



Mount Royal Faculty Association Bulletin August 30, 2021

Highlights this Week

Good Afternoon, Colleagues,

Happy Pride Week! Despite the current circumstances around the COVID-19, I hope you get a chance to participate safely in some the activities outlined [here](#).

Now to some updates

- The University's decision to extend mask wearing to all indoor spaces starting today is an encouraging step to keep a safe and healthy campus. We expect more details about the mask requirements including the status of face shields are forthcoming.
- Students who believe they have a valid reason to be exempt from wearing mask must work with Access and Inclusion Services who will issue a letter that indicate their exemption.
- The announcement of compulsory rapid testing on Friday is an important step to ensure that we have a safe and healthy workplace. We are looking forward to hearing the details of the plan. Be assured that the Association continues to advocate for the safest workplace environment and that we believe that vaccinations offer the best pathway to that environment.
- As announced on Friday there will be vaccine clinics on campus next week and then in mid-September. We support these initiatives.

The Association held drop-in sessions earlier today and on Friday 27 August to answer questions about the return to campus plans. Here are some responses to questions asked there.

- We have written to senior administration what guidelines will be provided to faculty to clarify whether faculty who are feeling ill and stay home out as stated in the COVID safety measures can move to remote delivery, if they are well enough to do. We have raised similar concerns about faculty who are required to stay home when children have been told to isolate from school. I anticipate that we will have some responses later tomorrow. We continue to seek answers to questions as they arise.
- Faculty have been sent a *COVID Hazard Assessment* form to sign. The form does not include COVID-19 as an airborne hazard nor the mitigation steps the employer has taken to address the risk. We have consulted with legal counsel whose in opinion is that that by signing the Hazard Assessment, affected employees are not "agreeing" to its contents, but rather acknowledging they have been "informed" of the employer's policy. Employees can make this clear by adding, "I acknowledge being informed of this Hazard Assessment" beside their signatures. Signing does compromise your rights under legislation or the collective agreement to grieve under Article 22.3.
- The Association has been pressing for the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee to meet to review this form and have input into it. To date, the JOHSC has not been convened.

The Special Meeting on Thursday will provide time to discuss the return to campus plans. Please plan to attend.

Again, I know this is an incredibly anxious time with many unknowns. While many of us want to return to campus and to in person teaching, we all need to do so in a safe and healthy manner. That remains our goal.

MRFA Special Meeting – By-election, Negotiations and Return to Campus Updates

An MRFA Special Meeting has been called for the purpose of presenting Negotiations and Return to Campus updates and to elect the MRFA Communications Officer. The agenda and related documents are available [online](#). The meeting will be held on zoom on **September 2, 2021, 12:00 - 2:00pm**. Please register [online](#) in advance to attend the meeting.

- The Closed Session Negotiations Update will include an opportunity for members to indicate their position on the Board's current offer.
- There will be an opportunity to discuss return to campus concerns.
- For the By-election, members in attendance will receive online ballots after the meeting. If you are unable to attend, you may email facultyrelations@mrfa.net to request to vote in the advance polling period of August 30-31.

MRFA Dates and Deadlines:

Members are encouraged to view the list of MRFA [Dates/Deadlines for 2021-2022](#). This list is current as of today and members should refer to the MRFA's Google Calendar for up to date info on MRFA events. MRFA Events and Deadlines Coming Soon:

- September 2, 12:00 – 2:00 - MRFA Special Meeting - [Zoom Webinar](#)
- September 3, 10:00 – 11:20am - Get Cracking on Teaching in a Hybrid World: register [online](#).
 - Campus continues to operate in two distinct spaces: On-campus and online. Join your colleagues to discuss strategies for teaching in this hybrid world. How do we continue to provide the best possible education for students in the face of ongoing challenges caused by the pandemic?
- September 7, 1:00 – 1:50 - Pre-GFC Drop in (hosted by ALC) - [Google Meet](#)
- **September 14, 1:00 – 3:00 - Tenure & Promotion Workshop - Register [Online](#)**
- September 17, 3:30 – 7:30- MRFA Welcome Back Social Event – In-person and Online
 - See details of other social events for the year [here](#)
- **September 28, 2:00 – 4:00 - Tenure & Promotion Committee Workshop - Register [Online](#)**
- September 29, 1:00 – 3:00 - MRFA Regular Meeting - Zoom Webinar
- September 30, 2021 - [Tuition Refund Application Deadline](#)

Question of the Week

Given the current circumstances with the pandemic, please indicate your comfort level with the following delivery models for fall 2021.

- [Status quo - current ratios of in-person and remote delivery](#)
- [Ability to switch between in-person and remote delivery as necessary \(e.g. when not feeling well or due to children being quarantined/isolated\)](#)
- [Fully remote delivery for fall 2021](#)

75% of members who responded to last week's question indicated they supported the Association's Statement on Return to Campus Plans. The statement is available [here](#).

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!

MRFA Reminders

In Consultation

Reminder - MRFA 2025: Towards a More Diverse, Inclusive and Equitable Association - Open for Consultation

Last year the Association made a number of structural changes to make the Association more inclusive and welcoming. As part of this continuing effort, the Executive Board approved in principle the draft version of the Association's four-year plan MRFA 2025. The Board also endorsed a consultation plan that will offer members the opportunity to discuss the Plan. Members of the Association can review the draft Plan and offer comments [online](#) (Please Note: to see the draft plan you will need to [log in to your mrfa.net account](#)).

Resources, Events, and Deadlines

Tenure and Promotion Committee Training Sessions

Article 9.1.9 requires that members and alternates serving in their first year on a Tenure or Promotion Committee (or on UTPC) attend one of the workshops conducted jointly by the MRFA and Academic Affairs. Topics include responsibilities of committee members, tenure and promotion criteria, congruence of scholarship expectations with teaching loads at an undergraduate university, the need for flexibility in assessing a candidate's performance, training on equity, diversity and inclusion, and the principles of due process and natural justice. Additional information will be provided this year regarding tenure and promotion process considerations relating to the pandemic. Sessions are being offered on multiple days to ensure you can attend. [Register](#) for one of the sessions listed below and you will receive a calendar invite for the session you register for.

- September 14, 1:00 - 3:00p.m.
- September 28, 2:00 - 4:00p.m.
- October 4, 2:30 - 4:30p.m

Participation is not limited to those who are required to attend. Anyone who would like to or feels they need a refresher is most welcome. For those unable to attend any of the below sessions, but who require the training are asked to contact Chantelle Anderson (cpanderson@mtroyal.ca)

MRFA PDC Events on Managing In-Person and Remote Delivery

Save the Dates!

- Get Cracking – Member Directed Discussion: September 3, 10:00 – 11:20am
- Fall PD Day – Resources for Members: October 14, 10:00am – 12:30pm

Let us know what you want to learn more about!

The PDC invites members to [let us know](#) what types of PD sessions would be of interest this year. In addition to the series noted above, the committee is planning a PD for scholarship series in the Winter 2022 semester.

Resources from the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee

Your Professional Standards and Ethics Committee (PSEC) has developed some useful resources over the past couple of years and is linking them here again for your reference. If there are any specific items you would like information on within the [mandate of PSEC](#), please feel free to send input to FacultyRelations@mrfa.net.

- [When to contact the MRFA](#)
- [MRFA Ethics Bylaws Flowchart](#)
- [Robert's Rules for Online Meetings](#)
- [Robert's Rules Cheat Sheet](#)

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.

Advocacy Efforts

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.

Contacting Your Association

Scheduling with Your Association (@mrfa.net)

Trying to schedule a meeting with the MRFA but can't see availability in the google calendar? Due to the move to the @mrfa.net email server, the President's and Association Staff members' calendars are viewable by searching for them in your calendar using the full email address (i.e. facultyrelations@mrfa.net). Members are encouraged to contact office@mrfa.net for all scheduling requests.

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.

@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.

Faculty Centre

The Faculty Centre remains closed until further notice: our target opening date is **October 12, 2021**. Members are encouraged to send inquiries and booking requests to office@mrfa.net.

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.