

Mount Royal Faculty Association – Social Events Standing Committee Annual Report for 2010-2011

Committee Members

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Social Events

The committee hosted a total of nine events this year.

September 17: Pizza Party: The first ‘Kick-Off’ Social Event: this event was organized in association with the MRFA Professional Affairs Committee (PAC). The purpose of this kick off event was to facilitate and encourage activities and the development of peer collegial relationships amongst both new and seasoned faculty in a relaxing and supportive environment.

October 22: Oktoberfest: this event featured an occasion consisting of German dancing and traditional Bavarian snacks. Dean of Arts Manuel Mertin kindly provided his German dancing and entertainment. A small monetary gift was provided to express our appreciation.

November 19: Let the games begin: Hosted an event whereby faculty had the opportunity to engage in some gaming related activities.

December 9: December holiday Event: the MRFA traditional seasonal adult faculty event to wrap up the Fall semester.

January 31: The Future is Bright... Here’s to the next 100 years! The tenure celebration is an annual event and the purpose of theme this year was twofold in nature: to reflect the MRU Centennial while recognizing the accomplishments and bright future of the newly tenured faculty. The newly tenured were formally recognized in Lincoln Park Room (LPR), and were presented with sunglasses and an engraved mag light keychain to recognize their bright and shining futures at MRU. Memorable remarks were provided to the newly tenure by Dave Marshall, Robin Fisher and Gerry Cross. Following the formal ceremony, celebrations of the newly tenured faculty achievements were continued in the Faculty Centre. Beer and wine was kindly provided with the compliments of the MRFA Faculty Association and the office of the VP Academic.

February 11: Spring Break: Faculty Gone Wild: An opportunity for faculty to ‘unwind’ in spring break attire and envision a break to warmer climates through providing complimentary tropical beverages and snacks.

March 11: Farewell to the Marshall: This 'Western Marshall' themed event provided the opportunity to recognize our president's, Dave Marshall, achievements as well as bid him a faculty farewell towards his future stage of retirement. The event was extremely well attended. Various faculty members were involved in the planning of this event and activities included a skit, formal kind words, and a gift of appreciation. In addition, The Steve Pineo band (external) came and played and excellent feedback was received from faculty regarding the band's performance and the event in itself. The MRFA president and executives kindly provided beverages for this event.

April 15: Race to the Finish Line, End of Class Bash: This April event was hosted towards the end of the semester to encourage a time of peer support and rejuvenation before marking and extensive end of semester obligations arose. This event welcomed various forms of races on the patio and small 'prizes' were awarded to faculty members for participation and enthusiasm in activities. Exceptional turnout.

May 27: Annual Keg Drain: This event is a traditional final Social Event of the academic year. The Steve Pineo band are invited back due to previous positive response. The patio outside of the faculty centre will be utilized. Light snacks will be provided.

Events Summary

The events were all well-attended and made full use of the faculty centre's facilities. This year's committee focused on organizing varying events involving food and music, often surrounding specific themes that were thought to peak faculty interest. Offering events based around food, beverages and music seems to have provided opportunity for relaxation, socialization, and collegial development for faculty members. Faculty seem to have indicated their approval in terms of excellent attendance at the events as well as through providing both formal and informal feedback to the social committee members. While we had attempted an off site event (curling) for April, there were insufficient numbers who registered thus the April event was replaced with an alternate within the Faculty Centre which was exceptionally well attended. Returning to previous social committee practices of hosting one or two off-campus events or recreational activities in the future may be considered.

As faculty schedules are increasingly diverse and even unpredictable at times, the committee attempted to facilitate scheduling and planning through providing a 'save the date' poster at the beginning of each semester and then followed through with providing individual monthly posters as means to publicize. This appeared to have been a successful method. Therefore "save the date" advance posters should be continued in the future. While committee members assumed the task of manually distributing printed posters to departments, Chantelle Anderson played an integral role in publicizing and ensured that all faculty were reached via emailing posters to all faculty and highlighting upcoming events in MRFA bulletins.

The committee was exceedingly grateful for the support of the MRFA executive and the VP Academic office whom provided beer and wine for events, particularly the tenure and Farewell to the Marshall event. This provision supported the culture of collegiality, not to mention conviviality, that the MRFA and University are committed to encouraging. We also are grateful for assistance from the MRFA Professional Affairs committee, who contributed refreshments served at the first event.

Much of these events' success depends on the food and beverages, which were dependably purchased, prepared and delivered efficiently and economically, and with great dedication and cheerfulness by Darlene Windrem. Chantelle Anderson also helped greatly with her organization and experience.

Budget

Brian Fleming assumed the treasurer role and in collaboration with Chantelle, has kindly kept track of our expenditures; an itemized list may be obtained from Brian or Chantelle. Out of a budget of **\$15,000**, we will have spent \$14, 420.52 by Apr 30th. This includes a variety of expenditures including contributions to the 45th Anniversary Committee/event, wine, beer and soft drinks, food, decorations, small prizes and gifts, and music (the Steve Pineo band on 2 occasions and the pianist for the Christmas party). It also includes a gift from the social committee acknowledging Darlene's hard work and Chantelle's continued support.

Because all of the events, (excluding the formal ceremony of the Tenure celebration which took place in LPR, no cost associated) occurred in the Faculty Centre, the main expenses were for food, beverages, and entertainment. We did not have large expenses associated with renting sporting or other venues, and catering costs were kept low, primarily due to Darlene's hard work. Darlene did hire a colleague to help with the Tenure Celebration and the Farewell to the Marshall event as these two exceptionally large events required tremendous preparation. A small monetary gift was provided to this colleague. The Social committee did not have to pay for beverages for the September, Tenure, or Dave Marshall event due to generous donations acknowledged elsewhere in this report. Since the faculty continues to grow, and since future committees may want to include more recreational events on or off-campus, the fact that we came in slightly under budget this year does not preclude the necessity to spend a similar amount or more in the future.

Future Considerations

Tenure celebration: this is probably the most important event hosted and organized by the MRFA social committee. This year, we honoured 42 newly tenured faculty, including faculty whose tenure from other institutions was recognized. The social committee will need to continue to remember to account for faculty being awarded tenure in this way when planning the tenure celebrations. The LPR was sufficient for this number for the ceremony and although the faculty centre was 'packed' for the celebratory portion of the event, colleagues seemed to thoroughly enjoy the intimacy of the atmosphere as evidenced by lengthy attendance and both formal and informal positive feedback. For the future the committee will need to consider tenure numbers in terms of space allocation and length of the ceremony. With a 2 minute maximum for speeches, the ceremony can be lengthy. However this year Brian and Doug did a superb job at keeping speeches to the agreed upon length and the ceremony ran smoothly. Future committee members may need to consider lengths of speeches if tenure numbers are to consider growing.

Curling: Faculty curling has been an event that the social committee has organized in the past. While we attempted this event for April, due to insufficient numbers the committee collectively decided to cancel the event. While a lack of expected registration may be due to varying interest levels, publicizing, or

time of year related factors, the future committee may also want to consider factors not limited to but including the nature of the activity. It is an activity that may appeal to only faculty with select interests. In addition, typically the numbers of ice/sheets that can be rented are small which can also be limiting in nature as it restricts the number of faculty who can attend. This may be a consideration if faculty are to continue increasing in number. Some other considerations for off site events may include renting facilities at MRU, renting a bowling alley, or renting other types of venues where larger numbers can be accommodated.

Calgary Corporate Challenge The Calgary Corporate Challenge, in which MRU traditionally participates begins about the time that faculty have returned for the Fall term. The social committee may want to think about a reception or other event that helps publicize and organize teams for the corporate challenges.

Final Comments

The committee would like to thank the faculty who came and supported these events, the MRFA executive and the MRU President's and Vice President's Office for their participation in and donations for specific events, to Gerry Cross for his continued support, to Chantelle Anderson for her organizational skills, to Darlene for her hard work, and to the remainder of the social committee members for their utmost dedication.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Hooper
Chair, MRFA Social Committee.