

MINUTES of the Mount Royal Faculty Association

Meeting date: November 16, 2011

Call to order: An Executive Board meeting of the MRFA, was held in Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta on November 16, 2011. The meeting convened at 9:00am, President Gerry Cross presiding and Kit Dobson, Secretary.

Members in attendance:

Gerry Cross
David Sabiston
Qasim Syed
Kit Dobson

Elaine Mullen
Cliff Werier
Pat Kostouros
Gerard Lucyshyn
Rafik Kurji

Orders of the Day

Guest, Jeff Goldberg, Dean of faculty of Science and Technology

Interpreting and Administering the Collective Agreement

- The Collective Agreement is an agreement between two parties and both are equally responsible in its interpretation and administration.
 - The Association plays a more important and central role in the everyday operations than is common in other institutions. The tight relationship faculty have with the Association is likely a very good thing but is distinctly different. Jeff can see where Robin would want these matters to be brought to him as well.

Changes and Stresses through the Transition

- People have not had the time to take a breath to gauge the relationship between change and stress at Mount Royal. Few people have stopped to recognize the implications of this and nobody has brought forward any possible solution/assistance.
 - As an incoming dean this was apparent immediately.
- Change and stress may be recognized but is there anything that can be done about it?
 - There are still many problems/transitional issues that need to be addressed. Finding the steady state of what Mount Royal is to be is, likely, 5-10 years away. This is a frightening prospect based on the concerns over this change/stress relationship. Given more time at the institution, some interim solutions may become apparent.
- Dave and Robin have said in the past they did not realize how fast we were going in eagerness to transition into this new state. Are we going too fast, do we need to slow down, or do we need to go faster?
 - The economy has forced us to slow things down a little bit. In terms of furthering the transition and developing programs or determining how much we should grow, we are held in neutral right now and Jeff feels this is a good thing. This gives us an opportunity to focus on the improving the programs we have and improving provisions for TSS faculty. We cannot really adjust our pace but we need to constantly remember what we want to be in the future and work towards that through our challenges.

Historical Context of MRFA/Administration Relationships

- In the past several years we have succeeded in forming an interest focused/mutual gains approach not just in Collective Bargaining but also in the relationship between the MRFA and Administration. In previous years there were very difficult and rancorous relationships between both groups: we were at the brink of strike twice. The loss of the right to strike was likely the lowest point in our relationship with the Administration. When David Marshall arrived, one of his main goals was to improve this relationship. We tried very hard to change the culture and we succeeded. We did this in part by changing the bargaining structure: this was required in order to negotiate all the changes into the Collective Agreement. It was very difficult as it was an absolute turn from how things had been. It is important not to dwell on history, especially history characterized by unharmonious relationships; however, it is important that the relationship we have now be nurtured understood and historicized.
 - This historical context is very helpful. It explains, in part, why faculty tend to go directly to the association rather than administration. It is important that we do not let our positive relationships deteriorate.
- One concern is that we have been successful building trust and we are hopeful that we will not lose that. That, in our dealings, everyone has the same intention for the institution and that we are working together rather than against each other.
 - In all instances, thus far, there is no doubt that we are not working with the same goals in mind and that there is good faith. Also, The Collective Agreement is very detailed in ways that will assist in maintaining certain things that are of central value at MRU.

Recognition of Previous Working Conditions in Consideration of Promotion Applications

- When considering Applications for Promotion we need to ensure that TPCs are taking into account the previous conditions of employment (e.g. 27 hours of teaching) and their impact on other faculty roles (e.g. scholarship).
 - Some cases are clear cut but most are not. Jeff's recommendations very much took this into account. Still, we have to recognize the Mount Royal context of past, present *and* future. Also, Deans are constrained by the established standards and criteria documents agreed upon at the faculty and university level.

Changes to Part-time Hiring Articles

- When considering Part-time Appointment criteria, would you bring to this decision the same context and historical background as to what the criteria has been in the past? Would you consider the existing Part-time faculty and their history with the institution as well?
 - We are building toward a future steady state. Jeff would look at the criteria laid out in terms of what we have in place in terms of criteria and what we are looking for.
 - In every case as a Dean a historical perspective may come into play but we are trying to define what we want to do through considering what the expectations are and what we are looking for. It is difficult to answer the question having not gone through the process yet.

Jeff expressed his appreciation for the Social Membership in the Association and that he hopes to participate soon.

Approval of minutes: Motion was made by Gerry Cross, and seconded to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2011 meeting. **Motion carried.**

Officers' reports:

President

- CAUT Workshop Dates
 - Preference: the afternoon of January 5 and all day Friday January 6
 - Alternative: the afternoon of January 27 and all day January 28th
- Strikes
 - Windsor has settled
 - 3 year agreement 1.5 increase for faculty per year and 5% for sessional faculty
 - Brandon
 - The University is bargaining in bad faith and they seem to be losing publicity
- Meeting with Randy
 - ISP Concerns
 - Deferred
 - Quality Council Report
 - Deferred
- Meeting with Randy and Robin
 - Randy is going to discuss the MRFA's concerns with Robin before the three of them meet together again on Monday

Unfinished business:

1. Faculty Evaluation Committee Motions
 - Deferred
2. General meeting agenda
 - Child Care Task Force left under President's Report
 - Faculty Evaluation Committee added at Bob Uttl's request. He will be speaking to it
 - Format of Tenure Celebration added

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:05am.

Secretary
Mount Royal Faculty Association

Date of approval

