

Dear Colleagues,

I apologize for the lateness of this report. There are several items worth reporting and I hope that you will have time to read about them.

In the October President's Report...

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### **Budget Advisory Committee**

President David Docherty has resolved that the Budget Advisory Committee will play a significant advisory role in the early stages of developing the university's budget, rather than just respond to documents presented to it. A significant shortfall is presently projected for the 2013-2014 budget and the BAC has been asked to provide strategic and specific advice to the President's Executive Committee in developing a balanced budget. Three subcommittees have been established to generate ideas for revenue generation and operational efficiencies and rationalization. Each of the three faculty representatives on the BAC sits on one of these subcommittees: revenue generation (Val Kinnear, Faculty Councillor elected by GFC and MRFA Treasurer), immediate term efficiencies and rationalization (Gerry Cross, MRFA President) and long term efficiencies and rationalization (Bruce Ravelli, Faculty Councillor elected by GFC).

If you have ideas for revenue generation or cost savings, please send them to one of the faculty representatives above. Senior administration believes that they cannot continue to chip around the edges with across-the-board cuts, because that would result in eroding everything the university does. Therefore, the BAC is particularly interested in major initiatives. The committee is in a brainstorming phase, after which some of the ideas generated will be selected for in-depth evaluation. One of the difficulties is that cuts to teaching are the easiest for administrators to make. They say, for example, that cutting the number of hours of instruction is not a problem because you can just teach less. But then they say that cutting administrative positions is more difficult because the work would still have to be done.

### **Presidents' Discussion Series: Budget Building**

The first event of this academic year was held on October 4. It began with a presentation on the budget context by Duane Anderson, Vice-President of Administrative Services. One of the issues is that tuition for Open Studies is still charged at the old college level, which is less than tuition for degree programs. Open Studies provides degree opportunities for students who would not otherwise have access to post-secondary education, but as yet the government has refused to approve an increase in tuition. Increasing tuition for Open Studies to degree rates would eventually produce approximately \$1.7 million in additional revenue. Tuition for international students is typically twice what it is for Canadian students and a number of Canadian universities have aggressively increased their proportion of international students in order to generate additional revenue.

The principal objective of the discussion series is to provide faculty with an opportunity to make their views known. There was a strong consensus among those present that we cannot continue to make cuts and the discussion was dominated by ideas to increase revenue. In at least two professional programs, persons working in the field wish to take senior courses to complete a professional designation. These courses are often under-enrolled, but admission to Open Studies is required in order to register and Open Studies has a huge wait list. Similarly, some spring courses are cancelled because University of Calgary students can no longer register in them. The solution to both of these problems would be restoration of the unclassified student category, which permitted a part-time student to register in one or two courses without being admitted to a program. If these students could be identified and admitted off-quota, i.e. not included under our enrollment cap, so that they did not displace other students paying the same tuition, then this would be a revenue generation opportunity. It was noted that professional registrations at SAIT are routed through Continuing Education and an extra administration fee is charged.

Comprehensive notes of the discussion are available on the [MRFA web site](#).

### **Tenure requirements for members of selection committees**

The MRFA Executive was asked at the September General Meeting to advocate that tenurable faculty be eligible for positions on administrative selection committees which currently require tenure. We could not do that without first determining what our position was on the tenure requirements for faculty selection committees. As well, the meaning of “normally” in Article 4.3.4, which specifies the composition of the selection committee for full-time faculty appointments, had been questioned. The Executive cannot definitively interpret the Collective Agreement, because it is an agreement between the Association and the University, but we did need to determine what our interpretation was.

The slides used to present the Executive’s conclusions at the October General Meeting is on the MRFA web site with the [documents](#) for the meeting. It first notes that Article 4.3.2 states, “Prior to posting a position, the Chair of the

academic unit shall meet with the tenured and tenurable employees of the academic unit or discipline to discuss fully the qualifications, areas of expertise, teaching responsibilities, work pattern, anticipated rank of the appointment, and the required academic credential or its equivalent for the position in accordance with Article 4.2.3.” This provision was added to the agreement effective July 1, 2009, at the same time as academic rank and the new system of tenure. Tenurable faculty are to be included in this meeting so that they have a voice in full-time hiring.

The presentation then explains the Executive’s interpretation of the two instances of normally and of how Article 4.3.4 could be applied in forming a selection committee. It ends with the following two Executive motions (which were deferred to the November General Meeting because quorum was lost):

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.
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.

### **Survey on child care needs**

Child care was one of the issues which emerged when the MRFA Executive visited departments two years ago. As a result, the Executive developed a child care discussion paper which was discussed at the 2011 AGM. As a result of a motion passed at the AGM, the university established a task team charged with collecting data to inform and predict the demands by students and employees for child care at Mount Royal University and to examine the strategies and operations for addressing student and employee child care needs at other institutions. The task team’s final report noted that there were several issues with the survey and that it did not gather all the information anticipated. The MRFA discussion paper and the task team’s final report are available on the MRFA web site with the [documents](#) for the October General Meeting.

Two motions were passed at the meeting: 1) that the MRFA conduct its own child care survey and invite other members of the university community to participate; and 2) that an ad hoc committee be established to develop and administer the survey. The Executive is establishing this committee and hopes that the survey will be conducted before the middle of the winter semester.

### **Professional development and service funding for part-time faculty**

Article 18.7.2 of the Collective Agreement provides for individual PD funds of up to \$400 annually for part-time faculty who teach 3 or more courses, or

equivalent, in an academic year. Requests are honoured on a first come, first served basis because the total amount available consists of unspent funding from two other articles in the agreement. The part-time PD fund has never been exhausted, perhaps because \$400 is too little to attend a conference. But the funds can also be used for books and subscriptions that expand or support the member's professional knowledge or skills and for membership dues in professional associations or societies. As well, part-time faculty are eligible to apply for Faculty Development Committee PD funding, and could supplement any funds from this source with individual PD.

Part-time faculty who teach 3 or more courses, or equivalent, in an academic year are eligible under pool 2 of Article 18.3 for reimbursement for credit course tuition fees at another post-secondary institution and for graduate studies program fees. The percentage reimbursed will depend on the total amount of all applications.

All part-time faculty members may apply for an honorarium for participating in certain service activities. The funding is provided for by the Memorandum of Understanding regarding funding for part-time opportunities for service on page 125 of the Collective Agreement. The application form is on the MRFA web site, [mrfa.net](http://mrfa.net), under *Documents\Reimbursement Forms* and contains a list of eligible activities and the application deadlines.

### **Presidents' Discussion Series: Access Copyright**

The second event of the year in the Presidents' Discussion Series was held on October 26. In early 2012, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada developed a model Access Copyright licensing agreement which imposed unjustified fee increases, tried to create new rights for Access Copyright such as defining a hyperlink to be a copy, and required intrusive surveillance to monitor compliance. Approximately twenty Canadian universities, including Mount Royal opted out. David Docherty and Carol Shepstone reported on a recent meeting of the group of universities that opted out and discussed how alternatives such as fair dealing, open access publishing, and site licensing are being used in place of an Access Copyright agreement. Bill C-11, an amendment to the Copyright Act, and recent Supreme Court decisions have strengthened our rights to use copyrighted work for educational purposes.

Matt Lonsdale, Mount Royal University's new Copyright Advisor, attended to answer questions. Matt has an undergraduate degree in computer science from the University of Calgary and a law degree specializing in intellectual property and copyright from Dalhousie University.

Some of the most interesting points in the discussion were:

- Both the AUCC and the ACCC (Association of Canadian Community Colleges) are developing fair dealing policies. It appears that the ACCC policy will be more assertive and may state that course packs are

permitted, as a consequence of the students' right to fair dealing for the purpose of private study.

- Bill C-11 has limited the damages that copyright holders can seek, making lawsuits less likely.
- Access Copyright has never sued for violation of copyright and it is not clear that it has the right to.
- If a faculty member were named in a lawsuit, the university would normally provide support (certainly if the member had acted in good faith, but possibly not if the member had willfully not complied with university policy).

### **Qualifications of the next Provost and Vice-President, Academic**

Views on the qualities and experiences desired in the next Provost and Vice-President, Academic were gathered at the September General Meeting and by e-mail. The Executive then prepared a draft profile which was presented at the October General Meeting. The objectives were to amend the draft so that it reflected the will of the majority present and to then adopt the profile as direction to the President, who is the MRFA representative on the selection committee.

The draft profile provoked a lively discussion, particularly about the statements "Values teaching above scholarship and considers the Teaching-Service work pattern to be a career path" and "Recognizes the value of promotion to full professor based on excellence and leadership in teaching". These points were not intended to devalue research or the TSS work pattern but, rather, were reflective of fears that the traditional teaching values of Mount Royal might be compromised in the transition to a university.

However, many members who were appointed in 2009 or later to the TSS work pattern believed that, in emphasizing teaching and the TS work pattern, the profile lacked balance and perhaps could even be interpreted as being divisive. They agreed that excellence in teaching must be preserved as a value and, indeed, that this was one of the reasons they were attracted to Mount Royal University. However, if Mount Royal is to become one of Canada's leading undergraduate universities, the importance of research (used broadly to include scholarship) must be woven into the culture of the university. Our students benefit from excellent teaching, but research enhances our teaching. We must provide opportunities for students to participate in research in order to become a first-rate undergraduate university.

Numerous amendments were made to improve the profile, but it was not passed in its entirety because the meeting lost quorum. However, I think general agreement was reached and the discussion provided very useful direction to me as the MRFA representative on the selection committee. In retrospective, perhaps the draft profile was too detailed and incorporated some points which were unnecessary in an MRFA profile because they will be included in the description of Mount Royal University that will become part of

the position profile approved by the selection committee. The revised profile is on the MRFA website along with the [documents](#) for the meeting.

### **Written question regarding debate at General Faculties Council**

A written question regarding the need for discussion, debate and informed decision making was submitted for the October GFC meeting on behalf of the MRFA Academic Liaison Committee. The concern raised was that substantial decision items are distributed one week prior to a GFC meeting, leaving little time to review the materials, discuss the issues with colleagues, and understand the effect on the entire university. The question was whether major decision items could be presented for discussion and debate only at one GFC meeting and then for a decision at the subsequent meeting. This would provide GFC councillors with more time to consider the issues and could result in the debate expanding from a critique of the document presented into related matters not addressed by it.

A lengthy discussion ensued. A councillor may always move to defer an item to a subsequent meeting if there has not been adequate time to consider the matter. Major items of business should be discussed at Faculty Councils before coming to GFC (and lack thereof would be a reason to defer). It was noted that discussion can be more thorough when approval is not required, and that the discussion which had just ensued was an example of this.

Perhaps invigorated by this discussion, councillors later amended a curriculum submission and deferred POL 541: *Cyclical Review of Academic Programs* to the November meeting.

### **Board of Governors Meeting**

I am given an opportunity to speak to the Board on any matters of my choosing at the beginning of the closed session. At the meeting on October 29, as I had at the April Board meeting, I elected to speak on the effect that reducing the number of instructional hours would have on the educational outcomes of particular courses. I based my presentation on the impact statement prepared by the Department of Languages and Cultures on reducing the hours of instruction in second language courses from four hours to three. The points in the impact statement which I highlighted were:

- other Alberta post-secondary institutions have four or five hours of instruction in first and second year courses because practice is required to acquire a second language;
- the department used to have a French language lab instructor, but the position was lost during the Klein government's cuts to operating grants of 21% over 3 years in the mid-1990's;
- the language courses are 4 hours lecture, 1 hour lab in the MRU Calendar, but the only lab support provided is senior students who are hired for a total of 12 to 16 hours per week to work with students on

- their oral and written skills in French and Spanish (only instructor office hours are available for Chinese, German, Italian and Japanese courses);
- increasing class sizes to subsidize the fourth hour of instruction is not possible because the language labs have a capacity of 30;
  - reducing these courses to three instructional hours would force a reduction in content and the department fears that this would result in a loss of transfer and eventually the disappearance of second language instruction at Mount Royal University.

I concluded by saying that faculty understand cuts will be required, along with initiatives to increase revenues, but we believe that the decisions need to be made with the best information possible and that the damage to our educational outcomes must be minimized. In answer to a question from a Board member about what the Association is doing to develop cost-saving measures, I observed that some hours of instruction can be delivered at lower cost and there is now a permanent, full-time laboratory instructor appointment in the Collective Agreement.

### **Department visits**

Over two-thirds of the MRFA Executive visits to department meetings have been completed. Perhaps the most striking feature has been the diversity of issues raised. We are compiling a list of issues from these meetings and several have been become Executive Board goals for 2012-2013. We have started discussing policy issues identified by members with the administration.

Dr. Gerry Cross  
President, Mount Royal Faculty Association