



Mount Royal Faculty Association Bulletin May 3, 2021

Highlights this Week:

Updates from the MRFA President

Good morning! I want to start by thanking the members of the Professional Development Committee for organizing an incredible PD Days event. At last count, 135 members registered to attend the two-day retreat. Despite the pandemic and its restrictions, the Association is helping us stay connected and engaged. Thank you PD Committee! Thank you also to Chantelle Anderson who ably supported the whole event!

Return to Campus Work Plan

The University's plans for returning to work on campus in Fall 2021 have been released and there are number of questions faculty have expressed around the determination that between 70 and 80 percent of classes are being planned for on-campus delivery. We have seen that the University is planning to accommodate faculty with underlying conditions that may preclude in-class delivery. All faculty regardless of employment category should complete these accommodation requests, if appropriate. While decisions about which courses will be delivered remotely will be made mid-May, the Association is working to

- Assess the workload implications that might arise when some courses are delivered remotely and others in person.
- Work through CAFA to hear other universities Fall return to work plans and see what we might learn.
- Assess the possible role of Occupational Health and Safety regulations with respect to safe workplace
- Understand the University's plans with respect to mandatory masks and social distancing

Further conversations about the return to campus plans will occur at GFC later this month. Be sure to raise your concerns with your faculty representatives. We have set aside time at the AGM next week to discuss the return to campus and to hear your concerns.

Pay Equity Update

The Joint Diversity and Equity Committee (JDEC) held its town hall on Friday April 30 to answer questions about the pay equity study and to outline anticipated next steps. If you have questions about the consultant's report and its findings, please email the JDEC. Questions arose about the JDEC's membership going forward. In June 2021, the MRFA will be appointing three new members with staggered terms to serve on the Committee. The Association will be distributing expressions of interest for this committee and other joint committees shortly. Consider putting your name forward.

Unfair Labour Complaint Update

The notice of the Association's unfair labour practice complaint has been posted on [its HR "Important Announcement" link](#). The Association pointed out that this notification would not reach many members and requested the Labour Board work with the Employer to send out the notice via email. Meanwhile, if you applied for a sabbatical and were denied, you can write to the Alberta Labour Relations Board to inform them of how your application may have been affected by the University's determination that it would make 26.5 leaves available instead of 31.5 leaves.

May the 4th - Demand a stop to post-secondary education cuts!

Last week, the provincial government released [Alberta 2030: Skills for Jobs](#)—most alarmingly, this report outlines changes to the governance structures away from local control and a shift to vocational job training at all levels of post-secondary education. This document will set the stage for the privatization and increased corporate influence amidst the ongoing cuts to PSE funding.

The action tomorrow, May 4th, is to flood social media with images and messages demanding that the government support and invest in our universities and colleges. Public Interest Alberta is asking all participants to put up a photo of themselves (or their back yard or their pets, etc.) with [this sign](#) demanding that the provincial government [stop the cuts](#). Please use the hashtag #StopPSEcuts in your posts to Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites.

[See the full campaign instructions here →](#)

MRFA Nominations Reminder

Members are encouraged to put their names forward to serve in the many available committee and Executive Board positions. Not sure which committee to be nominated for? Call Chantelle at 403.512.9295 to discuss the available opportunities.

- **May 5**, [Executive Board Nomination](#) Deadline
- **May 14**, [Committee Nomination](#) Deadline
 - Download and open the forms to fill them out (you cannot sign the forms if viewing them in a web browser) and email forms to office@mrfa.net.
- [Summary of Executive Board Positions.](#)
- [Summary of MRFA Standing Committees](#) and [committee web pages and charters.](#)
- [Campaign Statement Guidelines](#)
- [MRFA Policy on Association Representatives](#)

Members who spoke at last week's retreat panel on *Building a Stronger Association* indicated that they "would not have gotten to know [their] colleagues or understand the dynamics of MRU...had [they] not gotten involved;" that "the work of the association is important, and it is through this organization we can make a difference in our working conditions;" and that their involvement in the Association contributed to enhanced "workplace satisfaction and wellbeing."

In Appreciation – MRFA Annual Retreat

The Association would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members who made our annual retreat a great success (despite the online format).

1. Thank you to all faculty who took the time to facilitate sessions during the retreat – your contributions are essential to the ongoing success of this important annual PD event,
2. Thank you to all of our 135 members who registered and attended sessions during the retreat. This is a very busy time of year, and your attendance in these sessions, despite your heavy workload, is indicative of the high value of these sessions, and
3. Thank you to the event facilitators: the PD Committee members for their work in planning the event, the MRFA Executive Board and Membership for their continued support of the event, and the MRU Board of Governors for their co-sponsoring of the event!

We hope to see you all in Kananaskis next year – Save the Dates: April 25-26, 2022

Censure of the Administration of the University of Toronto

On April 22nd, delegates to the Canadian Association of University Teachers Council meeting voted to censure the Administration of the University of Toronto. This decision was taken in response to the Administration's failure to resolve concerns regarding academic freedom stemming from a hiring scandal in the Faculty of Law. For more, read CAUT's statement [here](#). Censuring the University of Toronto

Administration means that, until the situation is satisfactorily resolved, members of CAUT (which includes all members of the MRFA) are asked:

- not to accept appointments at the University;
- not to accept invitations to speak or participate in academic conferences held or hosted by the University; and,
- not to accept any distinction or honour that may be offered by the University.

Censure is a rare and extremely important sanction. It is a measure of last resort used only when we are faced with serious violations of academic freedom and other principles that are fundamental to higher education. This is only the third time since 1979 that CAUT has censured an institution, and the first since the censure of First Nations University over governance concerns in 2008. For more information about censure, please see CAUT's [Procedures Related to Censure](#).

Reminders, Updates and Deadlines

For all event details visit mrfa.net and/or view details on the [MRFA's google calendar](#).

- **May 14, [Contract Service Honorarium Application](#) and [CSH Extension Application](#) Deadline**
- The MRFA's AGM is being held on **May 14, 9:15am – 12:00pm** on zoom. The agenda package is available [online](#) and you must [register in advance](#) to attend.
- Volunteer List to Support Members Isolating or in Quarantine: Members who are isolating and needing support are welcome to contact any of the members, listed [online](#), to get the support you need.

Question of the Week

This year, the MRFA has enhanced mechanisms for member input in processes for amending its key documents. There is now a 30-day consultation period on all, non-editorial, policy amendments and members also now have the opportunity to provide comment on possible bylaw amendments before they are presented for consideration at a special meeting. [Please indicate your position on the MRFA's new consultation processes for policies and bylaws.](#)

While 30% of respondents indicated an Excellent to Fair relationship between the MRFA and MRU in response to last week's Question, overall, members characterize the relationship between the University's senior administration and the MRFA as poor or very poor. Faculty members' ongoing engagement in the work of the Association is important as we all try to navigate these difficult times: with your support the Association is better able to represent and defend your interests.

Thank you to all members who take the time to respond to these questions. The Association continues efforts in representing your concerns and your feedback is very helpful in this process!

CAUT News

CAUT Call for nominations for the Sarah Shorten Award.

The award was established in 1990 in honour of Sarah Shorten, who served as Vice-President (1982–83) and two terms as President of CAUT (1983–84 & 1984–85), to recognize outstanding achievements in the promotion of the advancement of women in Canadian universities and colleges.

Nominations for the award may be submitted by academic staff associations, status of women committees, or any other interested parties. **The deadline for nominations is June 1, 2021.**

The nomination form and procedures are available on the [CAUT website](#). Nominations will be reviewed by CAUT's Equity Committee and recommendations will be forwarded to CAUT Council. The number and frequency of awards will be as the Committee and CAUT Council deem appropriate.

CAUT Call for Nominations for the Academic Librarians' and Archivists' Distinguished Service Award.

The Award was established in 1994 to recognize outstanding contributions by academic librarians and archivists, other academic staff, or groups to the advancement of the status and/or working conditions of academic librarians and archivists at Canadian universities and colleges.

Nominations for the award may be submitted by academic staff associations, or any other interested parties or individuals. **The deadline for nominations is June 1, 2021.**

The nomination form and procedures are available on the [CAUT website](#). Nominations will be reviewed by CAUT's Librarians' and Archivists' Committee and recommendations will be forwarded to CAUT Council. The number and frequency of awards will be as the Committee and CAUT Council deem appropriate.

MRFA Reminders

Return to Campus Comment Form

As we are approaching the end of a very challenging academic year, we are now looking forward to 2021-2022 and are seeking your thoughts on the return to campus. Specifically, other than the mandatory masking and traffic control, we want to hear about the safety measures you want in place. Please take a moment to provide your thoughts in our [member comment form](#). Your input provided via this form throughout the pandemic has helped the Association represent your interests as we faced the many challenges throughout the past year, moving forward the Association will continue to solicit and follow up on your concerns.

MRU Policy Consultation - *Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention*

In accordance with the University's policy framework, a draft of the proposed new *Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention* policy has been posted on the policy website for the 30-day consultation period. The draft may be downloaded [here](#). Feedback can be sent directly from the [website](#) or to policy@mtroyal.ca by May 14, 2021.

@mrfa.net Spam Email Filtering

It has been brought to our attention that some MRFA emails are being filtered to spam when they are sent from the Association's @mrfa.net server. Please take a moment to ensure that you have not missed messages and mark @mrfa.net as safe if any messages have been filtered to spam (the most recent message was sent from negotiations@mrfa.net on April 13). Moving forward, the Association will be sending more communications from its server; so, it is important that you keep this in mind should you suddenly stop receiving our messages.

Send us an Image of your Lawn Sign

The MRFA recently delivered over 200 lawn signs to faculty members and other members of the campus community. Local and provincial efforts continue to get these lawn signs out.

- If you have not yet signed up for a lawn sign – [request your lawn sign today!](#)
- If you have a lawn sign – take a photo of it in front of your house and send the picture in to office@mrfa.net

Volunteer List to Support Members Isolating or in Quarantine

MRFA members have volunteered to provide support to colleagues who are isolating or under quarantine due to the pandemic. This support may vary but could include things such as grocery delivery. Members

who are isolating and needing support are welcome to contact any of the members, listed [online](#), to get the support you need.

MRFA Comment Form

The MRFA is seeking members' input on any matter relevant to the MRFA: currently we are soliciting members' input specifically related to members' experiences working from home and transitioning to remote delivery. Members are welcome to use this [online form](#) to submit their feedback on MRFA initiatives, communications, and any other matters the MRFA may or should be involved in.

Connect Online on Fridays

The MRFA is hosting monthly open zoom meetings, **Members Rejuvenate on Friday Afternoons**, 3:30 – 6:00pm, for members to get together. Please refer to the [MRFA google calendar](#) (Click on the “+GoogleCalendar” so you can easily access it anytime) for links to MRFA zoom meetings.

Faculty are Asked to Complete a Profile Demonstrating the Value of PSE

Even amidst the current challenges, we need to continue to advocate for PSE. The MRFA Advocacy Committee plans to showcase the value of the work being achieved, thereby illuminating the damaging consequences of diminished funding and support for the post-secondary landscape. If you would like to volunteer to be highlighted as part of this initiative, please fill out the [online faculty profile form](#) or contact our Advocacy Officer Frank Cotae (fcotae@mtroyal.ca). The Advocacy Committee will also be highlighting the significant impacts these budget cuts have on our students. Members are welcome to share the [online student profile form](#) with students who want to have their voice heard.

Faculty Members are Asked to Provide Their Contact Information

Thank you to all members who have taken the time to provide their private contact information. If you have not yet had a chance to respond please do so now [online](#). It is important that the Association have this information on file in the event of a lockout or strike or other Association initiatives which require a high level of member engagement. Please note – this is just a matter of preparedness and is not in any way related to the current state of negotiations.

Google Calendar

Instructions for how to add the MRFA Calendar to your Google Calendar are available [here](#), and the calendar is always available at mrfa.net/calendar.

Dates and Deadlines at a Glance

May

May 14, 2021 ~ Contract Service Honorarium Deadline ~ mrfa.net/faculty-oppo

May 14, 9:15 – 12:00 ~ MRFA Annual General Meeting

May 26, 2:00 – 3:00 ~ Pre-GFC Drop in – refer to [Google Calendar](#) for Zoom Link

May 28, 2021 ~ Scholarships for Dependents Deadline ~ mrfa.net/faculty-oppo

June

June 12-August 13, 2021 MRFA Office and Faculty Centre Closure

Contact Us

- Office@mrfa.net – All inquires can be directed here.
- facultyrelations@mrfa.net – all inquiries relating to member services, meetings, elections, MRFA Committees, and Association governance can be directed here.

- LabourRelations@mrfa.net– All inquires relating to the Collective Agreement and Grievances can be directed here.
- President@mrfa.net– All inquires related to Association governance and external affiliations can be directed here.
- EDI@mrfa.net– All inquires and comments relating to equity, diversity and inclusion matters can be directed here.
- Communications@mrfa.net– All inquires relating to MRFA communications can be directed here
- Negotiations@mrfa.net– All inquires relating to collective bargaining can be directed here