

Mount Royal Faculty Association

Introduction for New Faculty

January 3, 2018

Introduction

Welcome to Mount Royal. We are so pleased to have you as a colleague!

- First: who are these people?
 - Marc Schroeder
 - Associate Professor in Mathematics and Computing
 - MRFA President
 - Guy Obrecht
 - Department of General Education
 - Contract Member Representative on the MRFA Executive Board
 - Note: the CMR also serves on the MRFA's Negotiating Committee
- Next: a brief introduction to the Association (Marc)
- Then: a summary of negotiated benefits and supports (Guy)

This Is **YOUR** Association

- You are an MRFA member
 - By virtue being employed at Mount Royal as a member of the academic staff
- The MRFA is an inclusive, democratic organization
 - In fact, we rely on it
- Over 800 members strong
 - Including librarians, counsellors, educational developers, laboratory instructors
 - Including full-time, limited-term and contract (all are Regular Members)
 - A highly-engaged membership

The Association

Founded

1967

Vision

Progressive Educators Pursuing Excellence

Mission

The Mount Royal Faculty Association provides a collective voice for faculty, promotes tenure and academic freedom, advocates for the highest standards of professionalism in higher education, and upholds the values of diversity, equity and human rights.

The Association – Starting from the Core

- Negotiates the Collective Agreement
 - Through collective bargaining
 - Current Collective Agreement: July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2018
 - Between the MRFA and the Board of Governors of MRU
 - **Terms and conditions of employment**
 - This is a bargaining year!
 - Preparations throughout Fall 2017
 - At the table Winter-Spring 2018
- Resolves alleged contraventions of the Collective Agreement
 - As needed through the grievance process

The Association – Is that All?

There's so much more to say...

1. Context everyone should know
2. We go well beyond the core

Statutory Context – the PSLA and LRC

- In Alberta:
 - The Post-Secondary Learning Act
 - The Labour Relations Code
- PSLA: for each public post-secondary institution (PSI), an academic staff association (ASA) is established as a corporation
 - Consists of all academic staff members of the PSI
- LRC: the ASA is deemed to be a trade union for the purposes of acting as bargaining agent for the PSI's academic staff members
 - Exclusive authority to bargain collectively on the members' behalf (subject to the provisions of the LRC)

Our Collective Agreement Articles Cover

- Appointment (incl. appointment categories, hiring, retirement and termination)
- Salaries, benefits and insurance, vacations and holidays
- Workload
- Annual performance review, and the evaluation of teaching
- Tenure and promotion
- Leaves from the University
- Professional development
- Intellectual property
- Academic Freedom
- Workplace environment (e.g. OH&S), diversity and equity
- Discipline, personnel file
- Negotiation and grievance procedures
- ... and more

Statutory Context – the PSLA

- Also of note in Alberta
 - Academic staff are excluded from the *Employment Standards Code*
 - You don't have these provisions *statutorily*
 - Therefore the CA plays an especially important role *contractually*
 - The PSI board has the authority to designate groups of employees or individual employees as academic staff vs. non-academic staff
 - I.e. as in or out of the Association
 - Changes in designation require consultation with the Association first
 - Designation can be challenged before the Alberta's Labour Relations Board

Statutory Context – the PSLA

- The business and affairs of an ASA are managed by an elected executive
- The ASA, through democratic means, makes bylaws governing its affairs, concerning at least:
 - Elections
 - Executive officers, their duties, powers and remuneration
 - General and special meetings (including quorum and voting procedures)
 - Membership dues
 - The acquisition, management and disposition of property
 - Provisions for audit of accounts
 - Minutes, books and records (including provisions for inspection by members)
 - The manner of making, altering and rescinding bylaws

Summary of Key Documents

- The [PSLA](#)
- The [LRC](#)
- The [Collective Agreement](#) between the MRFA and the University's Board of Governors
- The MRFA [Bylaws](#)
 - **Encompass, and extend beyond, the legislated core**
 - Also: the MRFA [Policies and Procedures Manual](#)

Going Beyond the Core

- Core mandate by statute
 - Negotiate the CA
 - Resolve alleged contraventions of the CA via the grievance process
- Also mandated by members through a democratic process (e.g.):
 - Promotion of the professional standing of our members
 - Foster the faculty voice in the shared academic governance of MRU
 - Advocacy for quality and accessibility of PSE
- So, the MRFA really has aspects of both:
 - Labour organization (represent members to employer)
 - Professional association (promote professional practice and standing)

A Little More about Typical MRFA Activity

- Provide confidential consultation, advice and assistance to members
- **Represent members needing workplace accommodation (e.g. medical)**
- **Represent members facing potential discipline**
- Administer a Compassionate Fund
- Liaise with senior administration (President, Provost, AVP HR, etc.) concerning matters of collective faculty interest and welfare
- Consult formally on matters of MRU governance, planning and policy
 - MRU policies/practices include MRFA involvement at many points (e.g. administrative search)
- Work with external groups and other associations
 - MRSA and SAMRU
 - The MRFA is a member of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)
- **Administer the Faculty Centre for our members' use and enjoyment**
- **Professional development and social events**

How is the MRFA Organized?

- 10-member Executive Board
 - President
 - 2 VPs
 - 7 other executive officers
 - Including the Contract Member Representative, who also serves on the Negotiating Committee
 - Currently 3 of the 10 members of Exec. are contract faculty
- 3 staff members
 - Support Executive Board / officers / committees and assist in provision of services to members
- Various committees
 - 15 standing committees – specific tasks delegated and/or advisory to Exec.
 - Ad hoc committees as necessary
 - Some joint MRFA-MRU committees
- You can stand for election at the AGM

Looking for More?

- Visit the Faculty Centre (W315) – **next social event Friday, January 5 @ 3:30**
- Contact the Executive Offices
 - Located in the Centre
 - office@mrfa.net
 - 403.440.6103
- Speak with your department's designated "MRFA Communicator"
- Read our weekly (email) and monthly (printed) newsletters
 - **Note: CASL consent**
- Follow us on social media
- Come to our ~monthly Regular Meetings – **next: January 30 @ 3:00-5:00 in LPR**
- **Subscribe to our Google Calendar**
- Check out mrfa.net for a complete list of resources, services and events

Contract Faculty-Specific Issues

- Bargaining and advocacy
 - Decreasing the reliance on contingent employment
 - Fairness for those who are working on contract appointments
- A summary of negotiated benefits and supports follows...

Negotiated for Contract Faculty

- Job security provisions
 - Via the sessional reappointment and workload allocation process (4.8)
 - The possibility of “continuing” and “fixed-term” appointments for eligible contract faculty (4.10, 4.11)
- Annual cost of living adjustments to the contract salary grids (13.3)
 - Was 1.8% for all faculty as of July 1, 2016
 - Was another 2.3% for contract faculty as of July 1, 2017 (versus 1.8% for other faculty)
- Salary – other:
 - The contract salary grid is based on a set of hourly rates, varying by contact hour type
 - Each course/section contracted has a specified number of hours – see next slide for more on “SICH”
 - Additional 8% vacation pay for contract faculty (15.5)
 - 10% contract cancellation payment within nine working days of first day (13.3.6)
 - Grid system recognizes degree qualifications as well as MRU length of service increments (13.3)

Negotiated for Contract Faculty

- Contract Service Honorarium (14.15)
 - \$20k pool annually for contract faculty who engage in eligible service activities (not directly related to instruction in your contracted courses)
 - Amount just doubled in latest round of bargaining
 - Funds administered and disbursed by the MRFA
- Leave availability:
 - Paid Illness Leave up to 4 SICH* per 16 SICH contracted, per semester (17.2)
 - Just doubled in latest round of bargaining
 - Bereavement and Compassionate Care Leaves (17.3)

(*) Note: "SICH" = *Scheduled Instructional Course Hour*

- *A workload measure used at MRU per the Collective Agreement*
- *"Any officially-scheduled 50-minute class requiring the Employee to be present and teaching, without assistance, a group of students. Credit for other forms of teaching, including [...] shall be assigned by the Chair [...] and is subject to the approval of the Dean"*
- *E.g. a course comprising 3 (lecture) contact "hours" per week = 48 SICH ($3 \times 16 = 48$); includes associated preparation/marking/etc.*

Negotiated for Contract Faculty

- Benefits (16.8):
 - Eligibility details are in the CA – in short, available after two consecutive Fall/Winter semesters at 96 SICH or higher, where the 3rd semester is at 96 SICH or higher (or 48 if Spring/Summer)
 - Benefit eligibility continues in subsequent semesters, subject to the SICH threshold
 - Includes Extended Health, Dental, Basic Life Insurance (\$25k) and Health Care Spending Account (\$500)
 - Employee-paid Dental premiums are 50%
 - Employee-paid Extended Health premiums are 25%
 - Opt-out of Extended Health and Dental is possible if covered under another plan
 - Prepaid continuation of benefits over non-teaching Spring or Summer semesters is possible, subject to conditions (16.8.7)

Negotiated for Contract Faculty

- Professional Development funding:
 - Eligibility to apply to your Faculty's "FDC" PD funding pool (18.1)
 - Access to a contract faculty-specific PD fund (18.6)
 - For those who teach at least 3 courses per year
 - Up to \$1000 per year, first-come first-served, for eligible PD expenses
- Credit tuition refund (18.2)
 - \$20k pool annually for faculty (including contract faculty who taught at least 144 SICH) for reimbursement of fees paid elsewhere:
 - Successfully completed credit courses
 - Graduate studies program fees
 - Funds administered and disbursed by the MRFA

Negotiated for Contract Faculty

- MRU Courses:
 - Tuition refunded for credit courses successfully completed, subject to some limitations (18.4)
 - Free enrolment in credit-free courses, subject to some limitations, with the permission of the Dean of Cont. Ed. or the Director of the Conservatory (18.5)
- Resources for contract faculty (22.4)
 - The University “shall make reasonable efforts, subject to available resources” to provide appropriate instructional resources that may include:
 - Office space
 - Email account
 - Access to computer and telephone
 - Instructional support and supplies

Note as Well

- Many other CA articles are not specific to appointment category type, and apply equally to all faculty (contract or otherwise)
- Note especially:
 - Intellectual Property (19) ← in short, the material you develop is yours
 - Grievance Procedure (20)
 - Workplace Environment (22)
 - Academic Freedom (23)
 - Diversity and Equity (24)
 - Discipline (25)
 - Personnel File (26)
 - Evaluation of Teaching (28)
 - **Includes provisions on number and frequency of student/Chair/peer evaluations**

Questions and Discussion?