

## **NOTES of the Mount Royal Faculty Association**

**Meeting date: September 26, 2011**

**Call to order:** A General Meeting of the MRFA, was held in Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta on September 26, 2011. The meeting convened at 3:04pm, President Gerry Cross presiding and Kit Dobson, Secretary.

### **Members in attendance:**

See attached attendance sheets

This year we are keeping a count of attendance at general meetings with a view to consider increasing the quorum. Right now quorum is only 30 which is a small percentage of our membership.

### **Point of Order: Article 18, MRFA Bylaws**

The president may designate the chair of general meetings

Qasim is designated as chair for this meeting

### **Agenda**

No changes: agenda Approved

### **Officers' reports:**

President

#### 1. Meetings with Administrators

- Gerry has met with all of the new deans to introduce himself and discuss the Collective Agreement. These meetings all went very well.
  - Each new Dean is attending an Executive Board meeting in this semester
- Gerry meets with the President once a month and David will meet with the Executive Board once a semester
  - The Executive Board met with David on September 9: it was a good meeting. One of the major topics of discussion started out with how GFC works and doesn't work and the fact that in the pre-GFC days the MRFA presented a collective voice on academic matters and now we do

not.

- The MRFA is trying to make GFC an effective decision making body
  - PAC: Robert's Rules (3 workshops)
  - ALC: encouraging faculty caucuses
    - David Docherty is in favor of Caucuses: he believes these discussions lead to increased knowledge of issues and better discussions
- Gerry meets with Robin every two weeks or more often if needed.
  - Because we have the new AVP Academic, Randy is attending these meetings as well until they work their roles out. This is going well.
  - The Executive Board met with Randy and Robin for an hour last Wednesday and this was a good discussion
    - Major topic: the role of the MRFA in the administration if the Collective Agreement. Robin is known to have said that chairs should not talk to the MRFA regarding the Collective Agreement; rather, they are to talk to their deans as they are to report to their deans. However, Chairs *are* members of the association and have the right to talk to the Association President or any member of the Executive Board as they need to or deem necessary.
    - The Collective Agreement is an agreement between two parties. The MRFA President acts on behalf of the Association and Robin acts on behalf of the board. Either Robin or Gerry can be approached to discuss the Agreement.
      - Gerry is very well versed in the Collective Agreement and it is beneficial to talk about the Collective Agreement with the president of the association as he has the ability to provide some case history.
      - Robin conceded that chairs can talk to Gerry about the Collective Agreement as long as they are also talking with their deans.

## 2. Grievance Report

- We report on grievances at the AGM but we are also planning to report on them as they are resolved. The objective of reporting is to improve compliance with the Collective Agreement.
- Four grievances were initiated in late 10-11 and all have now been resolved.
- Part-time member not reappointed and a report was placed in the member's file in human resources. This was resolved in favor of the member.
  - The dean and the chair acknowledged that the Part-time re-appointment procedures had not been followed and they offered re-appointment (which would have displaced new faculty members). The member had already acquired another job and we changed our requested remedy to a letter of reference from the department chair and that the letter on file in HR be removed and it was.
- Part-time member not reappointed. At step 1 the member did not meet the ten day limit so the grievance didn't go anywhere
- Part-time member not reappointed. The step 1 meeting happened in the summer and the Part-time hiring committee was to meet with the member after August 15: the member chose not to proceed.
- Part-time member who requested 2 sections was allocated only one. The better decision in this case would have been to allocate the member 2 sections but there was no violation of the Collective Agreement. The Collective Agreement allows for discretion in making appointment decisions and that discretion was exercised. Robin and Gerry did agree on two observations on interpretation of assignment of workload for FTPT appointments. In the September monthly report coming out on Monday there will be a lengthy article on the whole interpretation of Part-time Appointment, re-appointment and workload allocation articles.

### 3. Childcare at MRU

- At the AGM last may we passed a motion that the MRFA exec propose to the administration that a joint committee be established with all stakeholders involved. Gerry met with the presidents of the SAMRU and MRSSA and with Brian Fleming VP Student Affairs and Campus Life.

- Brian wanted to meet with the Daycare board centre to resolve some concerns. His concerns were alleviated and the group is meeting again on Thursday to talk about the terms of reference and membership on a task force that will:
  - Examine current demand for daycare and project future demand
  - If current and/or future demand exceeds availability the task force is to look at possible ways of improving the situation.

#### 4. FEC Survey

- Bob Uttl, the chair of FEC, and the other members of the committee, spent an enormous amount of time processing the survey data
- Alain Morin has also spent a huge amount of time on this and he is not a member of the committee
- Thank you for your work on this!
- We expect the report by November

#### 5. Vision Statement Review

- Drafts have gone out to departments through communicators
- Feedback is welcome but must be submitted by the end of next week.

### **Board and committee reports:**

#### Negotiating Committee, David Sabiston

- The Negotiating Committee has already meet twice
- The Negotiating Committee went out for its dinner: thank you for that
- Members:
  - Tracy Powell,
  - Brady Killough,
  - Gerard Lucyshyn,
  - Melanie Peacock and
  - David Sabiston
- General
  - This year is a full round of negotiations. Everything is on the table.
  - There is likely going to be a lot of clarification required for the promotion

to professor article

- MOUs
  - Copyright, IP article
  - ADC and Counsellor Evaluation Processes
- Fall Planning
  - In the fall the Negotiating Committees do their prep work
  - There will be open houses in the faculty centre
  - If you want the Negotiating Committee to come to your department they can
- The survey
  - This is very important as we need to be able to communicate to the board that the Negotiating Committee is basing its opinions on the opinions of members
  - We will work to inform and prepare our members to better complete the survey
- Discussion
  - Two times in the last few years we have had faculty arrange that they hold their jobs here while they go to other institutions for a while. If this is available to some faculty then it should be available to all faculty. Can we raise this in Negotiations as a demand that they stop or that it be granted to all? It is troubling with its irregularity and works against our standard hiring processes.
    - Related to this we do have an issue with market supplements. Melanie has done a lot of work on this and it will be something we will be talking about at the table
    - These have been handled under “leave of absence without pay:” all the Collective Agreement says is that the board can grant a leave of absence without pay. The concern here then is to put in guidelines around this article. We do not want to remove the possibility to have a leave of absence without pay
    - Yes there are certain circumstances that merit it and others that do not.

## **New business:**

### 1. Elections

#### a) Results

##### *Part-time Member Representative*

Gerard Lucyshyn, Policy Studies (one year term)

##### *Diversity Committee*

Michael Hawley, Humanities (one year term)

##### *Professional Affairs Committee*

Fae Jackson, Advanced Specialty Health Studies (one year term)

##### *Joint Committee Regarding Part time Titling*

Michele Braun, English, PT (to Jan 2012)

Don Haidey, Bissett, FT (to Jan 2012)

##### *Accessibility Committee*

Janice Reiger, Interior Design and Art History (one year term)

#### b) Motion to destroy Ballots

Moved: Margy MacMillan, and seconded

Vote

Carried

### 2. Social Memberships

- Social Membership articles from the MRFA bylaws presented
  - Renewals
    - Marc Chikinda
    - Trevor Davis
    - Robin Fisher
    - Brian Fleming
    - Chad London
    - Manuel Mertin
    - Sabrina Reed
    - Carol Shepstone
    - Hunter Wright

- Jim Zimmer
- New
  - Duane Anderson
  - Randy Genereux
  - Jeff Goldberg
  - Vince Salyers
  - Murray Young
  - David Docherty: complimentary
- No objections.
- Discussion:
- What is the implication of having a social membership
  - Social membership entitles members to attend social activities and use the FC. It does not include the right to attend any meetings, to vote or hold office. The cost is 300\$ per social member

### 3. Draft Executive Board Goals. 2011-2012

- The Executive Board had its retreat on September 2. We came up with these draft goals and encourage your input on these items.
- Internal MRFA
  - Review of the MRFA vision statement
  - Develop a mechanism for online voting (ongoing from last year)
  - Introduce new faculty to the MRFA
    - Will the MRFA have input on re-visioning the ISP program?
      - This is one of the reasons why this is one of the executive board goals
      - Gerry is going to talk to Teresa about this and share the goals with Robin
    - Social event
      - Friday Sept 30 social event.
      - There will be a rock band that will begin playing 5-7
      - If you bring new faculty you can enter your names for a draw

- There will be complimentary food and drinks
  - Communicate more effectively through Department Communicators
    - We want Department Communicators to bring concerns back to us
  - Improve communications with Part-time members
    - Gerard has done a lot of work in this area but it is ongoing
  - Examine MRFA organization
    - We will be looking at things such as making our committees more representative. We could have certain committees that elect their chairs and the chairs would sit on the Executive Board.
    - There is a one page document that went out with the agenda package that reviews the work here
  - Examine the reporting relationship of, and develop charters for, all standing committees
    - Some committees had charters and some did not
    - We have draft charters for all committees and Gerry is meeting individually with each committee to review the Charter and discuss the coming year.
- Internal / External Relationships
  - Develop a discussion paper that describes the options for provincial and national memberships (ACIFA, CAUT, CAFA)
- Collective Agreement
  - Seek improvements in class scheduling and instructor assignment to classes through the scheduling policy grievance.
    - This will be discussed later in the meeting
  - Establish an ad-hoc committee to consult with the membership and report to the Executive Board on the workload implications of our transition to a university including, but not limited to, supervision of student research.
    - It is possible that some workload changes may be put through as editorial changes. We need to ensure that these changes go through the correct processes. Admin will argue that it is a budget



decision but it is not. It is an academic decision with budget implications.

- Academic decisions with budget implications are to go through the academic arm of bicameral governance and from there they go to the board and the board then makes its decision with all information and factors considered.
  - This committee could also look at workload credit for labs.
- Strive to get an article on academic freedom in the Collective Agreement.
- University Governance and Administration
  - Request that the Academic Liaison Committee examine and report back on how GFC might have meaningful input into the development of academic policy.
    - ALC is working on promoting caucuses and pre-GFC Meetings
  - Attempt to establish a formal mechanism whereby the MRFA is consulted at an early stage in the development of university policies which do not go to GFC for approval.
  - Continue to explore strategies to document the demand for child care at MRU and, potentially, to increase capacity.
  - Invite administrators who are new to Mount Royal University to meet with the MRFA President and with the Executive Board.
- Internal/External Relationships
  - Maintain an effective working relationship with the MRSSA and the SAMRU.
  - Develop a discussion paper for the May, 2012 AGM describing the options for MRFA membership in national and provincial faculty association organizations and outlining the advantages and disadvantages, including costs, of each.
  - Develop a relationship with the University of Calgary Faculty Association.
  - Engage the membership in a dialogue regarding the advocacy role of the Association and review the attached MRFA political activity policy.
    - Acifa is trying to dev a common front for PSE in Alberta

- Presentation of current policy on political activity
  - We need to clarify and be sure that our advocacy for PSE is considered separate from political advocacy
- Examine ways in which a relationship could be established with instructional staff at Mount Royal University who are not members of the MRFA.
- Discussion:
  - Any additions, changes or modifications are welcome.
  - Increasing the capacity for daycare will not be effective because the daycare here does not totally prioritize faculty or students: in the summer months spots are filled with children from the community.
    - Potentially, something can be done about this prioritization. A possible strategy would be to hold a certain number of spots just for faculty.
  - Regarding editorial and substantive changes, could we review how the list of editorial changes is reviewed? What oversight do we have in telling the registrar what is editorial and what is not?
    - Our Collective Agreement is not set up yet to account for bicameral governance, until we get this part mapped out then this is one of the only meaningful places we can have input in academic matters. GFC has to ensure that such changes are made for pedagogical reasons and not for budget concerns.
    - The policy has a list of things that can be considered editorial.
    - If the department feels that reducing the hours of instruction of a course will have an impact on the quality of this course then the department should take it through APTC and GFC so that the decision then goes to the board along with the discussion that happened at APTC and GFC
  - Making GFC more effective and allowing for more discussion in GFC is a good thing.
    - A couple of years ago we had pre-GFC meetings to discuss the documents prior to the meeting: do these still happen?

- Yes these still happen but the ALC is also looking at encouraging faculty caucuses as a more effective way to accomplish this.
- These would be at the faculty level?
  - Yes
- Thanks to Janet the ALC is looking at structures of caucus, how it could look and how to implement it. There is already caucus going on in Bissett.
  - The VP of the association used to be responsible for organizing these caucuses
  - This may still be useful. We hope to get to the point where the members of the ALC will perform this role
- With Academic Council all groups caucused together: having faculty caucuses may not be as practical
  - The ALC is continuing with the general sessions for all councilors
  - These dates are on the website

#### 4. Qualifications for VP Admin Services

- Richard Roberts retired effective of the end of August and Duane Anderson is acting in his role for the next 10 months. Dave Marshall wanted the new President to be involved in the selection of this position.
- Gerry is the faculty representative on this selection committee
- After the committee meets there will be a call for qualifications that faculty want to see in the person who will be in this role
- Presentation of draft qualifications: input is welcome

#### 5. Scheduling Grievance

- Grievance:
  - On December 23, 2010 the MRFA filed a policy grievance against the course scheduling system alleging violations of articles in the Collective Agreement. This policy grievance was just a vehicle for us to force some

serious consideration of the scheduling issues. We used the power of the Collective Agreement to initiate a process that will hopefully lead to some improvements

- Step 2 resolution increased the size of the scheduling committee (it now includes Gerry Cross, Jen Pettit and a technical support person)
- There was a meeting several weeks ago and they wanted to know if the MRFA was willing to drop the grievance and we are not going to. There are problems with the process that we know we can fix and we are going to run some simulations
  - We are going to examine why the software is producing the unreasonable schedules
  - In the end we might determine that the software is deficient
- Considerations:
  - Scheduling used to be based on the previous year's schedule. Chairs would submit requests to scheduling, multi section courses would tend to get distributions throughout the day and the faculty would select the course times they wanted to teach. By this method most people got the schedules they wanted.
  - With the constraints in the current system: it integrates class scheduling and instructor scheduling which results in unreasonable schedules. The more constraints that are fed into the system the less ability the software has to produce a schedule.
  - If I was chair of my department I would put more constraints in to get the schedules for my faculty that they wanted: in a department this may work but globally it creates problems
    - The software handles the stuff with constraints first and courses without constraints get pushed out to the periphery
- Discussion:
  - Is the association prepared to ask as a resolution to the grievance that the software be abandoned?
    - Yes we are prepared to do this if we are convinced that this is what needs to be done.

- Gerry you made a great example by putting yourself as chair and trying the best you could by entering constraints, but we could all agree to a mutual understanding and limit the constraints we use so that we can feasibly come up with better schedules.
  - Yes this is being considered.

Motion THAT the MRFA proceed with the Scheduling Policy Grievance until a suitable resolution to the problems can be found.

Moved Lee Easton and seconded

Vote

Carried

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.

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Secretary

Mount Royal Faculty Association

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Date of approval