

MRFA Faculty Evaluation Committee

THE MRFA Faculty Evaluation Committee's (FEC) Statement on the MRFA Executive Decision to Disband the FEC

March 9, 2020

Preamble

On February 10, 2020, Melanie Peacock (MRFA President) and Heather McLellan (MRFA VP Senior Policy and Grievance officer) attended the FEC meeting and informed the FEC that the MRFA Executive decided to disband the committee and that the proposed changes to the Bylaws to this effect would be presented to the membership on March 4, 2020. The three reasons provided to the committee were; first, that the FEC was no longer needed as the *Ryerson University v. Ryerson Faculty Association* decision and other works such as the Report of the OCUFA Student Questionnaires on Courses and Teaching Working Group from the Ontario Confederation of Faculty Association (OCUFA) made the FEC work on student evaluation of teaching (SET) redundant. Second, other MRU committees (e.g., MRU Teaching and Learning committee) were doing the same work rendering the FEC work redundant. Third, the course release compensation for the FEC Chair resulted in hardship to the MRFA given budget pressures.

The MRFA Executive decision caught the FEC by surprise. After a discussion, the FEC unanimously voted to provide a statement to the MRFA Executive to be presented to the MRFA members when the proposal to disband the FEC is presented to the Membership. After learning about the FEC decision, on February 13, 2020, Melanie Peacock emailed the FEC that the decision to disband the committee had been put on hold and that the MRFA Executive is awaiting the FEC statement. This is the statement.

The FEC believes that the disbanding of the committee is not in the best interest of the MRFA membership for at least the following reasons. **First, the FEC mandate is much wider than examining SET.** The FEC charter states:

"The Faculty Evaluation Committee shall make recommendations to ensure appropriate evaluation of all faculty members takes place. It shall recommend policy on pre-tenure, post-tenure, limited-term and contract faculty evaluation, monitor evaluation processes, and provide information to Regular Members on evaluation practices."

Accordingly, even though various reports regarding SET exist, those reports do not make the FEC work redundant. Moreover, although the existing reports agree that SET ought to be abolished and replaced by evaluations based on teaching dossiers, these reports provide no proposals on how to evaluate the material in the dossier so that the resulting evaluations are objective, transparent, and equitable.

Second, other MRU committees concerned with SET and evaluation of faculty do not necessarily have the best interest of the MRFA membership in mind. For example, the MRU Teaching and Learning Committee includes a variety of members who are not MRFA members including management and student members who may, and likely, have very different goals.

Third, the course release costs/budgetary concerns can be addressed by alternative ways rather than by disbanding the entire FEC committee. For example, the FEC Charter can be modified back to pre-2018-2019 academic year and the course release time for the Chair abolished. Although this will result in re-allocation of the work from the Chair to the committee members and may reduce how much the FEC may accomplish, in the FEC's unanimous view, it is a better option than to abolish the entire committee.

Sincerely,



Donald Jenner
Kit Murdoch
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Faculty Evaluation Committee