

# 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](mailto: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](http://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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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?