancement at MRU," with four female full professors. The roundtable was held on May 3rd 2013 and featured Jennifer Pettit, Katja Hoehn, Dawne Clark, and Victoria Calvert.

4. The DC carefully reviewed the Collective Agreement (July 1, 2012-Jun 30, 2014) with an eye to highlighting components of the CA that could be re-examined from a diversity perspective. The DC presented a variety of considerations for the MRFA Executive regarding the CA, some of which are itemized below. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list; a full list of considerations, as well as the rationale(s) for reconsideration are found in the DC's *Report to the MRFA Executive on Diversity Considerations in the Collective Agreement*.

Language used to describe workplace environment

- Article 22.1.1 contains an important non-discrimination statement that refers to "physical or mental *disability*," which might better be expressed as "physical or mental *condition*."

Policies and procedures relating to parental leave

- Long Service Increments do not include periods of parental leave
- Employees currently apply in writing upon return from parental leave to receive annual increments; faculty members on a 4 for 5 plan are automatically granted the annual increments
- Leave time granted for adoption is currently different from time allotted for natural birth
- Illness leave does not allow for leave to support dependent children
- Compassionate leave stipulates a definition of spouse that changes with the presence of children in the union

Policies and procedures with respect to tenure and promotion

- TPC training does not currently include diversity training
- UTPC training does not currently include diversity training

Policies and procedures with respect to Recruitment and Retention

- There are no clear proactive recruitment policies to address key underrepresented groups

Policies and Procedures with respect to Half Time Tenured Positions

- Half time terms are currently renewable only in 5 year increments

The DC considers its review of the Collective Agreement to be preliminary and recommends further work be done on this by next year's Committee, if they should so choose.

The DC has respectfully recommended a Fall 2013 meeting between the 2013-2014 Diversity Committee and the MRFA Executive to discuss ways in which the Diversity Committee can assist the Executive as it considers ways to best accommodate the above concerns in the next round of Collective Bargaining.