MRFA 2025

Building an Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive Association

Dear MRFA Members

I am pleased to announce that the Mount Royal Faculty Association's Executive Board has approved *MRFA 2025: Building an Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive Association*. This Plan is the culmination of over a year of work by the MRFA 2025 Working Group and the result of consultation with the BIPOC Support Network and with individual members. It is an action plan to transform our Association into an organization that is more inclusive, more equitable and more welcoming. I am eager to get to work.

Where did this Plan Come From?

This plan has its origins in the Executive Board's 2020 *Statement on Racism* that was issued in the wake of George Floyd's murder and acknowledging police violence against Black and Indigenous people in Canada. In that statement, the MRFA Executive Board committed to a full review of the Association's By-laws, policies and procedures.

In September 2020, the Executive Board established an Equity Review Taskforce, charged with examining the Association's basic documents and policies to ensure they were as inclusive as possible and did not foster discrimination. Their recommendations resulted in important changes to the Association's Bylaws last year as well as to on-going revisions of the Association's policies.

As the review progressed, the Taskforce members saw that a more fundamental cultural change was required–change that would take time and a clear action-oriented plan to guide the work needed to transform the Association. With that goal in mind, the Taskforce wrote the first draft of *MRFA 2025* with four proposed goals or interventions. The MRFA Executive Board approved these goals in June 2021. The Plan was then posted on the Association's website for member comment and suggestions.

Since September 2021, the MRFA 2025 Working Group continued refining the Plan. It reviewed members' feedback and held consultations between October and December 2021. Representatives of the Working Group also met with the BIPOC Support Network and received feedback from the MRFA Diversity and Equity Committee. The Working Group reviewed all received feedback and, where appropriate, made revisions to the Plan.

I wish to thank all of those who took time to share their labour and expertise. The Association is indebted to them.

Some members are still curious about the Plan and its origins. Let me therefore take a moment to answer a few frequently asked questions.

Why is this Plan Necessary?

This plan is required in order to address the Association's past inadequacies and failures when dealing with the concerns of our members who hail from equity-deserving groups or, more accurately, historically-excluded groups. The Plan's starting point is that the Mount Royal Faculty Association has not always been the inclusive, equitable and welcoming organization that we have imagined it to be. As an Association, we need to do better to make sure we hear the legitimate concerns our colleagues have expressed about being unheard, marginalized and treated unfairly. This Plan offers a road map to acknowledging (facing) that the Association has deep connections to white, hetero-normative, patriarchal, abilist, male, colonial privilege (yes, that word) and to reorienting the Association to become more fully serving all of its members.

What Does the Plan Offer?

MRFA 2025 has five major goals or interventions that will transform our Association over the next 4 years. The Plan is appropriately focused on accountability–it outlines concrete strategies and specific actions with implementation timelines. Over the next three years, for example, the MRFA Executive Board will lead an organizational review to ensure the Association's mission, vision and goals are congruent with our focus on equity, diversity and inclusion. We will be reviewing our organizational structure and activities, which will culminate in proposed changes to be effective in May 2023. The MRFA 2025 Working Group is also working on annual report card, which will provide members with a progress report on the Plan's implementation. More importantly, I know we must act, not just plan to act. So, you will notice a number of specific actions in the Plan are already accomplished (in green) or underway (in blue). These are initial steps but not the last.

Where can I find the Plan?

MRFA 2025 can be found on the Association's website. You will find there a FAQ page that provides some information about the Plan. This is a dynamic document so if you have questions or comments about *MRFA 2025*, you can address them to office@mrfa.net or to me at president@mrfa.net. We anticipate making adjustments to the Plan as it unfolds.

A Final Word of Thanks

I need to thank all the members of the MRFA 2025 Working Group, past and present. Their imagination, expertise and labour of all types made the Plan come together. I also want to thank the MRFA Executive Board for their commitment to foster and guide the changes the Plan proposes. Now, let us get to work.

Sincerely,

Lee Easton, MRFA President

Preface

As this Plan develops the framework for our work towards building an equitable, diverse, and inclusive association, we do so with the recognition that this work requires an ongoing collective and systematic vigilance. We anticipate that every new MRFA Executive Board in active collaboration with the membership will review and reflect on this Plan and engage in further development as needed.

We have included a glossary at the end of this document to help establish a common vocabulary. The terms contained within the glossary are intersecting and as such, any distinctions within the concepts are incomplete and arbitrary.

Table of Contents.

Executive Summary

The Mount Royal Faculty Association is committed to the work of building an equitable, diverse, and inclusive association. This work requires ongoing dedication and courage. Having said that, this Plan acknowledges that the Association has not always been an inclusive, equitable and welcoming organization for all its members. Members of historically excluded groups have not seen the MRFA as an organization that represents them. We have at times failed these members and we need to do better. *MRFA 2025* is an important part of addressing these gaps and mistakes.

With this in mind, the Association has taken and continues to take immediate steps towards realizing our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. We know that working towards an inclusive association must recognize and include the diverse experiences of those members whose voices and experiences have historically been excluded from, or minimized within, the Association.

> **This Plan is broadly intended to provide a pathway for the Association to achieve its goals as outlined in the MRFA Bylaws. The overarching goal of the Plan is to create an organization that respects the dignity, rights, and beliefs of its Association members.**

The initial draft of the Plan identified four key interventions to guide the work of the Association and its Executive Board until 2025. Justice-centred, anti-colonial, anti-racist, equitable, anti-discriminatory, and inclusive practices are required to transform the Association. To that end, in June 2021, the Executive Board approved goals 1-4.

1. **Increase historically excluded members' engagement with the Association and representation on its committees and its Executive. Board.**
2. **Create, implement, and support inclusive, diverse, and equitable Association systems and structures.**
3. **Strengthen the Association's working environment to prioritize safety for its members and staff.**
4. **Build members' capacity to develop and implement EDI in the Association and across MRU**

The completed plan has added a fifth intervention – accountability of the Association to meet these goals.

5. **Ensure accountability within the Association to achieve goals 1-4.**

The MRFA Executive Board approved this intervention as well as the entire Plan at its March 18, 2022 meeting.

To ensure accountability, an immediate action item will see the MRFA 2025 Working Group, in conjunction with the Diversity and Equity Committee and the MRFA Executive Board, develop a report card to inform members annually about the Association's progress.

The Association is also committed to conducting cyclical organizational reviews with respect to all goals outlined in this plan and one of the first steps in this process shall be to develop an EDI Policy.

Concomitantly, building on the gains in the most recent Collective Agreement, the Association commits to ensuring that collective bargaining continues to take a leadership role in the realization and implementation of this Plan. We have alsready added key EDI goals into the Association's Long-Range Bargaining Goals and these will be pursued through bargaining the relevant provisions in the Collective Agreement, wherever possible and appropriate. In the final year of this Plan, the Association will undertake a process of review, conversation, consultation, and reflection in order to update the EDI plan to move forward for the next 5 years.

Guiding Principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

> **This Plan seeks to ensure that the Association commits to concrete actions that will result in the fullest inclusion of its members, with particular attention to those members whose voices and experiences have historically been absent from the Association, including (but certainly not limited to and not listed in any order of importance):**

- Gender and sexual diverse individuals;
- Indigenous individuals;
- Individuals with disabilities;
- Neurodivergent individuals;
- Racially minoritized individuals;
- Refugees and new immigrants;
- Religious minorities;
- Socio-economically disadvantaged individuals;
- Women.

The Association recognises that each member of the Association uniquely embodies and inhabits multiple, simultaneous, and contextualised social locations and experiences and that, as such, various approaches are required to address all of the Association's unique members and the continued awareness needed to acknowledge, respect, and support those members.

The Plan's Vision

The Association is committed to: Acknowledgment and Celebration. Visibility and Representation. Equitable Treatment and Opportunities.

Intervention 0.0 Accountability within the MRFA

Concrete strategies		Specific Actions (Green = Completed / Blue = Currently Underway)	Who does it	Implement by
0.1	Approve a Strong Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.	Create an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy with wide consultation among interested members	Bylaws & Governance, MRFA 2025, EDIC, the Executive Board	April 2023
0.2	Conduct a review of goals, mission, vision, and organizational structure of the Mount Royal Faculty Association.	Strike an Organizational Structure Taskforce to steer the process	Executive Board	Sept. 2022
		Consult with members on Association mission, vision and goal	Organizational Taskforce	Fall 2022
		Revise the Association's Organizational structure Modify By-laws to reflect revised organization	Taskforce/Executive	Jan 2023
		Elect officers according to revised bylaws at AGM	Bylaws & Governance Executive/Staff	March - May 2023
0.3	Develop a report card to track accountability for the Plan and its projected outcomes.	The Executive Board issues annual reports to members on the Board's EDI plans.	MRFA 2025 Working Group.	April 2022
0.4	Establish an EDI Council.	Use the 2025 MRFA Working Group to develop a network of stakeholders with a view of establishing an EDI Council.	MRFA 2025, Exec., & Taskforce	January 2023
		Create By-laws to structure the EDI Council	Bylaws & Governance	February 2023
		Establish EDI Council	Executive Board	May 2023

0.5	**Provide avenues for feedback from members of rhe MRFA Executive Board, MRFA Committees, and MRFA Staff**	Develop a complaint policy related to Executive Board/MRFA Committees Develop Staff Policies for member complaints Highlight the results of the MRFA Census related to Executive Board and President	Bylaws & Governance Audit and Finance Committee SAFRO	Draft May 2022 Draft May 2022 April Annually
0.6	**Conduct a cyclical review of MRFA Committees, social events, by-laws, policies, and procedures through the lens of the MRFA 2025 plan.**	Create a Policy for a cyclical review of MRFA Committees, social events, by-laws, policies, and procedures through the lens of the MRFA 2025 plan. Review the Appointments Policy to allow for the appointment of specific members to increase representation Conduct cyclical reviews (noted above)	MRFA 2025 Implementation Committee Bylaws & Governance All Committees, staff, & Executive Members	October 2022 April 2023 May Annually
0.7	**Develop a communications plan and strategies for membership engagement, transparency, and accountability.**	Launch the MRFA 2025 Plan Develop and maintain EDI page on mrfa.net	MRFA 2025, Comms Officer, Executive Board, and Staff Communications, SAFRO, DEO	March 2022 March 2022 and ongoing

1.0 Representation within the MRFA and MRU

Concrete strategies		Specific Actions (Green = Completed / Blue = Currently Underway)	Who does it	Implement by
1.1	**Track and identify barriers contributing to historical and ongoing under representation in the Association.**	Develop optional exit interviews for out-going Exec members and Committee Chairs on their experiences and identify issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion that require attention.	President and projected HR advisor	May 2023
		Develop a follow-up questionnaire for all out-going Committee members on their experiences and identify issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion that require our attention.	SAFRO and President	May 2022
		Request committee chairs to engage in discussions around invisible labour. Chairs to report to Executive Board	Committee chairs, President, and DEC-O	April 2022 May 2022
1.2	**Use the MRFA census to collect data, analyze and disseminate data on member identification and historically excluded members' experiences or barriers encountered with the MRFA and the University.**	Review and redesign the MRFA census to include collection on said data.	DEC-O and SAFRO	March 2022
		Design a communications campaign to increase member completion of the MRFA census.	Comms Committee	March 2023
1.3	**Work with the University to collect and share hiring and faculty retention data.**	Implement provisions in the Collective Agreement for collection of hiring and retention data (note - related issue in correlating the data and self-identification).	MRFA Representatives on the JEDI Committee	Sept 2022

	Develop a better understanding who is leaving MRU and under what pressures.	Ensure that Long-Term Bargaining Goals Committee refers to appropriate groups involved with Negotiations (e.g. Collective Bargaining Advisory Committee and/or Negotiating Committee)	Long Term Bargaining Goals Committee and, eventually, Negotiations	April 2022, then ongoing till 2025
1.4	**Collect and disseminate aggregate data to track and reduce the number of cases of harassment and bullying involving MRFA members.**	Support the JOHSC in gaining regular (monthly) access to MRU's OHS data to be shared with the Executive. Develop a reporting process between JOHSC and Exec. Add a standing reporting item to the Exec agenda. Provide orientation and training to our JOHSC members. Develop an internal MRFA EDI complaints process with tracking Provide training to DEO and MEO on relevant aspects of Mobilis to help develop this process.	JOHSC, DEC-O, President, MRFA staff. JOSC Members/ Executive Board SAFRO President DEO/Staff President/Staff/ Bylaws & Governance Executive Board/Staff	Sept. 2022 Sept. 2022 August 2022 August 2022 August 2022 June 2022
1.5	**Advocate for changes in the Collective Agreement to provide more full-time tenurable positions for current qualified contract academic faculty and more job security for those who are precariously employed.**	Creation of the Faculty Workload Taskforce charged with looking at pathways Continue participating in CAUT's Fair Employment Week Organize activities to highlight inequities of precariously employed faculty Use the Faculty Workload Taskforce to advocate for pathways to permanency Establish pathways for contract faculty as a central priority for Collective bargaining in 2024	Negotiating Committee Advocacy Committee Faculty Workload Committee Negotiations Committee	February 2022 On-going Fall 2022/ Winter 2023 January 2024

| 1.6 | Develop a strategy to respond to the impact of Covid 19 including amendments being made to existing tenure and promotion guidelines and documentation which ensures that pandemic impacts are taken into consideration indefinitely. | Use the MRFA census to track the impact of COVID19 for the next 4 years.

Census results to be provided to the MRFA Long Range Bargaining (LRB) Goals and the MRFA Negotiating Committee

Share census data with the Academic Standards committee.

Make changes through GFC for recognition of the impact of the pandemic in tenure and promotion documents | SAFRO, Executive Board

SAFRO/LRO, Negotiations

Academic Liaison Off.

Academic Liaison Officer and Academic Liaison Committee | May 2023

May 2022 and ongoing

Sept. 2022

December 2024 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1.7 | Include EDI training requirements in the CA. | Completed with the ratification of the recent Collective Agreement | Negotiating Committee | March 2022 |

2.0 Engagement with the Association

	Concrete strategies	Specific Actions (Green = Completed / Blue = Currently Underway)	Who does it	Implement by
2.1	**Learn from members' experiences to adapt and improve processes which will promote equity and ongoing engagement in the MRFA.**	Revise and clarify MRFA By-laws and policies (specifically Communications Policy 13.2.5 and Bylaws Political Activity, Charitable Activity and Donations 25) to enable the Association to respond in timely ways to issues related to the scope of this document and its goals.	Bylaws & Governance	October 2022
2.2	**Track the number of self-identified members engaging with the Association.**	Use MRFA Census to track information by adding questions re engagement with Association Implement the MRFA Meeting Policy to reflect UDL principles.	MRFA Staff (SAFR0); Member Engagement MRFA Staff	March 2022 On-going
2.3	**Schedule MRFA meetings and events so that they reflect the diverse work-home-care realities of our membership.**	Implement the MRFA Meetings Policy to enable hybrid participation Consider scheduling different meeting times including evening meetings	MRFA Staff MRFA Executive Board and Staff	AGM 2022 and on-going afterward
2.4	**Provide inclusive and accessible technology-based options for holding meetings. Track whether those options increase opportunities for member participation and involvement.**	Implement the MRFA Meeting Policy to reflect Universal Design for Learning principles. Employ meeting technology to facilitate hybrid meetings and events in FC Create a post meeting follow-up mechanism	MRFA Staff MRFA Staff MRFA Staff	Underway Completed Underway

2.5	Enhance collaborative decision making by addressing matters of timely provision of materials and consideration of member workload and other impacts on members' ability to fully participate in collaborative decision making.	Review Meeting Policy to adjust timelines to ensure timely provision of materials etc. Review timelines to incorporate a principle of reflection Clarify and communicate expectations around Association work	Bylaws & Governance MRFA Staff Bylaws & Governance Executive Board	April 2023 February 2023 Dec. 2022
2.6	Rearrange or redesign the Faculty Centre, meeting rooms, and working spaces to increase accessibility to all members regardless of social location(s), disability, and/or identities and ensure events held in this space are inclusive and welcoming.	Install an automatic door to enable members with mobility challenges access Implement on-line ordering Clearly display signs about expected conduct Clarify processes for incident reporting in FC	MRFA Staff Faculty Center Coordinator	Completed March 2022
2.7	Develop a set of practices within the Association to recognise a diversity of belief systems and practices, health and lifestyle needs.	Providing food that is inclusive of religious practices at MRFA meetings and events Creating inclusive lunch menus in the faculty centre.	Faculty Centre Coordinator Faculty Center Coordinator	April 2022 Completed

3.0 Working Environment

Concrete strategies		Specific Actions (Green = Completed / Blue = Currently Underway)	Who does it	Implement by
3.1	**Improve efficiency and effectiveness of the MRFA's response to issues where our members are not receiving appropriate support or are encountering barriers to thriving safely in their jobs.**	Improve data gathering on issues Implement a trauma-informed approach to grievance process	MRFA Staff/Executive Board Grievance Committee	January 2023 Fall 2022
3.2	**Advocate for EDI-informed hiring practices.**	Implement EDI training requirements in the new CA. Create a recommendation document to guide proposing changes to the *Hiring Guidelines for Faculty* including diversity in hiring committees, improved recruitment practices, and consultation with Indigenous communities when hiring for Indigenous-focused positions. Implement mandatory EDI training as outlined in the Collective Agreement related to tenure and promotion committees	Steering Committee for EDI Training /JEDI Long Range Bargaining Goals and Collective Bargaining Advisory Committee MRFA President/ MRU Provost	December 2022 January 2024 May 2023
3.3	**Advocate for improved human resources and environmental health and safety.**	Better Health and Safety provisions in the Collective Agreement.	Refer to the Long-Term Bargaining Goals Committee.	April 2022

3.4	**Incorporate EDI goals into Long Term Bargaining Goals Document to create more inclusive working conditions.**	A representative from the Diversity and Equity Committee sits on the Long-Range Bargaining Goals Committee.	Bylaws & Governance	Dec. 2021
3.5	**Align Association's external practices with its EDI goals.**	Create policies to ensure that the Association engages unionized external parties/services, where possible.	Advocacy Committee Bylaws & Governance	May 2023
3.6	**Ensure the Association's financial investments, where possible, are aligned with the principles in this document.**	Review the Association's financial investments. Develop an ethical investment policy.	Audit and Finance Committee	May 2023
3.7	**Ensure principles of EDI are incorporated into MRFA Staff Policies including those related to hiring, training, and retention of MRFA staff.**	Develop an EDI policy for the MRFA Staff. Undertake cyclical reviews of staff salaries with a view to ensure pay equity is maintained.	Audit & Finance/ Executive Board Audit & Finance/ Executive Board	May 2023 May 2023

3.8	**Support awareness of and cultivate appreciation for gender and sexual diversity within the MRFA and MRU.**	Adjust the mandate of the Diversity and Equity Committee. Advocate through MRU Coalition, GFC and with Administration for identifiable, accessible all-gender washrooms (and change rooms where applicable) in all buildings at MRU.	Bylaws & Governance MRFA President / Academic Liaison Officer / Diversity and Equity Committee	May 2023 May 2024
3.9	**Align Association's internal practices with its EDI goals.**	Association Committee charters incorporate awareness and appreciation for gender and sexual diversity within the MRFA. Association documents reflect gender neutral pronouns.	Bylaws & Governance / MRFA Staff	January 2023
3.10	**Change the Collective Agreement so that it provides flexibility in "holidays" to recognize holidays outside of the western Christian tradition.**	Incorporate into the Long-Range Bargaining Goals.	Long Range Bargaining Goals Committee	May 2023

4.0 Member Capacity

The MRFA recognizes that Indigenous, anti-racist, feminist, human rights, and politically informed work may not be fully recognized and adequately supported by academic institutions and may place academic staff at risk for criticism within and outside of classrooms.

Concrete strategies		Specific Actions (Green = Completed / Blue = Currently Underway)	Who does it	Implement by
4.1	**Advocate for amendments to MRU's tenure and promotion criteria to better support historically excluded faculty members in tenure, retention and promotion processes.**	Consult with BIPOC Support Network for suggested changes	President/DEO/ Academic Liaison Officer	Fall 2022
		Work through the Academic Standards Committee of GFC to amend the Institutional Tenure and Promotion Criteria	Academic Liaison Officer	Winter 2024
4.2	**Incorporate ongoing educational opportunities for MRFA members**	Draw on the educational activities appendix ACRI approach.	Prof. Standards and Ethics, Prof. Dev. and Diversity and Equity Committees.	Starting in September 2022 and ongoing
4.3	**Advocate and actively support Indigenous faculty in tenure, retention, and promotion.** **Support Indigenous methodologies, teaching practices, and community research to be acknowledged and funded by the University.** **Review & amend TPC and UTPC training where applicable.**	Review changes to Collective Agreement with BIPOC support network and other groups to assess impact.	VP Negotiations and President / Collective Bargaining Advisory Committee	May 2022 and ongoing
		Work with Indigenous faculty to determine how best to address these areas.	MRFA Executive Board	Fall 2022
		Revise TC, PC, and UTPC Training to ensure Tenure and Promotion Committee training includes understanding of changes to the criteria.	MRFA and University (TBD) and Academic Liaison Officer	Sep. 2023

4.4	**Recognize systematic barriers faced by Indigenous faculty members, such as hostile classrooms, racist comments on SPOTS, and the ongoing fatigue from dealing with violence of colonialism on and off campus.** **Review and amend TPC and UTPC training where applicable.**	Review Article 29-Indigenization to determine required action	MRFA 2025 Working Group	April 2022
		Improve language in Article 28 to deal with racist comments	Faculty Evaluation Committee	Sept. 2024
		Work with the Provost and the MRFA President to revise TC, PC, and UTPC Training to ensure Tenure and Promotion Committee training includes understanding of changes to the criteria from recognizing Indigenous ways of knowing in the Institutional Tenure and Promotion Criteria.	MRFA President and Joint Steering Committee for EDI Training (JEDI)	Sept. 2023
4.5	**Actively support racialized faculty in tenure, retention, and promotion.** **Address systematic barriers in place for racialized faculty members, such as hostile classrooms, racist comments on student evaluations,** **Address the ongoing emotional labour of dealing with racism on and off campus.**	Amend Institutional Tenure and Promotion Criteria to account for racialized identities.	Academic Liaison Officer	Sept. 2023
		Create a Tenure and Promotion Support program to address these issues	Member Engagement Officer	June 2023
		Work to have recommendations from Systemic Racism Taskforce implemented	Faculty Evaluation Committee	Sept. 2024

4.6	**Actively support gender and sexually diverse, two-spirit, and non-binary faculty in tenure, retention and promotion.** **Addressing systematic barriers in place for gender and sexually diverse, two-spirit, and non-binary faculty members, such as hostile classrooms, discriminatory comments on student evaluations, and** **Address the ongoing labour of dealing with discrimination on and off campus.**	Work with the University to address these issues	MRFA Representatives on JEDI and Joint Committee on EDI Training	May 2023
		Create a Tenure and Promotion Support program to address these issues	Member Engagement Committee	June 2023
		Improve language in Article 28 to deal with discriminatory comments in SPoTS	Faculty Evaluation Committee	Fall 2024
		Use the census and other tools to identify specific barriers and strategies to overcome them	SAFRO/Executive Board	March 2022 onwards
		Address additional workload that inequity brings	Faculty Workload and Appointments Committee	Fall and Winter 2023
4.7	**Actively support faculty members with caregiving responsibilities in their tenure, retention, and promotion.**	Review current MRFA measures on childcare accessibility for MRFA events	Bylaws & Governance Long Range Bargaining and Collective Bargaining Advisory Group	April 2022
		Evaluate how caregiving impacts MRFA members' tenure and promotion.		Fall 2023
		Create a MRFA Dependent Care Policy	SAFRO/ Bylaws and Governance	Approved by the Executive Board in March 2022

	Recognize the gendered implications of caregiving work on faculty member's career trajectory **Recognize the need for accessible and affordable childcare for all faculty members.** **Ensure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, where faculty members with childcare have been significantly impacted due to closure of schools and childcare centres is recognized**	Use the MRFA Census to track impacts	SAFRO Diversity and Equity Committee	March 2023
4.8	**Recognize the importance of acknowledging the wide range of human neurologies and neurological differences**	Develop understanding of neurological differences including Autism, ADHD, OCD, Tourette's, dyslexia, and other cognitive differences. See note below.	Diversity and Equity Committee	Winter 2025

APPENDIX

1. Educational opportunities and training

The Mount Royal Faculty Association fully acknowledges the wealth and depth of knowledge and expertise that exists—both inside and outside of MRU—connected or embedded in EDI. We are committed to recognizing, supporting, and amplifying existing expertise and resources. Below, we've captured examples of educational opportunities, training, and advocacy support that form our ongoing commitment to the work of building an equitable, diverse, and inclusive association.

AMPLIFY: promote and celebrate the work of MRU scholars and experts.

CONNECT: invite scholars from outside MRU.

RESOURCE: EDI work and ADVOCATE for Mount Royal to do the same.

INCENTIVIZE: to encourage engagement with professional development connected to EDI.

Professional development opportunities and resources for MRFA members who want to build their own EDI capacity and for those wanting to increase capacity for EDI initiatives across MRU (not limited to):

i. the history and ongoing contributions of Black, Asian and other racially minoritized people in Canada as well as racially minoritized immigrants and refugees in Canada

ii. the history and ongoing contributions of Indigenous people, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the violence of 60s Scoop, the lack of sufficient action to Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Men in Canada, the ongoing colonization through violation of treaty agreement and rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, treaties and Indigenous rights, Indigenous law, and Indigenous-Crown relations

iii. history and ongoing contributions of women and other gender and sexual minorities in Canada, including: the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women; the Calls to Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls; the annual findings of the Canadian Centre for

Policy Alternatives that rank Calgary as among the worst urban places in Canada for women to live ; and the history and legacies of Canada's gay and trans liberation movement

iv. the history and contributions of neurodiverse people in Canada

v. diverse religious and faith practices

vi. integrating Indigenous knowledge frameworks and teaching methods into scholarship and teaching

vii. building student capacity for decolonization work in keeping with the recommendations of the TRC

viii. identifying and responding productively to workplace harassment, bullying, and various forms of discrimination and/or human rights violations (e.g., racism, sexism, ableism, gendered violence, and trans-antagonism)

ix. bystander intervention

x. conflict resolution

xi. recognizing and preventing discrimination in all its forms

xii. integrating EDI best practices to eradicate white supremacist, capitalist, heteropatriarchal thinking and processes from scholarship and/or teaching including (not limited to):
   ○ principles of Universal Design in Learning (UDL)
   ○ incorporating Indigenous knowledge frameworks
   ○ strategies for decolonization, gender and racial justice
   ○ facilitating difficult conversations
   ○ integrating critical disability studies frameworks and teaching methods (including UDL) into classrooms
   ○ building student capacity for critical disability advocacy
   ○ building student capacity for religious tolerance work and advocate for enhanced provision of support for instructors on how to integrate religious tolerance teaching methods into classrooms
   ○ recognizing and preventing sexism and misogyny in all their forms
   ○ integrating feminist and queer theories and approaches into their classrooms
   ○ building capacity for non-gender-essentialist understanding, empathy, and mutual respect in the face of gender and sexual diversity.

2.   History

The Collective Agreement throughout the years has not only protected our working conditions but also furthered equity on campus through bargaining on the following provisions. In 1991 language to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual preference was added to the Collective Agreement which saw MRU to offer health benefits to gender ands sexual diverse faculty long before the Supreme Court of Canada's Vriend decision in 1999. The Collective Agreement was again modified to prohibit discrimination based on gender identity in 2004. In 2014, the Association and the University added Article 24-Diversity and Equity to the Collective Agreement and in 2016, the Joint Diversity and Equity Committee was created. In 2018, two major initiatives were agreed to in collective bargaining. The MOU on Article 24 agreed to a pay equity study focussed on binary gender and another MOU was reached to Recognize Indigenous Knowledge, Ways of Knowing and Scholarship.

The Association has also been working towards becoming a more inclusive organization.

- 2016- Approved By-law 10 renames Diversity Committee to Diversity and Equity Committee
- 2020- Approved adding the Diversity and Equity Officer to the Executive Board
- 2021- Approved By-law changes among several to:
  - included a territorial acknowledgement in Bylaws
  - Made Association meetings more accessible
  - Completed EDI workshops for MRFA Grievance Committee members, the Executive Board and MRFA staff

As part of its plans for the 2019-2020 plan, the MRFA Executive Board identified creating an EDI Plan to guide the Association's efforts. The pandemic, however, led to this plan being deferred.

This current Plan to create a more accessible and representative Association gained impetus from the MRFA's *Statement on Racism* June 2020 and in September 2020, the Bylaws and Governance Committee recommended that the MRFA Board consider striking an Equity Review Working Group (ERG) to fulfill this commitment. The Board appointed MRFA President Dr. Lee Easton, Member-at-Large Dr. Irene Shankar, and Past MRFA President Dr. Melanie Peacock to the working group, who recommended that the group have broader and more direct representation from the members. The Executive Board accepted this recommendation and issued a call for expressions of interest for members to join the Equity Review Working Group.

Through this call, Dr. Kimberly A. Williams, Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies in the Department of Humanities, was appointed to the Working Group. In addition, to ensure a connection with the MRFA's Equity and Diversity Committee , Dr. Ghada Alatrash, a contract academic faculty member in the Departments of Humanities and General Education, agreed to join this Working Group. In 2021-2022, the reconstituted Working Group had Dr. Michael Ata and Dr. David Couliably appointed to replace Dr. Melanie Peacock and Dr. Ghada Alatrash.

3. Glossary

3.1. Capitalism

Capitalism is the world's dominant economic system. It is also a settler colonial system that disproportionately affects historically excluded people. It requires the privatization of resources and modes of production. In this economic system, production is primarily for a market rather than directly for the needs of the producers. Capitalism considers wage labour the most important form of labour, which inherently devalues, both monetarily and culturally, the five Cs work of caring, caring, clerical, catering, cashiering, and cleaning (Government of Canada 2017). This labour, both under- and unpaid, is done overwhelmingly by women, gender non-conforming people, immigrants, and visible/racialized persons.

The brand of capitalism currently dominating the global economy is neoliberal capitalism. Neoliberalism is a political ideology that advocates free-market capitalism, the private accumulation of wealth, and the disinvestment from public institutions through the reduction of government spending. This has resulted in the adjunctification of the academy, including here at MRU where more than 65% percent of courses are taught by contract faculty -- most of whom are women and/or visible/racialized persons.

3.2. Decolonization

Decolonization was first used in the early twentieth century to refer to former colonies that had gained political independence from their colonizers. Since this has not happened in Canada (i.e. Canada is a settler colonial nation-state), decolonization has come to refer to the long-term and ongoing process of disrupting the colonial systems and structures of white supremacist, capitalist, heteropatriarchy. It is a process, not a product. Academic decolonization challenges the colonial roots of the university itself in a wide variety of ways. These include (but are certainly not limited to): valuing and integrating Indigenous epistemologies; challenging racism in all its forms; incorporating Indigenous content into the curriculum; creating sustainable campus support systems for Indigenous faculty, staff, and students; interrogating dominant cultural narratives and histories, and utilizing dialogic pedagogies (Smith 2012 and Pete 2015).

3.3. Diversity

Prioritizing diversity within the Association, and the University, means we commit to (a) recognizing the different and diverse experiences of all our members, (b) welcoming diverse contributions to knowledge and operations, and (c) facilitating diverse representation of difference in terms of vision, values, and organizational practices.

3.4. Equity

Equity guarantees all people the freedom to realize and fulfil their potential, free from inequitable restrictions such as systemic discrimination; employment and education inequities; lack of accommodation; and institutional structures, policies, and practices which perpetuate systemic discrimination and may enable a climate of hostility. An inclusive union or workplace is one that is active in eliminating these restrictions and practices and promotes the full democratic participation of all its members. Realizing equity is both an individual and a collective responsibility.

3.5. Heteropatriarchy

Patriarchy is a social system in which men have primary power by occupying the overwhelming majority of leadership and decision-making positions in all public and private institutions, including family, media, government, health care, organized religion, business, and education. As a consequence of their quantitative majority in these positions, it is their lives, experiences, and perspectives that are broadly understood as "normal" and "natural" and are thus assumed to be representative of humanity as a whole. This has created a hierarchy in which the lives, experiences, and perspectives of women and anything associated with femininity or gender non-conformity have become not only abnormal but also abhorrent. Research has shown, too, that patriarchy is closely linked to white supremacy (Wilson 2020; see also Anti-Defamation League 2018 and Parton 2019).

To add the prefix hetero- signals a more nuanced understanding of the complex ways that patriarchy is rooted not only in the primacy of men and masculinity (along with the corresponding devaluation of women and femininity), but also on the insistence, first, that heterosexuality is "normal" and "natural" while all other sexual orientations are deviant and, second, that there are only two biological sexes (male and female), which produce just two corresponding gender identities (man and woman) and gender performances (masculinity and femininity). It also draws attention to the fact that the men referred to above are overwhelmingly heterosexual, cisgender men (i.e., their assigned sex matches their gender identity)

3.6. Inclusion

An inclusive union or workplace is one that is active in eliminating these restrictions and practices and promotes the full democratic participation of all its members. This requires institutions to consciously review their policies, practices and institutional culture to ensure complete and meaningful inclusion of historically excluded groups.

3.7. Indigenization

The Association recognizes the importance of Indigenous perspectives that see equity as a continuing struggle to achieve and maintain balance between living things. The Association advocates implementing recommendations made in 2015 by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) for improving (a) educational attainment and equity for Indigenous students at MRU, (b) opportunities for professional development and equity for Indigenous faculty, and (c) a commitment to hiring more Indigenous faculty.

3.8. Anti-Racist Justice

"Anti-racism is the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably" (qtd. attributed to NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity, as cited in Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre). Key to this definition is the idea of making an active effort to dismantle racism, in contrast to imagining that one can hold a neutral, "not racist" position. In advocating for racial justice, it is important to understand that racism comes in different forms and (b) not all visible/racialized persons experience racism in precisely the same way or for the same reasons.

3.9. Religious Freedom and Tolerance

Freedom of conscience and religion is one of the "Fundamental Freedoms" in section 2(a) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, where freedom of religion has been defined as "the right to entertain such religious beliefs as a person chooses, the right to declare religious beliefs openly and without fear of hindrance or reprisal, and the right to manifest religious belief by worship and practise or by teaching and dissemination." As such, the Association is to make an active effort in acknowledging, respecting, and, as importantly, implementing an inclusive approach to observing different religious and spiritual practices of all members of the university's community. This would entail offering students, faculty, and staff with equitable treatment and access to accommodations of diverse religious observances, and granting members of the university the right to have time away from study or work to practice and/or celebrate the tenants of their faiths. Moreover, university calendars ought to be inclusive and mindful of religious and spiritual observances when course schedules and events are planned. Members of the university ought to be invited to update the university's calendar on a continuous basis for inclusivity of religious observances; as well, all members of the university ought to refer to the updated calendar in advance of planning any university events (including examinations and activities).

3.10. White Supremacy

White supremacy is "a political, economic and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources" and in which "relations of white dominance and non- white subordination are daily reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings" (Ansley 1997: 592; qtd. in Gillborn 2006: 320). It describes "the operation of forces that saturate the everyday, mundane actions and policies that shape the world in the interests of white people" (Gillborn 2006: 320). As such, white supremacy is neither "an extreme position" nor "an artifact of history." Rather, it continues to serve as the "central organizing logic of western modernity" (Bonds and Inwood 2016: 720).

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