

## **Minutes of the Mount Royal Faculty Association**

**Meeting date: February 15, 2013**

**Call to order:** An Executive Board meeting of the MRFA, was held in Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta on February 15, 2013. The meeting convened at 2:00pm, President Gerry Cross presiding and Kit Dobson, Communications Officer

### **Members Present:**

Gerry Cross  
Elaine Mullen  
Brenda Lang  
David Sabiston  
Kit Dobson

Marnie Kramer-Kile  
Scott Murray

### **Members not Present:**

Pat Kostouros  
Shiraz Kurji

### **Order of the Day: Guests SAMRU**

Kaylene McTavish, President  
Jennifer Langille, VP Academic  
Michelle Dennis, Interim VP External  
Addison Asuchak, VP Student Affairs

#### **1. Student Issues and Priorities**

SAMRU presented on student concerns and possible solutions regarding access to post secondary, student debt, workload, mental health, and perceptions of MRU.

#### **2. Program Continuance Requirements**

The biggest fear is that the continuance policy will set a precedent and could be applied too freely. SAMRU is working to ensure that people provide sufficient justification for using the continuance policy. SAMRU is, also, looking into W and WC grades: it is too difficult for students to get a WC.

- o A student should get two good attempts at passing a course and if they cannot pass it then it is in the student's best interest to be looking for a different program. When a student drops a course because they are too busy this does not count as a good attempt at passing.

#### **3. Budget Development**

SAMRU is fairly optimistic at this point but is cognizant of the fact that most cost savings/revenue generating initiatives suggested by BAC will affect, or be supported by, students.

Particularly with regards to the budget, but in all matters of common interest, the SAMRU and MRFA need to have better lines of communication.

#### **4. Child Care Survey**

The SAMRU Executive could be included in the MRFA survey test so they can see what the survey is about. SAMRU is planning to do a general survey of students and could include these questions in their survey. Gerry and Kaylene will connect on this later.

### **Guest Jennifer Pettit, Report on Harry Crowe Foundation Academic Freedom Conference**

The biggest threats to academic freedom are in relation to teaching, not to research, as academic freedom in research is already well protected. Major themes at the conference were

- discipline and norms in academic freedom regarding tenure and promotion, hiring, and granting agencies;
- the questionable practice of bibliometrics – conferring value in tenure and promotion considerations based on how many times research is cited;
- funding priorities causing researchers in some disciplines to be disadvantaged;
- the academic freedom of the individual being compromised by concern for the reputation of the institution;

- arguments against standardized CVs;
- problems arising from a journalized and commercialised academy – there being no recognition for unpublished work and work being published regardless of its quality;
- the limits and dangers of academic freedom in relation to Human rights legislation;
- the need to clearly define ‘professional conduct’ if it is considered as criteria for tenure;
- pressures for online education – faculty should not be forced to teach online; and
- considerations around confidentiality in faculty research and legal requirements

#### Moving Forward:

The information from this conference should be sent to the faculty members on GFC’s Academic Freedom subcommittee, Miriam Carey and Terry Field.

The Executive Board and Negotiating Committee need to meet to develop a strategy to build membership support for Academic Freedom and to get it into the Agreement.

Jim Turk offered to come to MRU to speak about this at CAUT’s expense.

**Agenda:** Added to New Business: 4. Topics for Meeting with David Docherty  
Task force on leaves and the academic year added to next meeting.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Motion was made by Gerry Cross, and seconded to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2013 meeting. **Motion carried.**

#### **Officer’s Reports**

##### President’s Report

1. Budget Town Hall  
There was no new information presented.
2. ACIFA Presidents’ Council  
The ACIFA guidelines for faculty representatives to Boards of Governors have been approved and will be sent to the Minister of Advanced Education.
3. LAPP Report  
Gerry will report on this at the next general meeting
4. Child Care Survey  
The Executive Board will assist the Child Care Committee in testing the survey.
5. Forum for Chief Negotiators  
Brenda Lang will attend
6. Dean of Cont Ed Candidate Meetings  
MRFA Executive Board members are invited to attend these meetings on March 14 and 15, 11:15am-12:00pm, in room 2.

#### **Business Arising**

1. Travel Expense Claims for Contract Faculty  
Gerry and Scott will discuss this Randy and Manuel. Manuel will be informed about this before the meeting so he can be prepared.

#### **Unfinished Business**

1. Honorarium for acting ALO  
Al Fedoruk will be offered, as overload, 3 SICH per month at his part time rate.  
Agreed  
Carlton Osakwe is attending the March 15 meeting to discuss preparations for the review of tenure and promotion criteria.
2. Presidents’ Discussion Series  
We will bring a written list of the divisions and Gerry and David will provide some initial comments on them. The list shall include divisions between Tenure track/ tenured faculty, TS/TSS, big/broad based research, and full time/Contract faculty. These are

possibly perceived divisions and this shall be highlighted in the discussion's title.

**New Business**

1. ACIFA Climate Survey Results  
Deferred
2. March General Meeting  
Meeting cancelled due to lack of business
3. MRFA Position on Applied Research and Economic Diversification

Motion THAT the MRFA adopt the statement developed by the Advocacy Committee, in principle, as a position of the Association to be released by the President on February 19 subject to editorial revision.

Moved: Kit Dobson  
Seconded: Scott Murray  
Discussion of revisions to the release  
Vote  
Carried

Motion THAT the statement "Mount Royal University receives [only 42%] of its revenue from the government" be maintained in the final version of the press release.

Vote  
Carried, 1 against

4. Topics for Meeting with David Docherty  
Distributed and decided upon via email.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:20pm.

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Communications Officer  
Mount Royal Faculty Association

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Date of approval