

**Notes related to the creation of MRFA Awards
from the MRFA Executive Board meeting
held on March 27, 2013.**

The University awards now combine Teaching, Scholarship and Service, but it is important to have a teaching award since MRU is a teaching focused university. Other universities' Faculties, Departments and Faculty Associations give out awards and we thought this would be a good thing to do at MRU. This is a way for us as an Association to reward and recognize our members.

The MRFA awards, forms and related documents were drafted by the ad hoc MRFA Awards Committee created by the Executive Board in Fall 2012. The members of the committee were Glenn Rhule, Brian Sevick, Alex Bruton, Jodi Nickel, Elaine Mullen, and Chantelle Anderson. The committee spent the first few months reviewing awards at other universities across Canada and has modeled its awards and selection processes on the University of Regina and the University of Guelph's awards. The [Mount Royal University Faculty Association Teaching Excellence Award](#) and the [Mount Royal University Faculty Association Distinguished Service Awards](#) are both available online.

Concerns Expressed by Executive Board Members

The following concerns were discussed and addressed in revising the forms. The revised forms are available [online](#) and will be presented and discussed at the April General Meeting.

Why is there no research award being proposed?

- It is very difficult to determine the criteria for such a reward, and it has been argued that being published is in itself a reward
- The committee was created by the Executive Board to create a Teaching award and to formalize the Distinguished Service Award.

What does it mean by "gathering evaluative information?"

- The nominee submit's the evaluative information and, only if necessary, members of the committee may speak to colleagues and students to get more information. This process is common in award selections and has been used in MRU award selections. The reason why this is a common practice is because, unlike tenure processes where department members can submit feedback, nominees for awards are the only ones providing information to selection Committees. Speaking to peers and students ensures that the committee can have all that is needed to make fully informed decisions: it allows the committee to go to an impartial person to provide information about the nominee. For the same reason the process does not include the nominee providing a list of people who could be contacted.
- To ensure that the committee does not just go to one person with whom there was a bad relationship, the process has been revised to ensure that the committee speaks with at least three people.

What if someone from the committee or the Executive Board were to be nominated?

- Someone nominated would not be allowed to be on the committee
- Any candidate who is on the Executive Board would need to abstain from the vote, and their abstention would be recorded in the minutes.

Why are SEIs used as a measurement?

- They are asked for in every other award and, despite the problems with SEIs, they do provide an indication of the quality of teaching.
- We did add that SEIs shall not be the primary means to evaluate candidates. This is included in the rubric and guidelines for the committee.

It would be good to make it equitable: to encourage each Faculty to submit a nominee.

- Agreed, but we would do this in the process: it does not need to be stated on the form.

Do we need a monetary award?

- Yes, in order to make the award prestigious there should be a monetary reward. It will be \$1,000 per award rather than \$1,500. Having money attached to the award also confers our appreciation of the efforts made by the candidates.
- The service award is an occasional award that will not necessarily be given every year. These awards will cost the Association between \$2,000-\$3,000 each year, and there is room in the MRFA's budget for this.