

MRFA Weekly Bulletin

December 20, 2021

happy holidays!

WISHING YOU A SEASON
 FILLED WITH WARM MOMENTS
 AND CHERISHED MEMORIES.

THE MRFA EXECUTIVE



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Highlights this week

1 Pandemic Update: MRFA in Winter 2022

The Executive Board is monitoring the surge in COVID cases associated with the Omicron variant. The Executive Board has written to Tim Rahilly urging the senior administration to communicate any decisions regarding delivering courses in Winter as soon as practicable. We have also reminded the President to engage GFC or its Executive Committee when academic decisions must be made. We have also asked again that the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee be involved in reviewing and offering recommendations on any safety plans.

MRFA Operations

In light of the shifting circumstances and given feedback from membership the Association will operate as follows:

MRFA Meetings

All committee meetings, Executive Board meetings, and meetings of the membership meetings will be held virtually until further notice.

MRFA Office

The MRFA Office will reopen for January 5, 2022 at the same level of restricted operation we are currently operating under. These operations may change subject to the circumstances of the pandemic and/or University decisions related to campus operations.

Faculty Centre

The Faculty Centre will reopen January 5, 2022 at 9 AM with the current restricted levels of operation, subject to changes in respect to pandemic regulations. Lunch service will remain available Wednesday through Friday 11:00-2:00 PM and will resume on January 12, 2022 subject to province pandemic restrictions.

The Executive Board will review these arrangements on January 4 and are prepared to move on short notice to remote work, if and when required. The Association is committed to keeping our staff and our operations safe and healthy.

2 Second Call for Sabbatical Leave Applications

In accordance with the Collective Agreement between the Board of Governors and the Mount Royal Faculty Association, there were fewer approved applications than leaves available; therefore, a second call for applications is being made on behalf of the Sabbatical Leave Committee. Please apply for a sabbatical even if you are unsure that you will take one. Remember that under the CA, you can under certain circumstances defer a sabbatical to the following year.

Please note the following deadlines for this call:

Second Call sabbatical leave applications due to Chairs for review by December 20, 2021

Chair to submit to Dean for comments by January 7, 2022.

Dean to provide comments by January 14, 2022

The Sabbatical Leave Committee will meet to consider second-call applications on January 28, 2022.



3 Alberta 2030: Transforming Post-Secondary Education in Our Province

The Alberta 2030 plan seeks to align education and research more closely with private sector wants. The Advocacy committee conducted a panel discussion named 'Alberta 2030: Transforming Post Secondary Education in Our Province' on November 30, 2021. The discussions were based on the political project's specific goals, elements, and strategies.

Panelists:

- Trevor Harrison, University of Lethbridge
- Richard Mueller, University of Lethbridge
- Kevin Kane, President, Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations (CAFA)
- Brenda Austin-Smith, President, Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)

Please Note: to watch the video that was recorded on this session, you will need to [log in to your mrfa.net account](#). If you are having difficulties logging in please click on the reset password button. If the system does not recognize your email account, please email office@mrfa.net for an account to be set up for you.

4 Bargaining Update

On December 03, the Board's negotiating team amended their compensation proposal. The MRFA Negotiations Committee conducted a Special Townhall for December 10, 2021 to communicate this [new offer](#) to you.

5 Important Dates and Upcoming Events



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Extended Proposal Submission Date

The Professional Development Committee has extended the date for proposal submission to January 28, 2022.

PSEC Event: Cultivating Civil Discussion

Given the increase in conflict in academia and our desire to help every single faculty flourish, Members of the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee have invited a few of our own faculty to start a conversation towards maintaining solidarity amongst us by sharing their practical strategies on how to prepare for a conflict or how best to transform a potentially hostile debate into a neutral and fruitful one.

Speakers:

- Jennifer McCormik, Student Counselling Services
- Shiraz Kurji, Accounting and Finance
- Mirjam Knapik, Student Counselling Services

Date: January 07, 2022

Time: 9:30 - 10:30am

Join the webinar [here](#)

Social Event Organized by MRFA Triad Committee (subject to change with respect to the pandemic)

Looking to connect with fellow faculty? Are you currently in a Triad? Interested in learning more about Triads? Would you like to do this over a free lunch?

If yes to any of the above, join us for a complimentary lunch.

- Date: January 12, 2022
- Time: 12:00 - 1:00pm
- Location: Faculty Centre

Register [here](#) to attend the event. Registrations close on January 7, 2022

New Year Event Organized by the Social Events Committee (subject to change with respect to the pandemic)

Celebrate the New Year with Colleagues. To accommodate varied schedules and allow for social distancing, prior registration is required for one of the two sessions: Lunch or End-of-Day servings

- Date: January 21, 2022
- Time slots: 12:00 - 2:00 pm (lunch serving) or 4:00 - 6:00 pm (end-of-day serving)
- Location: Faculty Centre

Register [here](#) to attend the event. Registrations close on January 13, 2022.

See Faculty Centre COVID Protocols [here](#)

[View MRFA Calendar →](#)



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Reminder – MRFA Committee Positions Available:

The following positions are to be appointed by the MRFA Executive Board in accordance with MRFA [Bylaw 13.1.1](#) and MRFA [Policy Article 14](#):

Academic Liaison Committee

Position: 1 position for 2021-2023

Eligibility: All Regular Members from the Faculty of Science and Technology. Experience on GFC would be deemed beneficial.

Awards Committee Chair

Position: 1 position for 2021 -2023.

Eligibility: This position is open to all regular members. Demonstrable understanding of the variety of ways and various levels to assess teaching, as per MRU standards (competent teaching, proficient and scholarly teaching and leadership and excellence in teaching), would be deemed beneficial.

Member Engagement Committee

Position: 3 positions for 2021-2023 and 1 position for 2021-2022

Eligibility: three of these positions must be filled by Contract members and one position is open to all full-time members. For representative purposes, candidates from a variety of sessional appointment types would be ideal (e.g. lab, sessional, continuing, and fixed term).

Social Events Committee

Position: 1 position for 2021-2023

Eligibility: All contract members are eligible.

Job Action Preparedness Committee

Position: 1 position for 2021-2023

Eligibility: All members are eligible



MRFA Question of the Week

Self-care is not selfish.

We've been schooled to think that taking time for ourselves needs to come after every other priority is taken care of. However, if we put ourselves first, or at least near the top of the priority list we are better able and equipped to offer assistance to others who need our help. It's time we began making our needs just as important as everyone else's needs.

Compared to pre-pandemic times, how much time are you going to spend on self-care over the semester break?

- [Usual \(what is typical for me\)](#)
- [More than usual](#)
- [Less than usual](#)

Last week over 40% of our members indicated that they are moderately optimistic about 2022 and 12% couldn't wait for the new year to begin. The Association do hope that the new year brings positive changes to all members and that the Association will continue to operate with least restrictions so that the members feel more engaged in the coming year.

Thank you for your ongoing engagement in the Association despite the busy time of year! We look forward to seeing you again in the Faculty Centre if you are able to come when it's safe to do so in 2022!

[How much time are you going to spend on self-care over the semester break?](#)