

Mount Royal Faculty Association

Introduction for New Faculty

August 18, 2017

Introduction

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

- First: who am I?
 - Marc Schroeder
 - Associate Professor in Mathematics and Computing
 - MRFA President
- Next: a brief introduction to the Association
- Later: executive officer introductions

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!
 - Preparing now and 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
- 2 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) – **first social event Friday, September 9 @ 3:30**
- Contact the Executive Offices
 - Located in the Centre
 - office@mrfa.net
 - 403.440.6192
- 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: September 29 (important)**
- **Subscribe to our Google Calendar**
- Check out mrfa.net for a complete list of resources, services and events

Questions and Discussion?