

Topic: MOUs regarding Continuing Impacts of COVID-19.

Release Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2020.

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Hello Mount Royal Faculty Association members,

In addressing the effects of the pandemic on Employees, the Association wanted to highlight a few of the implications on Chairs and Academic Directors. Two Memoranda of Understanding have been signed which affect Chairs and Academic Directors. The [current MOU](#) was signed on August 28, 2020. Previous MOUs related to the pandemic include an MOU signed on April 27, 2020. Please contact the [MRFA office](#) if you need access to previous MOUs.

#### MOUs regarding Continuing Impacts of COVID-19

In both MOUs, Senior Lecturers, Permanent Laboratory Instructors, and Tenurable Employees were allowed to extend their probationary period by one year. If this clause had been enacted, Chairs should have been notified by June 30, 2020 or September 30, 2020 by the affected Employee.

During the Winter 2020 and Spring 2020 semesters, Probationary Senior Lecturers, and Probationary Permanent Laboratory Instructors, are not required to submit Student Perception of Teaching evaluations as part of their permanency application, unless they chose to do so. Similarly, Tenurable, Conditional Tenurable, Limited-Term, and Fixed-Term, will not be required to use evaluations from Winter 2020, Spring 2020 or Fall 2020, but are expected to submit evaluations from other semesters in their place (as outlined in the MOUs). Thereby, as these applications for permanency and/or tenure enter into the preview of the review Committee (i.e. the Tenure Committee or the Laboratory Instructor Standing Committee), please remind applicants and committee members that the absence of these documents or the deviation from Article 28.4 is expected, and is not abnormal or to the detriment of the applicant.

Additionally, the Chairs of the review committees (i.e. the TC or the standing committee, as appropriate) shall verbally remind committee members of the unique circumstances of Winter 2020, Spring 2020, and Fall 2020 when reviewing the permanency applications of affected applicants. The Association recommends that Chairs also remind committee members in writing, asking committee members to acknowledge receipt of the information in a written form, so as to protect Chairs from accusations that their duty was not performed. For ease, draft written reminders are included at the end of this advisory.

In the MOU signed on August 28, 2020, Clause C allowed Contract Employees to continue on all benefits plans to which they are enrolled and prepay 100% of the benefit premiums due, if they meet the following qualifications.

- i. Qualified for benefits in the Winter 2002, Spring 2020, or Summer 2020 semester,
- ii. Can produce a contract signed by the Dean which their qualification for the Winter 2021 semester, and

- a. NOTE: On August 13, 2020, the Interim Provost and Vice-President, Academic confirmed to the Association that emails offering contracts to employees would be used in place of contracts signed by the Dean.
- iii. Do not have a contract for the Fall 2020 semester, Additionally, please draw upon the [MRFA Office](#) and/or the folks within Human Resources should additional questions develop regarding benefits.

#### Sample Language

In an effort to fulfilled the MOUs obligation to inform committee members about the unique circumstances that took place during the pandemic, the MRFA suggests that Chairs circulate the following statement, asking committee members to confirm receipt of the statement.

*Mount Royal University declared a move to remoted delivery on Sunday, March 15, 2020. During the Winter 2020 semester, Employees were expected to transition their teaching, mid semester, with minimal time to prepare. During subsequent semesters, Employees were expected to transition, and in some cases reinvent, their teaching to fit within a remote delivery method. The pandemic also created impacts for Employees' ability to accomplish scholarship and service goals, as teaching redevelopment often was prioritized over scholarship or service. In other cases, the ability to access scholarship or service was removed. Additionally, the pandemic impacted Employees by limiting their access to many social supports (e.g. daycares, in-person schooling, in-person medical assessments) and collapsed Employees' work-sphere into their home-sphere. Although Employees would have been able to achieve more had the pandemic never occur, the Association holds that despite the challenges and stresses that were created, Employees still performed at a high caliber.*

As always, the collective agreement touches upon a variety of aspects of Chairs' and Academic Directors' work, many that have not been addressed within this advisory. Despite these topics' absence, the Association is committed to providing resources and support to Chairs. To this end, the MRFA will be unveiling a [Chairs' Resource](#) section of the MRFA webpage with resources. With that in mind, the Association would like to request that as questions develop, and as absent resources are identified, please contact the [MRFA Office](#) so that we can address the questions and/or develop the resources.