



**MINUTES OF THE MRFA
DECEMBER 12, 2005
B101 @ 3:30pm**

DRAFT

This special meeting of the MRFA was called to inform the membership of the outcome of President Hyttenrauch's recent visit to advance our CAUT membership application. President David informed the membership that our application had been tabled to the CAUT membership meeting in April, 2006 as a result of the apparently coordinated efforts of CAFA (the Council of Albertan Faculty Associations) which includes UofL, UofA, and Athabasca faculty groups, UofC having resigned their membership several years ago (although UofC spoke against our membership as well). The above four faculty associations wrote identical letters (obviously a form letter) to the CAUT Executive protesting our membership.

CAFA's position is that our membership in CAUT should be tabled until we are definitively made a university or assigned to the College camp. There was all manner of misinformation circulated both in the letters mentioned above and at the CAUT meeting, including assertions that we currently don't have a mandate in accordance with the Post-Secondary Learning Act, that all AU degrees delivered from Mount Royal are taught by AU faculty; that we don't offer degrees at all; and the like. President David did not have standing at the meeting and therefore was not in a position to dispel all these various allegations. In addition, there was some concern expressed over the role of a staff member of ACIFA who is currently moving to CAFA as Executive Director—was there some conflict of interest if that individual was critical to the dissemination of this misinformation?

After a brief summary of events, President David opened up the floor to discussion and questions.

Mardy Roberts (Behavioural Sciences) asked why CAFA would object to out membership in CAUT. President David believes that, as the first independent college with CAUT membership, we would be setting a precedent. In addition, ACIFA (the Alberta Colleges and ___ Faculty Associations—don't know their name) is making a collective application which should arise at the April meeting. There were also accusations of the MRFA “union-busting”, which we assume relates to our potential withdrawal from ACIFA membership should the organization have been directly involved in this action at CAUT. Mark Chikinda (Journalism) asked more directly about the employee in between ACIFA and CAFA and whether there was a conflict of interest there. President David noted that person was working half time at both ACIFA and CAFA this fall and would shortly be full time at CAFA. He was also observed in caucus with the CAF and CUFA (BC) members objecting at the CAUT meeting, although his level of involvement is unclear. President David had written to the ACIFA Executive and President Milner investigated the matter and found no conflict of interest. He was aware of the letters of objection and had met with Jeanette Buckingham, President of CAFA and apparently the author of the form letter, although he did not have any idea of the contents. ACIFA takes a neutral position on our individual application.

At this point, President David seded the Chair to 2ndVP David Clemis.

PLAN OF ACTION for discussion and approval

1. a resolution from the membership opposing any further expansion of majors in AU/MRC collaborative degrees
2. initiation of action against CAFA members
3. continued pursuit of individual MRFA CAUT membership
4. an invitation to David Milner (President ACIFA) to address our membership in ACIFA

Re: 1

There was a variety of views expressed by different members from specifying majors to be boycotted to clearing up misrepresentations about the MRFA. There was also discussion about who to pressure on this subject: the AU, the AUFA, or our own administration. President David sought approval from the membership for our Executive motion which was to refer this matter to Academic Council for consideration.

MOTION: That David Clemis brings notice of motion to the Chair of Academic Council that MR not add any further majors to the AU collaboration until clarification is received about the state of MRC's own degree applications.

Seconded: Anne Vernon (Behavioural Sciences). Carried with 5 opposed and 3 abstentions.

Re: 2

Again, after much discussion, the consensus was to let the CAUT Executive handle the matter and reserve our legal right to proceed should the outcome not prove satisfactory. Our legal counsel, Bill Johnson, could write a letter noting our concerns about the misinformation circulated throughout CAUT and send that to the CAFA and objecting CAUT members.

MOTION: That the MRFA supports the CAUT Executive's progression of our membership application and, additionally, that we send a letter from our legal counsel correcting errors and expressing concern at the misinformation presented at the CAUT meeting (subject to legal advice). Moved by Jerre Paquette, English; seconded by Anne Vernon (Behavioural Sciences); passed unanimously.

Re: 3

It was agreed that we should continue to pursue our individual membership in CAUT. There was some discussion as to the relative increase in costs should the ACIFA membership also go through – our members would thus be paying for CAUT membership twice (as the MRFA and as a member of ACIFA). We can reconsider our ACIFA membership at the AGM in May.

Re: 4

We could invite David Milner to our January general meeting to address the value of our membership in ACIFA along with the dues question mentioned above.

Further Discussion

President David asked whether there were any further courses of action we might consider and pursue.

Scott Murray (Humanities) asked whether the besmirching of our entire faculty would be helpfully addressed by enlisting the Administration in our actions. President David noted that MRC President Dave has continually been ambushed in the last few years—there's not a lot more we can or need to do to enlist the support of the Administration.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20pm.

Moved by Mark Chikinda (Journalism); seconded by Miriam Carey (Policy Studies); passed unanimously.