

Topic: Workload during the Pandemic

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Hello Mount Royal Faculty Association members,

This advisory provides Chairs and Academic Directors guidance on elements of Article 14 which can be used to help offset the impact of the pandemic on full-time faculty works. These measure offer full-time faculty, especially those with dependent care responsibilities, options other than taking an unpaid leave.

#### Using the Department Average Department Average

The Department Average (Article 14.6) tasks Chairs with maintaining a department instructional load based upon a weighted average. For ease of reference, the average is 384 for all TS work patterns and 288 SICH for TSS work patterns. If the department average drops below this threshold, the Chair is required to obtain approval from the Dean. Otherwise, the Chair and Academic Unit are awarded flexibility in their workload allocation to be within the ranges outlined within Articles 14.4 and 14.5. Within the scope of the pandemic, this flexibility has been utilized considerably to ease the burden of Employees who are simultaneously balancing dependent care responsibilities.

#### Workload Appeals

Article 14.12 outlines that process that any MRFA member, including Chairs, can access if they are dissatisfied with their workload responsibility. Historically workload appeals have been infrequent and resolved early in the appeal process.

The Association does not view an Employee's initiation of a workload appeal as a shortcoming of the workload process you follow in your academic unit. Nor is an act of aggression towards any individual. Unlike Grievances, workload appeals are an internal process that allows a third party (the Appeal Committee) to resolve an issue. Chairs' role within the process is either as an applicant (initiating the process) or providing information as requested.

In the later, your Dean may call upon the Chair to provide documentation (likely the same documentation that ought to have been provided to the Dean under Articles 4.7.8/4.8.12/6.4.5/6.15.2/14.1) that provides information regarding the Committee's decision. As with all processes within the Collective Agreement, Chairs are welcome to contact the Association if they have any specific questions.

#### *Information about the Workload Appeal Process*

The MRFA offered a session in January 2019 regarding Article 14.12 (Workload Appeal Procedure). The PowerPoint presentation can be found on the MRFA website using this [link](#). Please feel free to contact [Derrick Antson](#), Labour Relations Officer, if you have any questions.

### Tenured Employees and Workload “Banking”

Introduced into our collective agreement on July 1, 2018 is Article 14.8.3 that outlines the process for averaging instructional workload (colloquially known as *Banking*). Employees are able to request an averaging of their instructional load over a period of three years.

There are two ways to bank time: the Employee may work additional courses in years 1 & 2, to have relief in the third year OR may take the relief initially, working additional courses in subsequent years. Some Faculties have developed forms to help navigate this process and the Dean will be able to connect you with these forms if they exist.

The deadline for employees to apply to the Chair is October 15 each year. Chairs shall provide their written recommendation to the Dean by November 15 each year. Chairs are expected to provide a recommendation with respect to an employee's application, which shall only assess the impact of the proposed request on the needs of the academic unit as well as the mutual impact of any concurrent requests. Recommendations that progress beyond this enter into the preview of elements that the Dean is expected to comment upon.

The article outlines Chairs' responsibilities regarding granting averaging, so I will not spend time repeating that. Once approved, the Employee, the Dean, and the Chair have the shared responsibility to track the averaging of the instructional load, as it has impacts on the Employee's workload (Articles 14.4/14.5), the Department Average (Article 14.6), and a variety of other articles that vary depending on the unique situation of the Employee.

### Contract Employee Workload Allocation

#### *Contract Appointment Information Session for Chairs*

As an extra resource, the MRFA offered a session on October 28, 2020 regarding Article 4.7 & 4.8 (Initial Appoint and Reappointment of Contract Employees). The PowerPoint presentation can be found on the MRFA website using this [link](#). Please feel free to contact [Heather McLellan](#), VP Policy & Senior Grievance Officer, if you have any questions.

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.