



President's Update - December 7, 2020

Good morning, Colleagues!

We almost there! With the last days of classes in sight, let provide a quick update on three items related to the pandemic:

- 1) **Winter 2021 classes will start Jan 11.** I would like to thank GFC councilors whose strong endorsement of the delay made the decision possible. I'd also like acknowledge MRSA President Michelle Lugollo who organized a meeting with President Tim Rahilly and the two association President to discuss how a delay might be best handled. This delay will provide faculty with more time to prepare for another semester of remote delivery.
- 2) **CRA allows up to \$400 tax credit for working from home expenses without a T2200 form ([read more](#))** The federal government's Economic Statement last Monday announced that workers with "modest expenses" may claim up to \$400, based on the total number of hours worked from home, without having to "track detailed expenses". Those who wish to claim more than this amount and have not been otherwise been reimbursed may do so with a T2200 form. MRU Human Resources is awaiting further guidance from the CRA on how this will work.
- 3) **The Association continues to press for an MOU to account for the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on faculty work in Winter 2022.** The University has announced it will not extend or revise the existing MOU on COVID-19. This insensitive decision means that teaching evaluations including the administration of student evaluations (SPoTS) will proceed as outlined in Article 28. This decision is especially concerning since there are no legal requirements for reappointment processes to take account of the circumstances of the pandemic when reviewing teaching evaluations.

A few final reminders: The MRFA Diversity and Equity Committee has organized a [focus group](#) to better understand how faculty with dependent care responsibilities have been affected during the pandemic and the MRFA Faculty Evaluation Committee is [gathering feedback](#) about full-time faculty's experience with the Faculty-180 annual reporting system. The FEC will use this information to make recommendations to the Executive Board and to the University to improve the system. I wish you all the best as we head into the final stretch of Fall 2021.

sincerely,

Lee