

MRFA's Response to Recent Hiring Announcements

Message sent to all members of the MRFA by email on Jan 10, 2019 at 7:30pm.

Colleagues,

Over the past weeks, many of you have questioned the Provost's recent communication (articles and tweets) stating that "the largest single investment in new full-time faculty (21 assistant professors and 1 lab instructor) is now underway".

The MRFA would like to contextualize these claims in light of years of austerity, unreplaced vacated positions and growth in student enrolment. The MRFA Executive researched our records and determined the following:

Year	Number of F/T Faculty (Excluding Limited Term)	Net Change
2009	358	
2010	379	+21
2011	385	+6
2012	400	+15
2013	390	-10
2014	383	-7
2015	357	-26
2016	368	+11
2017	376	+8
2018	371	-5

Even with past levels of hiring, the above chart indicates that this was not *net new* hiring (see the net change figures) and that often these "new" positions actually replaced those that had been vacated.

Our data also indicates that there were several years with significant hiring as follows: 59 individuals in 2009, 33 in 2010 and 23 in 2011. These figures include Limited Term positions and represent pools of hiring. Even with this in mind, attention to net change data is what is critical as this conveys actual increases/decreases to the F/T faculty complement.

Given this, your Executive has communicated with the Provost indicating that while we are encouraged by the upcoming hiring, we note that the information she has conveyed was inaccurate (i.e. this is not the largest pool of new hiring in MRU's history), and we requested that a retraction and correction be presented.

In response, the Provost has indicated that this is "**net new hiring**" (although this is not what the communication stated) and therefore the information is correct. The Provost thanked the MRFA for bringing this issue forward and stood behind her communication while recognizing that the Association viewed the matter differently.

The MRFA Executive realizes that a “net new” figure for 2019 cannot be determined, as this will only be known when data is available to compare the number of faculty before and after the current hiring cycle is complete. Currently we do not know how many vacated positions will not be replaced and if the current hiring of 22 individuals will actually result in an overall total net increase of 22 FT faculty positions.

Further, data indicates that a decreasing FT faculty cohort has supported the University’s enrollment growth as we have not yet returned to the 2012 high watermark level of 400 FT faculty positions. Our austerity and our increased workloads are what have permitted and supported increased student enrolment, as follows*:

Year	FLE
2014/2015	9166
2015/2016	9266
2016/2017	9534
2017/2018	9809

*Numbers taken from MRU annual reports.

In summary, the MRFA Executive continues to convey to management that we are following their communications, that we expect accurate sharing of information and that we are very much aware that MRU’s growth and expansion continue to be achieved by increased faculty workloads. As such, when you hear that the MRFA is advocating on issues such as workload, we are taking into account growth in FLE and net reductions in the F/T faculty complement.

The MRFA Executive Board appreciates the ongoing interest in, and support for, your Association.

Together we are stronger.

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