



## **Minutes of the Mount Royal Faculty Association**

**Meeting date: August 26, 2020**

**Call to order:** A Diversity and Equity Committee meeting of the MRFA was held virtually through Zoom in Calgary, Alberta on August 26, 2020. The meeting convened at 2:03p.m., Chair, Maki Motopanyane presiding.

### **Members Present:**

Andrea Phillipson  
Derrick Antson  
Ghada Alatrash  
Jennifer McCormick  
J.J. Fenez

Lee Easton (Guest)  
Leah Hamilton  
Maki Motopanyane  
Maria Teresa Grillo Arbulu  
Yasaman Amannejad

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the June 8, 2020 Diversity and Equity Committee meeting were approved by consent, with one revision.

### **Business Arising**

1. Introduction, Welcome and Document Binders
  - The committee was re-introduced to new and continuing members as well as to the new MRFA President Lee Easton. The committee members were informed of the MRFA Policies, Bylaws and Committee Charter as well as the Collective Agreement. Links to these documents were provided in the Agenda.
2. Committee Working Groups
  - i. Communication Working Group
    - The committee discussed the need for a communication working group to develop a communication strategy for addressing diversity, equity and inclusion topics.
    - The Communications working group is Andrea Phillipson, Leah Hamilton and Maria Teresa Grillo Arbulu. The working group will be supported by J.J. Fenez. The working group is tasked with developing a communications plan and developing a poster in collaboration with the joint Occupational Health and Safety committee on Freedom of Expression. The committee also discussed how the Communication working group will work on the letter to the MRFA President regarding the conduct observed at the AGM as well as the possibility of looking at some of the problematic language used by members at the AGM and drafting messaging around why this language was problematic, providing a resource for others to see how/why this type of language is problematic.
    - During the discussion of the purpose of the Communication Working Group a question was asked, whether there is an official recording of the AGM in May 2020. The committee was informed that there is no official recording of the AGM and that members of the Association were asked prior to that meeting not to record it. This committee was then informed

that the MRFA Executive is looking at how to provide more integrated approaches to MRFA meetings.

- It was brought to the committee's attention that, according to university policy, persons alleging discrimination are required to collect evidence supporting their claims and it was suggested that recordings can be beneficial to this collection process. The committee discussed the possibility of making a recommendation to the Executive Board regarding recording meetings. It was decided that the committee will take some time to consider advantages and disadvantages to recording meetings and will discuss this further at the next DEC meeting.

ii. COVID-19 Dependent Care/Workload

- The committee discussed creating a Covid-19 Dependent care/Workload working group to look at the pandemic and its negative effects on those providing care who are also struggling with workload. The discussion centred on a problematic email sent out by University management on August 18 (Appendix A) outlining the options for faculty teaching from home who have care obligations which may impact their teaching workload.
- The working group members are Ghada Alatrash, Jennifer McCormick and Yasaman Amannejad. The working group has been tasked with looking into the landscape regarding what options are available for faculty during Covid, how this impacts equity and what can this committee do to advance positive equity measures.
- The committee was informed of an advisory that is being put together regarding the impact of Covid-19 on faculty work. This working group will be sent the draft advisory for review/comments and revisions.

**Action:** Lee Easton will send the draft advisory to Ghada, Jennifer and Yasaman for input. Input is to be received by 3p.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2020.

3. Recommendations regarding MRFA Internal Meetings

- The committee discussed how to advance equity within the internal structure of the MRFA in regard to events such as meetings (regular and committee), professional development and social events. The committee briefly discussed asynchronous delivery of PD events; this is not always possible with all types of PD the Association offers. The committee was informed as well that meetings of the Association are governed by the Bylaws (Article 7) which provides that: "All meetings of the Association shall be held on working days and between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.". The committee discussed looking at the bylaws and identifying inequitable practices. This will be discussed further at the next committee meeting and recommendations (if any) may be put forward to the Bylaws and Governance committee for consideration.

4. Intra-MRFA Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Training

- The committee was informed that the MRFA Executive Board has tasked this committee with developing internal EDI training with the aim of tailoring the training to the MRFA/ MRU specifically. This is also seen as a membership engagement piece. The committee discussed, briefly, the amount of work involved and the remuneration for comparative training elsewhere. The committee decided to consider all the options/costs/ benefits etc. and will discuss in further detail at the next committee meeting.

5. CAUT Ten Actions to Advance Equity during Covid-19

- The committee was provided with a guide from the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) with ten actions to advance equity during the pandemic. Most of the items on the list were actions already being taken by the MRFA. One concern was raised regarding the recommendation to reconsider tenure and promotion timelines and criteria. There was serious concern raised regarding the “stopping the clock” for those on the tenure track. The committee discussed the importance of reconsidering expectations over simply freezing the process. The committee also discussed the CAUT recommendation regarding the collection of demographic data by the employer. This will be discussed further at the next committee meeting.

6. Requirement of Exec for Annual Self & Chair Evaluation

- The committee was informed that this practice is about documenting practices to maintain institutional knowledge. The 2019-2020 annual report reflects what this committee has done and what the committee aims to do this year and suits the purpose of this evaluation.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:59p.m.