



MRFA Weekly Bulletin

December 5, 2022

Faculty Benefits Reminder

Did you know, [eligible faculty](#) can claim health benefits premiums (dental and health care) under your Health Spending Account (“HSA”)?

Since the year is coming to an end, you should check your HSA balance and use the unspent portion to claim your benefits premiums. **Unspent funds do not roll forward**, so now is the time to submit claims to use your unspent balance. As a reminder, full-time faculty receive a \$1000 Health Spending Account/Personal Spending Account and contract faculty who meet the Article 16.8.1 eligibility criteria receive a \$500 Health Spending Account.

Campus Health and Safety Update

While the Association continues to advocate for the University implementing stronger measures to protect the health of the campus community, we can all take steps to protect each others’ health as we move into exams and look forward to the December break: stay home if you are sick, remind students to stay home if they are sick, ask students to wear masks (especially in large final examination spaces, and [report illness](#).

[See current campus provisions here](#)

Deferred Exam Scheduling and Medical Notes

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

[Examination Policy](#), students unable to attend final exams due to illness may be required to provide a medical note. The timing of deferred exams is to be determined in a conversation with the student and faculty member. Generally, the aim is to have the deferred exam scheduled at the same time as the regularly scheduled class.

[Academic Workers - Labour News Updates](#)

Ontario Supreme Court Ruling: Cap on Public Sector Wages Violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms

"In a big win for public sector workers, the Ontario Superior Court struck down Bill 124 on November 29, 2022. The law capped wages for public servants and employees in the broad public sector, including universities and colleges...By preventing wage increases of more than one per cent, the Court concluded that Bill 124 substantially interfered with collective bargaining by:

- Limiting the scope of bargaining over wage increases;
- Preventing unions from trading off salary demands against non-monetary benefits;
- Preventing the collective bargaining process from addressing staff shortages;
- Interfering with the usefulness of the right to strike;
- Interfering with the independence of interest arbitration; and
- Interfering with the power balance between employer and employees."

[Read More](#)

Laurentian University Mismanagement

"The [Special Report on Laurentian University](#) details years of financial mismanagement at Laurentian University which culminated in the unprecedented and unnecessary decision to file for insolvency protection under the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) on February 1, 2021."

What happened at Laurentian is a clear demonstration of the importance and need for General Faculties Council to be meaningfully involved in Universities' budgeting processes: had this been the case at Laurentian, the disaster may have been averted.

[Read More](#)

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▾](#)

Part-time academics, teaching assistants, markers, and demonstrators from Dalhousie University returned to work mid-November after reaching an agreement with a **23 - 44% wage increase** “(i.e., 0-7 courses: 2020-2021 pay rate: \$10,594.80; 2023-2024 pay rate: \$12,956.25), TA wages to 23.1 per cent (i.e., 2020-2021 pay rate: \$24.72; 2023-2024 pay rate: \$30.05), and Mark/Demo wages 44.5 per cent (i.e., 2020-2021 pay rate: \$16.82; 2023-2024 pay rate: \$24.00).”


[Read More](#)

[Learn More and Get Involved...](#)

Governance Roundtable

Members are invited to attend an ULFA hosted Governance Roundtable on **Jan 27 from 10:30-12:00** to find out what is wrong with University governance (and what is right), how it can function better, what we can do to improve things. Speakers include:

- Deborah Saucier (President, Vancouver Island University)
- Jeff Hennessey (Provost and VP Academic and Research, Mount Allison University)
- Robin Whitaker (Vice-President, CAUT and Associate Professor of Anthropology, Memorial University)
- Marc Schroeder (Associate Professor of Mathematics and Computing, Mount Royal University)

[Read More and Register here](#)

Call for Nominations for CAUT Standing Committees

Many positions are available on CAUT's [Standing Committees](#). [Standing Committee Nomination Forms](#) need to be submitted by **February 1, 2023**.

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

- [Equity Committee](#)
- [Librarians' and Archivists' Committee](#)

CAUT welcomes recommendations of members of marginalized groups. These groups include but are not limited to: Aboriginal peoples; women; racialized academic staff; academic staff with disabilities; and lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans, queer and two-spirited academic staff.

[Submit a Nomination Form](#)

Upcoming MRFA Events

- **Members Rejuvenate on Friday Afternoons** - weekly Socials every Friday in the Faculty Centre from 3:30 - 7:00pm
- **Breakfast / Brunch with the MRFA Executive Board**, (Rescheduled from November 15), **December 9, 8:30 - 10:00am in the Faculty Centre** and **January 13, 10:00 - 11:20am in the faculty centre**. Come meet, eat, and discuss items of interest to you with members of your MRFA Executive Board. Register [here](#)
- **End of Semester Party - December 9, 3:30 - 7:30pm** (family members welcome and a range of activities planned) in the Faculty Centre. Register [here](#).
- **Deadline for Retreat Calls for Proposals** - December 21, 2022. Submit your proposal [here](#).

2023 MRFA Meeting and Event Schedule - Save the Dates!

- January 6, 10:00 - 11:30am, **Get Cracking on Tenure Dossiers** [Register here](#)
- January 10, 1:00 - 1:50pm, MRFA Tenure and Promotion Series Info Session - **Important Considerations when Applying for Promotion** (registration to open soon)
- January 13, 10:00 – 11:30am : **Brunch with the Board** [Register here](#)
- January 18, 1:00 - 1:50pm: **Pre-GFC Drop in Session** - Online and in-person (in the Faculty Centre - Peggy Brydon Room) (see mrfa.net/calendar for links - other dates are February 15, March 15, April 19, and May 17)
- January 20, 11:30-2:00: **Envision your Year (with Lunch)**
- January 31, 1:00–3:00 – **Regular Meeting**: *Lincoln Park Room/J301* & Zoom*
- February 17, 3:30 – 7:00pm: **Family Day Weekend Dance**
- March 1, 10:00 – 12:00 – **Regular Meeting**: *Faculty Centre Lounge* & Zoom*
- April 5, 12:00 – 2:00 – **Regular Meeting**: *Lincoln Park Room/J301* & Zoom*
- April 24-25 - **Annual MRFA Spring Retreat** - Submit a proposal [here](#)
- April 25-27: **Writing Residency** (details to follow)
- May 12, 9:30 – 1:30 – **MRFA Annual General Meeting**: location TBD and Zoom
- May 25, 11:00-1:00: **Member and Staff Appreciation BBQ** (registration not required)
- June 9, 12:00-7:30: **Recreational Day**

Question of the Week

This Week's Question

After your experience using D2L this past semester, what are your thoughts on the new Learning Management System (LMS)? (Select all that apply)

- [Better than Blackboard](#)
- [Blackboard was better](#)
- [Difficult to use](#)
- [Easy to use](#)
- [Other](#)

Last Week's Results

In response to last week's question, there was some support for Mandatory masking in public spaces and for making begin "Strongly Recommended". Responses supportive of mandatory masking and maintaining the current status were split with an even amount of support from respondents for both options.

Read more about campus safety provisions [here](#).

Let us know what you think of D2L...



- [Lunch Service](#) W – F, 11:00am – 2:00pm
- [Appetizers](#) available on Fridays 3:00 - 7:00pm

- Dinner Service (same as lunch menu) available on request on Fridays 4:00 - 6:00pm (email facultycentre@mrfa.net)
- Sign in your guests [online](#)
- In a hurry? Order ahead using the [MRFA Bistro Takeout Order Form](#)
- Send us your [Feedback](#)

[View the Menu](#)

[Request a Meeting Room](#)



[View this email in your browser](#)

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

[Unsubscribe](#)