

## Notes of the Mount Royal Faculty Association

Meeting date: January 29, 2013

**Call to order:** A General Meeting of the MRFA was held in Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta on January 29, 2013. The meeting convened at 12:15pm, President Gerry Cross presiding and Kit Dobson, Communications Officer.

### Members in attendance:

See attached Attendance Sheets

**Agenda:** Approved

### Approval of minutes:

Motion was made by Gerry Cross, and seconded to approve the minutes of the October 30, 2012 meeting as amended. **Motion carried.**

Motion was made by Gerry Cross, and seconded to approve the minutes of the November 23, 2012 meeting as amended. **Motion carried.**

### Officer's Reports

#### [President's report](#)

#### 1. Department Visits

- These visits were very valuable for the Executive.
  - There are still 9 meetings for which we have not written up the notes yet.
  - These meetings have generated more work.
  - The Executive is working on the issues coming out of these meetings but it is ongoing.
- Discussion:
  - What are the top three topics that have emerged?
    - There was incredible diversity in the issues brought forward.
    - Workload credit for senior student research projects, instructional hours and scheduling are likely the top three topics.

#### 2. Budget

- Gerry's notes from the town hall are available under the meeting resources section of the [website](#).
- Causes of current budget situation:
  - Operating grants were frozen at 2008-09 levels so the implementation money promised for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years of the degrees was never received. The University responded by reducing intake quotas to get to the same previous FLE quotas. This helped but was still costly because we are still over target on the FLE.
  - There were a number of errors in budget assumptions.
    - 2.15% was budgeted for increase to tuition but it was only 1.15%
  - Table in the notes [online](#) indicates the expenses affecting the budget
- List of possibilities that Deans are looking at
  - Point 3: Unfunded FLEs in nursing.
    - We have now received some funding for this
  - Point 7: ensure institutes are operating on a cost recovery basis.
    - There was an email the other day that the Integrative Health Institute is being closed because it is not recovering costs.

### Quorum achieved for Special Meeting

General Meeting recessed at 12:22pm and resumed at 12:45pm

- Budget Advisory Updates:
  - Our acting provost does not agree with everything the predecessor was proposing and he has mentioned the need for some fundamental restructuring.
    - The mandate of BAC is to advise the President's Executive Committee on budget initiatives. BAC cannot do that if Academic Affairs is independently making budget decisions: not sure where this is at right now

- The last BAC meeting was on Jan 16. The committee had broken into three idea generating committees for cost savings, rationalizations and revenue generation. Then, the plan was that the President's Executive Committee would select a certain number of these ideas, ten to twelve, for serious examination.
  - Gerry assumed that at the last meeting we would get a progress report on some of these but we did not. What BAC did get was a long list of the ideas that are being studied by various groups.
- They hope to present the budget at the April 15 Board of Governors meeting
  - This means we may be looking at a more compressed decision making timeline.
  - Another concern is that we were told there would not be across the board cuts but yet at the divisional level across the board cuts are proposed. If work is not done on these initiatives we may be forced into some version of across the board cuts.

Discussion:

- When are they having the next town hall?
  - Nothing has been scheduled yet.
- Is there any variability you are aware of in different areas where they are being asked for differential rates of cuts? Faculty have been hearing some of this but what is the range?
  - We were told that there would not be these sorts of cuts. We were told that they were looking at cutting vertically; that is, they were planning on eliminating certain things and generating revenue.
  - If they do go to some type of across the board cuts, the amounts will vary across the departments. Factors considered in this are the cuts that were made last year, the extent of the cuts, whether the cuts were ongoing or not, and then the full time part time ratio may also be looked at.
- Although there is an attempt at greater transparency this round and David is presenting this as a new way of doing the budget, it seems that there is a certain amount of tokenism. There has been a lot of advice generated but there seems to be something disorganized about the way the committee has functioned and the way the ideas are being turned into priorities.
  - It is too early to say this but it is getting concerning as time is running out.
- Instructional hours
  - There was an attempt to coerce APPC into adding reductions to instructional hours for budgetary purposes to the list of editorial changes.
    - This was defeated.
    - If this had of passed there would have been a lot of editorial changes made in time for the next academic year. However this did not pass so this is put off for a least a year.
  - Gerry wrote about this in the November [President's Report](#) and there are a list of recommendations for faculty.
  - Excerpt from an impact statement presented and is available [online](#)
    - This is shown with permission
    - It was picked out because it provided comparisons with all other Alberta Universities and come MRU comparator institutions. If these other schools can afford it, why can't we?
  - What faculty can do:
    - You cannot separate budget and academic matters. If someone says that GFC cannot discuss things with budget implications you can respond by stating that this is not true.
    - If you are under pressure to reduce instructional hours and you think it will have pedagogical impact then it is not a editorial change: it has to be processed as a substantial change that goes through APPC, GFC and the Board.
    - Since budget is not in the mandate of Faculty Councils and GFC, faculty can talk about these things only terms of the academic implications and disregard the budgetary impact.

- Faculty councillors are encouraged to run for GFC. If we are to make GFC effective we need to get faculty based caucuses working. Without caucus you go in uninformed and unprepared and you will get ambushed in the meeting.
- GFC can give advice to the board on any matter including matters that are primarily budgetary. GFC councillors need to resist arguments that they cannot discuss budget matters.

Discussion:

- To what extent should we ask the GFC speaker to participate in faculty caucuses?
  - If I were the speaker I would be uncomfortable being involved in a faculty caucus.
  - The Speaker does run the business of the meeting so it is good to have a faculty member in this position.
  - The speaker should not be actively involved in faculty caucuses. The key issue for caucus is to share views identify common interests etc. the speaker is supposed to be impartial. It is really important to have an impartial speaker.

### 3. CAUT Forum for Presidents

- Gerry will write about this in the January [Presidents Report](#).
- This forum was Jan 18-Jan 20
- It was organized by topics with two presenters on each with discussion groups to follow
- University Governance
  - CAUT has done a series of studies on academic governance
  - Quoting from previous 2004 report about “senate as rubber stamp”
    - This is related to perceived management control of senates GFC.
    - In this regard we have done fairly well this year.
    - In the fall we had a good discussion on academic freedom as it relates to teaching, we beat back the editorial changes to instructional hours, and there was a good discussion on continuance.
    - This year our GFC is more effective than the average senate
  - GFC is a discussion forum not a decision body/the importance of Collective Bargaining
    - BoG makes decisions and the ideas come to GFC from Deans’ Council
    - We need to recognize that it is through collective bargaining that we are best able to have a voice.
    - Collective Bargaining is really about limiting the powers of the employer. Any rights that are not constrained or taken away are residual management rights. If the CA is silent on an issue then management can do as it sees fit.
    - The employment standards act and the labour code do not apply to us: the Collective Agreement is the only thing that applies to us regarding the terms and conditions of our employment.
    - The intersection between GFC policies and articles in the CA is quite large.
      - We tried to get an article in the CA on academic freedom in the last round but did not. Now, we are starting a campaign to emphasise the importance of academic freedom. The Board may be resistant because it could be viewed as limiting their decision making authority.
  - GFC is responsible for amending its bylaws.
    - If we want to make a change we do not have to ask for permission we just have to make it since 2/3s of GFC is comprised of faculty members.
    - Currently, the MRFA has two ex officio positions on GFC. The MRFA President is an ex officio councillor and the Academic Liaison Officer is an ex officio member of APTC. We have discussed moving this to the APPC.
      - We can make such changes as a faculty.

### 4. Presidents Discussion Series

- Notes of previous meetings are posted [online](#)
- The next one is 12:00 - 1:30pm in the Faculty Centre. The topic is donor agreements and revenue generation principles.

## **Announcements**

- We have two representatives, Monica Baehr and Janet Monteith, on the Transportation advisory committee. Our members would like you to send them any agenda items you may want them to bring to this committee.
- Academic Scheduling
  - You are invited to submit your experiences with the software
  - There is an implementation audit coming up and we need to ask them why the system is producing such bad schedules.
  - This is an opportunity to make some real progress because the software engineers will be able to answer these questions
- This year's tenure celebration has been combined with a celebration of our recently promoted faculty members. It will be in the Faculty Centre on February 7 and the program starts at 4.
- The MRFA Child Care Committee is meeting every week and the work is progressing well in the development of a new survey
- ACIFA has two teaching awards. Brett McCollum is the recipient of ACIFA's Scholarship of Teaching and Learning award and he has received a grant for his project.

## **Part-time Member Representative, Brenda Lang**

- The Part-time Service honorarium was set up under an MOU in the Agreement that provides \$10,000 for Contract faculty to participate in service activities across the University
  - This fund is undersubscribed and we are trying to find ways to get more people applying to it.
  - We would appreciate if you could spread the word to your Contract faculty colleagues that some of their non instructional activities may be eligible for an honorarium.
  - Honoraria amounts are proportionate amount of the funds available per term.
- Changes to activities include:
  - Institutional governance activities under the Agreement are now eligible: this includes the contract faculty hiring criteria development meetings
  - Sitting on boards for academic or non academic misconduct.
  - MRFA Committee Service
  - Formal representation of the University in the external community
- Contract faculty no longer need the chair of the meeting or activity to sign the form
  - The form is available on the MRFA website at [mrfa.net/forms](http://mrfa.net/forms)
- We also request that you promote the social and informational event for contract faculty being held tomorrow, January 30, 4:00 – 7:00pm in the Faculty Centre.

## **Negotiating Committee Report**

### 1. Clarification on Terminology

- The term part-time, as a generic term, has been replaced with Contract Faculty or Contract Academic Staff.
- You can, then, identify among the Contract Faculty.
  - Fixed Term, Continuing, and Sessional: this identifies the type of contract that they have.
- We have removed the term lecturer from the academic ranks: if you were hired to a tenurable position without the required academic credential you were previously a lecturer: you are now an Assistant Professor.
- A Chart of the different ranks and contract descriptions is available [online](#).
- Some committees have had to change their names
  - Standing committee for sessional appointments
  - Contract Professional Development Fund
- Discussion
  - Conditional tenurable members without the minimum required academic credential are not lecturers anymore?
    - No, they will be assistant professors.

### 2. Update for Winter Negotiations

- You'll be happy to hear that the new Collective Agreement has been finalized. All that remains to be done is to have it signed by the Chairs.
  - The electronic version should be up by next week and the paper version shortly thereafter.
- This year we need to put in place a new IP and copyright article.
  - David and Carol will be working with IP lawyers from both sides and they will report to the Negotiating Committees with recommendations.
  - This will come for ratification by the end of May
- The Negotiating Committee also needs to clarify some of the benefits for contract faculty and some of the reappointment process to ensure it is consistent with the changes in language.
- Will be looking at the pool of money in List A, at where it is going, how much we are short, and if any significant changes are needed.
- There will be a full round of negotiations starting January 2014
- Discussion
  - None

### **Unfinished Business**

#### [MRFA Position on Tenure Restrictions for Service.](#)

- We had this on the agenda for October General Meeting but we lost quorum before we could make the decision. It was also on the November General meeting but we did not get quorum for that meeting.
- There were two executive motions at the end of the presentation. We are doing these things anyway but because this was initiated at the request of our members and because we had it on the agenda for two General Meetings, we need to vote on these motions.
  - See [November General meeting notes](#) for more information on this matter.

Motion 1: Resolved, That Articles 4.3.2, 4.3.4, 4.5.5, 4.7.1, 6.2, 6.4.5, 9.3.7 and 9.3.9 be referred to the Negotiating Committee in the next round of collective bargaining and that the negotiations survey be used to determine whether to negotiate changes.

- It was not appropriate for the Executive Board to take a position on whether members of hiring committees be tenured or not: this is up to the membership. This is why this motion refers the matter to Negotiations.
- We also decided that we would prepare a brief discussion paper outlining the issues that will help members make their choice on this.

No Discussion

Vote

Carried Unanimously

Motion 2: Resolved, That the ad-hoc Organization of the MRFA Sub-Committee of the MRFA Executive review and update the document listing tenure requirements for Executive Board and Standing Committee positions that it prepared last year and determine whether to recommend any changes to the membership.

- The MRFA Organization Committee did work on this last year so the motion is for there to be review of the work done last year on tenure requirements for service on MRFA committees and the MRFA Executive Board.

No Discussion

Vote

Carried Unanimously

- Of the 10 positions on the Executive Board only 4 require tenure.
- When the bylaws do not require tenure any form of full time or contract faculty members are eligible to be nominated
- The only Committees requiring tenure are FEC (4 positions) and Ethics (all 6 positions)
- The point of requiring tenure is for there to be experience in the University, but the electorate can make that decision. The MRFA Organization will likely recommend that the members of PSGC do not need tenure and that the VP Policy be put on this committee.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 1:26pm.

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Communications Officer  
Mount Royal Faculty Association

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Date of approval