

NOTES of the Mount Royal Faculty Association

Meeting date: March 1, 2012

Call to order: A General Meeting of the MRFA, was held in Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta on March 1, 2012. The meeting convened at 3:02pm, President Gerry Cross presiding.

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 January 30, 2012 General Meeting. **Motion carried.**

Officers' Reports

President

1. Scheduling Grievance Update

- Unfortunately there is very little to report
- In early October Gerry attended an Infosilem conference
 - Some good ideas came from this conference that could have led to a better and shorter process at MRU
 - Would have resulted in a better schedule here
 - Gerry reported on this at the committee meeting on November 16. Since then six meetings have been cancelled and only two meetings have been held
 - This is why there is little progress.
- Discussion:
 - Would there be point in urging them along to try to get them to, in good faith, address this issue?
 - We are not going to just let this go even though it is taking longer than expected.

2. Voting Sub-Committee Report

- One of the objectives the Executive Board set for this year was to develop a mechanism for online voting and to implement it as an option for the committee elections in May
- We selected simply voting
 - 856\$ for unlimited annual elections
- There is a sample election set up. This will be emailed out tomorrow and will be open till March 16
- Email: you will have a link with an user elector ID and password as well as a direct link
- Once logged in click on "vote now"

- There are links to candidate bios within the voting system
- Abstain is the default
- It will allow you to vote for less, but not more, than the required number of candidates
- Once you have finished voting you will be brought to a screen to review your ballot before submitting/confirming it
- Members will receive an email tomorrow with the sample ballot

3. University Budgeting Process

- The intent here is to review some things about budgeting at MRU and to discuss the current situation
- How large is the deficit?
 - Non cash items in the budget are currently impacting the forecast deficit. See budget presentation under Meeting resources online.
 - Earned capital contributions are capital grants from the government spread out over the lifetime of the capital asset
 - Amortization is the declining value of a capital asset
 - These two numbers are different because all of the capital money does not necessarily come from the government. Some operating funds are converted to capital funds and we receive donations that go into capital funds as well. These are then counted in amortizations but not in earned capital contributions
 - The difference between earned capital contributions and amortization is 4.6 million and the deficit is 5.8 million.
- Budgeting for Earned Capital Contributions and Amortization:
 - Last year there was an adjustment to the budget resulting from a donation for the science wing expansion and the use of internally raised funds. Both earned capital contributions and amortization increased equally.
 - Thus, there is obviously some flexibility around this.
- Where does the excess cash go?
 - It should go to reserve funds such as residence renewal, recreation equipment etc.
 - This should be planned and budgeted for. This would be a better way to do it
- New Facilities Capital Reserve fund: 6.3 million
 - This is money that has come from operational surpluses
 - *Why are we taking out operating money to fund building buildings when the government is more willing to fund capital investments than increase our operational funds?*
- Current total of 26 million in capital reserves and 6 million in

operating reserves

- Academic program development fund: 1.5 million
 - This is administered through the VPA's office
 - Supports academic program initiatives
 - This includes course development for fourth year bachelor programs and general academic program needs
- Special Projects 3.7 (biggest operational reserve fund)
 - Many priority projects including: completion and response to key recommendations of the academic plan, the activities of sustainability initiatives, enrolment services, financial process improvements to change the fiscal year, and improvements to the emergency response plan
- In how many ways do we address the deficit?
 - Departments have been asked to cut 3% but there are other ways this could be addressed
- Curriculum Change Process (esp. credit hours per course)
 - Change in ratio of lecture / lab hours is considered editorial
 - The registrar approves editorial changes
 - The initiator of a curriculum submission can determine if something is editorial and can submit it to APPC and GFC
- Is this strategic budgeting?
 - The budget planning process didn't start in the fall: if they had wanted to make any changes they could have started in the fall but if you wanted to get everyone into a panic then you would give only a short period of time to make cuts.
 - *Why do we not protect our core business of instruction?*
 - Most of the cuts that academic departments make in the end is a reduction in courses taught by *part-time faculty and this is the best value of all the money the University spends for the dollar spent so it is the worst place to make cuts*
 - The University of Calgary announced a balanced budget on Feb 28 after starting out with a huge deficit
 - They cut back on excess students
 - They got the same 2% inc. to their operational grant
 - Small savings in printing changes and power supply
 - Deferred controversial non instructional fee
- Discussion:
 - What is the actual deficit here then?
 - 5.8 million
 - Most of this is capital
 - How did this come about and what is to stop this debt in the future?
 - This is the first time I have heard of the credit accounting

- where three credit pay is given for four hours teaching
- They are trying to force us to make instructional hour adjustments to courses as editorial changes so there is no discussion: *this needs to be resisted. These types of changes need to be submitted as substantive course changes and need to be discussed in Faculty Councils and then in GFC.* This is when we can hopefully reveal the real extent of the budget problem and then start weighing options.
 - GFC considers other academic matters that have budgetary implications
 - The faculty who teach these courses think they are too valuable to be cut
 - It has to go to GFC, the academic discussion needs to take place for the BoG to consider the matter fully
 - The VP Academic said that last year some disciplines were given an ultimatum by their dean to cut the hours of instruction in a course from 4 to 3 or to increase class size by the comparable amount of money. The VP Academic said that since they increased class size they don't care about the class size: this really just showed how important the 4th credit hour was
 - It seems that GFC is the place to have this conversation: the VP Academic is trying to say this is a budgetary not academic matter: but this is not the case. There are huge pedagogical and learning implications. We need to have this discussion at GFC as soon as possible.
 - The other kind of rhetoric we need to resist is the demonization of expected salary increases.

4. Task Force on Faculty Leaves and the Academic Year

- In the midst of the budget issue is unfortunate timing
- The results of the survey will be posted with the materials for the meeting
- High response rate
- 30% of those who completed the survey indicated they are on TS and 70% on TSS. This is about the proportion of our faculty who are these streams so it is fairly representative.
- One surprising thing was the proportion of tenure track faculty responding was quite a bit lower than tenured faculty
- 60-70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed to most of the questions

Discussion:

- What percent answered the 4 for 5 question?

- That was part of the Negotiating Committee survey so we do not have those results at this time.
- There will be no changes to 4for5s in this CA
- One of the ways this program may be funded was to take money from 4for5 to pay for this sabbatical program
- 4for5s are in the CA and we should maintain this.
- All of this has to be negotiated
- The survey results have gone to the Negotiating Committee. The task force has recommended that an MOU be put in the agreement to flesh out a more fully developed sabbatical program
- What was the ratio of people from each faculty who responded?
 - Did not ask that
 - There is a concern that we could be privileging particular programs when we implement possible changes to the academic year
 - We want to think about this if we want to remain a collective
- Concerns with MOUS. -MOUs can end up muddying a straightforward negotiable item. -If we go to MOUs then people get a vested interest and then we end up with something we may not have wanted. -MOUs sometimes tend to be negotiated, in part, outside of the CA.
 - Not all of the work can be done in negotiations. Some things are too big and there is not enough time. (e.g. the copyright issue)
 - An MOU would result in further study of sabbatical models and costing methods. Then Negotiating Committee would then survey the membership and follow its direction
 - If members do not want to forsake 4for5s then members are obliged to complete the Negotiating surveys to indicate that.
- The necessity for sabbaticals is brought about by our transition to being a University: sabbaticals have nothing to do with 4for5s.
 - They made us a University and have put us in debt. We have 4for5s now and should not give them up. They are not related to sabbaticals: they serve diff functions.
- The survey seems to be covering two things: sabbaticals and the academic year: these are two very different issues.
 - The relationship in the mind of the task force was to free up more time in intersession to work on research or on course development.
- Why do we have to rearrange the academic year to free up intersession?
 - Some departments are having trouble setting tenure and promotion meetings in May because people are away
 - It would be good to have intersession freed up for research

- The level of bureaucracy here is somewhat excessive. We can free up intersession through other means
 - Yes this is true.
 - We are not trying to force people to teach in the summer but to facilitate it. Right now it causes problems for nursing faculty who teach in the summer
- As the Faculty Association can we not deal with the question just of workload in the intersession without conflating it with other things?
 - A lot of people agree that workload in intersession is an issue
 - Some processes could be slimmed down a bit
- The task force work on the academic year has implications on support staff: is there a support staff member on the task force and if not then why not?
 - This task force is not making any decisions
 - Involving staff would come at the point when possible changes and solutions are to be discussed.
- Rigour and merit of spring and summer semesters may be different and what impact would a tri-semester have on enrolments?
 - This could be considered later as we are not at the point of suggesting any changes
 - If it works better for a program then they can do it: this will not be forcing anyone to offer courses in the summer
- We have a cookie cutter mentality that does not work with this institution. Could we not just allow for flexibility in some of our deadlines in order to free up intersession?
 - The Negotiating Committee will likely discuss this

5. Recommendations for Review of the SEI Processes and Form

- These recommendations come to the membership now both from the FEC and the Executive. The recommendations are available with the [Meeting resources](#) online.
- We are aware that there is a perception that the FEC literature review was slanted. I do not think this was intended. One of the reports they refer to is from the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario which is a comprehensive review of what is good and not good about SEIs. The FEC lit review was intended to support recommended changes which was why it was or seemed to be slanted.
- Moving Forward:
 - The Executive suggested that the membership does not need to vote on these as they are just recommendations going to the joint committee to consider and it is the joint committee that is going to decide and make recommendations to UTPC.
 - The other argument is that members vote on these

recommendations and do so individually so we can get a sense for how much support there is for some of these motions: this may be useful for the joint committee as well.

- Motion 1
 - UTPC could decide to do it themselves but it would likely be better for them to delegate it to a committee: this was the process last time we revised the SEI form.
 - The chair of UTPC agrees that SEIs should be reviewed
 - There should be someone from UTPC on this joint committee.
 - This is for them to decide: we are making a recommendation that the joint committee include the members as listed but it is up to UTPC to charter the committee.
 - It would be up to the UTPC to determine the composition of the committee though we are recommending a composition.
 - There is a recommendation to create a joint committee and then the rest of the recommendations are made to the joint committee
 - We Ought to have chair of APTC on this committee also.
 - this is a good suggestion

Motion THAT the motion “Review of the SEI Process and Form” be revised to include the Chair of APTC as one of the recommended members of the Joint Committee

Moved: Scott Murray

Seconded: Lee Easton

Discussion:

- Why the chair of APTC instead of any member of APTC?
 - This way APTC would not have to choose who on the committee would be appointed
 - This way it is fairly certain that the representative would be a faculty member
- Someone from the chairs assembly should also be on this committee

Vote

Carried

Motion THAT the MRFA recommend a member of the Chairs’ Assembly be appointed to the joint committee by the chairs assembly

Moved: Lee Easton

Seconded: Scott Murray

Vote

Carried, 4 opposed, 3 abstentions

Motion THAT we use Simply Voting to vote on these recommendations.
The vote will begin tomorrow, March 2, and end on March 16.

Moved: Jane Drover

Seconded: David Bird

Discussion:

- Will this include the committee composition motion
 - Yes
- Issue around diversity of teachers not reflected in these recommendations
 - Diversity should be included in the analysis

Carried Unanimously

Motion THAT we add a further recommendation that the joint committee consider the impact of the diversity of instructors when interpreting SEI data.

Moved: Mary-Lee Mullholand

Discussion:

- There is research that women and different ethnicities do less well
- This should be similarly supported with links
- It seems that for this data to be valid we would need to know the demographic information about the student doing the evaluation.
- This is just a recommendation for the joint committee to consider it
- Positive space acknowledges this as an issue

Vote

Carried, 1 opposed

The arts diversity committee will send references supporting this motion

Committee Reports

1. Negotiating Committee, David Sabiston

- At the next meeting in April there will be a more in depth report from the Negotiating Committee
- Thank you for submitting the time logs: we received 50-60
- 200 Full time members filled out the survey (50% response rate)
- 83 PT faculty filled it out
- This data is very useful in negotiations
- The teams met for the first time this Monday addressing relative priorities and they are meeting again tomorrow
- The teams will meet at least weekly until the exam period then more often after that
- People are very interested in 4for5s: these will not be changed in this round

- Salary was the highest priority issue for faculty and workload was the second highest (both for FT and PT)
- The board wants to address the MOUs
 - We do not know how much we will get done on the leaves
 - Have not had a chance to discuss these recommendations at the table yet
- The Board also wants to identify and address the issues that have arisen with Promotion
- Removing vacation has not come up
- It all seems very straightforward at this point
- Discussion:
 - Minimal acceptable salary increase I was only able to click on 4% at the lowest
 - Other PSE institutions have negotiated 2% for this year and 2-3% for 2012-13
 - I do not want to be driven to one or another side there should be the option for those filling out the survey to select 0%
 - Based on the survey results, why are faculty not taking up the sabbaticals as they are?
 - The main reason for a lot of people not to take these is the 20% reduction to salary

2. Sub-Committee on Faculty Organization, Cliff Werier

- This sub-committee of the MRFA Executive Board has been considering reorganizing the MRFA structure to make it more efficient and effective
- Reassigned time:
 - President full time release: we are considering decreasing this so the President can still teach a course. This could make the position more, or less, attractive for members and will keep the president in his/her department and in the teaching role
 - 1st VP: the total of 9 hours release is absolutely necessary for this position
 - 2nd VP: this position has more release than the other exec positions. This is anomalous
- Presentation of possible scenarios available under [Meeting resources](#) online.
 - Scenario 1
 - We will likely end up with a combination of these scenarios
 - This committee studied executives at other institutions of similar size across the country, had a workshop with a CAUT advisor on effective faculty organizational

- structure, and reviewed CAUT's recommendations.
 - We need to have a VP External (communications): we need to be more grassroots and have more involved members. This is very important
 - Possibility that we change the way we choose people for the Negotiating Committee: for years these have been elected positions and it has worked. But, one of CAUT's recommendations is that the Association Executive appoint the Negotiating Committee members.
 - Collapse the secretary and treasurer positions
 - Continue with ALO: this is an effective and important role
 - Past President is useful in transitional years
 - Have two members at large to guarantee more representation from the membership
 - Chair of PD committee
 - Scenario 2
 - Includes a grievance officer
 - The VP internal assists with the PD committee
- We have also been looking at, though not currently endorsing, the possibility of having a full time salary non-faculty Executive Director.
- Most committees will remain the same
 - New committee: Advocacy Committee
 - PDC and PAC amalgamated
- Discussion:
 - This will be further discussed at the April general meeting

3. Professional Affairs Committee, Isha Sharma

- Survey response was overwhelming over 200 people responded. Based on these responses, PAC is hosting a roundtable discussion on April 30.
- Also, the annual Committee Affair will be on May 3
- Register for both events online

New Business

1. MRFA Political Action and Advocacy Policy

Deferred

2. Faculty Centre Services

- Posters being sent out to the departments
- We provide lunch as a service to members
 - There days in the week that there is so little business that we need to consider discontinuing this service though we do

not want to have to do this.

- Discussion
 - This issue is scheduling: classes scheduled over lunch so many faculty members are not able to make it for lunch.
- Also, please note, that faculty members are welcome to book the faculty centre for private functions at no charge. There would be a fee if bar service/catering were required.

Announcements

Spring 2012 PD Retreat, Registration coming soon! May 15-16

- The retreat is May 15-16
- Registration for the retreat will start on Monday
- The process will be similar as last year but improved
- We are using a third party online payment service
- It is in Delta Lodge again this year

ACIFA Conference, June 3-5, 2012

Winter 2012 MRFA Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, April 3, 2012. 2:00-3:50pm. Location: Y224

AGM: May 11, 9:00 - 2:00. Location: Jenkins Theatre (I115)