



MRFA Spring Retreat 2023

Looking Backward/Looking Forward: Be the Change! is a compelling call to reflect and act, and the 2023 MRFA Spring Retreat program is filled with exciting sessions that promise ample opportunity for members to pause, connect with each other, challenge themselves, and learn from one another after a very busy year. Great thanks to all the faculty members from across the university who submitted proposals.

The annual Retreat is an exceptional occasion. It strengthens collegiality and facilitates interdisciplinary collaboration in scholarship, teaching and service. It helps us to focus on all the important things that make Mount Royal an outstanding university and that make the MRFA a strong and vibrant community.

The MRFA expresses its deep appreciation to the Board of Governors, the President's Office and the University Secretariat for the ongoing contribution of \$10,000 that they have committed to this Retreat. This sponsorship stretches back to the 1990s, and we are happy that the University continues to support our valuable annual event. It's an opportunity for gathering together as a community that we cherish now more than ever.

I'm also grateful for the members of the MRFA Professional Development Committee, who have worked tirelessly to organize this event and to assemble this excellent program. You'll notice PDC members still working hard during the Retreat as they greet you at the registration table and facilitate sessions, so don't forget to give them a little nod of appreciation.

As we endeavor to create a positive and generative space, I'll point your attention to the community agreements and related matters detailed in the following preface. I'm confident everyone will learn a lot at the Retreat, and I hope you can all relax a little, too. Perhaps I'll even see you on the dance floor!

Regards,
Andrea Phillipson
MRFA PDC Chair





Retreat Preface

The Association is committed to providing this opportunity for members to connect and engage in important dialogues and discussions in a positive and proactive way. What this means is that we need to consider our own positionality and be thoughtful in our approaches to ensure that we are all able to engage fully in conversations while minimizing harm and supporting each other when needed.

Community Agreements

As participants at the MRFA Spring Retreat we understand the following Community Agreements are in place:

- Recognize and value individual differences.
- Speak from our own experience and not invalidate others' experiences.
- Respect every person's right to withdraw consent to physical, mental, and/or intellectual interactions.
- Approach difficult topics with the aim of mutual understanding (not necessarily agreement).
- Recognize that our intention does not mitigate impact. The statement recognizes that there are some who have been able to speak openly and freely without regard for consequences and that others have not been heard. We aim to create a respectful and inclusive space where people who have not been heard feel invited to speak while inviting those who have spoken to listen and to choose words judiciously and be mindful of their potential impact.

Facilitators will be present in each session throughout the retreat to provide support to speakers and attendees in adhering to these Community Agreements. If necessary, individuals may be asked to reframe their comments in alignment with the Agreements. If individuals engage in actions or words that are intentionally or unintentionally aggressive, bullying, or intimidating they may be asked to leave a session.

due to the number of attendees and sessions at the retreat, these Community Agreements will only be read in the first sessions of each day. Members with comments, questions or feedback related to community Agreements are welcome to submit them [here](https://bit.ly/3xNZhcl): <https://bit.ly/3xNZhcl>.

Expectations of Participants

We need to operate in an environment of safety to fully engage in potentially difficult conversations. The Association has set the following expectations to assist in creating a safer environment.

Retreat participants are expected to adhere to the Association's [Standards of Professional Conduct](#).

Supporting Each Other Through Difficult Conversations

Should a participant or moderator perceive that the community agreement has not been observed or a behaviour does not meet expectations, the moderator will draw attention to the situation and may

- Offer the participant an opportunity reframe their comments,
- Provide suggestions on how comments might be reframed, and
- Should the participant not take up these opportunities to address the situation, the moderator may ask the participant to leave the session.





Seeking Support When Needed

The program does include sessions which may give rise to difficult conversations; wherein, conversations may activate members and ongoing engagement in such conversations may be challenging in various personal, interpersonal, and emotional ways. Depending on your position, preference, and personal approach to these difficult situations, you may seek support at the retreat in the following ways:

- Continue to engage, respectfully, in the conversation in accordance with the Community Agreements and Expectations listed above and remind others, where needed, to abide by these same expectations. There will be facilitators in each session to assist in this.
- Disengage from the conversation and remove yourself from the space
 - We hope you may feel empowered to do so without concern for impact or perceptions: many of your colleagues in the space with you are allies and will support your decision to leave a space that is harmful to you
 - Refer to the [Member Support Form](https://bit.ly/3xF9CrS) (<https://bit.ly/3xF9CrS>) to connect with support on site or otherwise
- If you want to remain in the session but seek support or advice from a qualified resource, complete this [Member Support Form](https://bit.ly/3xF9CrS) (<https://bit.ly/3xF9CrS>). Our onsite support person, Kim Smith, will be monitoring this form and will respond promptly.
- After leaving the space seek out support from our on-site resource. She will be located in the Conference Boardroom just outside the conference lobby. If she is with another member when you try to meet with her, please email her at LabourRelations@bvcfa.com to arrange a time.

On returning to campus, members are reminded of these existing resources to which you may refer for support or advice if you have concerns:

- Office of Safe Disclosure - Request a consultation here: <https://bit.ly/3KXozZM>
- MRU's Confidence Line - <https://bit.ly/3rBkF11>
- Relevant Policies and Processes - <https://bit.ly/3JV8nH8>
- Homewood Health - <https://bit.ly/3rDir5j>
- MRFA Contacts:
 - MRFA Faculty Relations Officer - FacultyRelations@mrfa.net
 - MRFA Labour Relations Officer - LabourRelations@mrfa.net
 - MRFA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer - edi@mrfa.net

**We appreciate your participation in the annual MRFA Spring Retreat.
We hope that it is a positive experience for all attendees.**

*This program has been reviewed and approved by the MRFA Executive Board.
Questions about the program can be directed to president@mrfa.net*





MRFA 2023 Kananaskis Retreat

Day 1 – April 24, 2023

Registration and Coffee 8:00 – 8:30am

8:30–8:50 - Community Agreements, Introductions, and Opening Prayer

Location: Silver/Bronze Room **Indigenous Affairs Advisor:** Alvin Manitopyes **Facilitator:** Lee Easton

8:50 – 9:50 - 2023 Retreat Keynote

(amended session abstract)

Racism at MRU - Challenges and Opportunities

Presented by: Members of the EDI Taskforce: Jebunnessa Chapola and Paul Varella & the Co-Chairs of the MRFA/MRU Joint Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee: Jacqueline Musabende and Stephen Price

Location: Silver/Bronze Room **Facilitator:** Lee Easton **Format:** Panel (60 minutes)

Representatives of the MRU/MRFA Joint Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (JEDIC) and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force will reflect on the work of both groups over the year and the Task Force's recommendations about how to address the institutional aspects of racism at MRU.

JEDIC established and supported the work of the task force which was composed of three support staff, three exempt/management staff and three faculty members.

Core objectives of the task force included the gathering of information and then making recommendations regarding racism at MRU. Information was sought through informal meetings with and formal requests for information with different MRU groups. including MRSA, MRFA, HR, HREB, the Office of Safe Disclosure, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, the Associate Vice President Academic, and the Associate Vice President Research and Community Engagement.

9:50 – 10:00am – Coffee/Tea Break – refreshments in lobby area





10:00 – 11:20 – Session 1

Climate Change as Moral Imperative: Creating a Carbon-Negative University

Presented by: Ranjan Datta, Brian Nichols, Andria Dawson

Location: Silver/Bronze Room

Facilitator: Peter Houston

Format: Panel (80 minutes)

CAUT has emphasized the need for faculty associations to do more to address climate change. In response, the MRFA has approved the creation of a member-directed working group on climate change and sustainability. Members of this committee will explore the moral urgency of doing more to address the climate breakdown and the many ways that Mount Royal can rapidly transition to more sustainable campus that absorbs more greenhouse gases than it produces. Attendees will learn more about what Mount Royal is already doing, initiatives that are underway, and changes they can support.

Can We Talk About This?

Presented by: Mirjam Knapik

Location: Gold Room

Facilitator: Nadine Van Wyk

Format: Individual (80 minutes)

There is much comfort in dialogue with those who affirm our identities, world views, and ideas. Dialogue that engages world views and ideas different from our own may, in some instances, be experienced as violating our core identities and values. This can activate strong emotional reactions that make it more difficult for participants to stay engaged. We can opt to engage in tenuously comfortable dialogue by treading carefully around anticipated difference and by encouraging the uptake of shared community narratives and protocols. Still, some topics seem to inevitably lead to acrimonious exchanges, community division, and open conflict. In this presentation I take the position that: 1) there are costs and benefits to participating in the varied discursive circumstances described above; 2) that we co-construct conflict by how we orient to, and respond in, conversations across difference; and 3) that, rather than smoothing over or minimizing difference, a full expression of difference provides opportunity for learning from, and living well with, difference that is presumed to be divisive. I will invite participants to consider the costs and benefits of engaging in affirming, tenuously comfortable, and challenging dialogue. This will lay the foundation for proposing how we might move forward by increasing our capacity for dialogue when we engage with differences we find challenging.

For the Good of the University: Excellence in deliberative democracy

Presented by: Lee Easton, Marc Schroeder, and Leah Hamilton

Location: Champion Room

Facilitator: Lee Easton

Format: Panel (80 minutes)

Why MRFA members, both new and more experienced, should be engaged at the General Faculty Council (GFC) meetings, and be worried if they are not an active part of GFC processes. This workshop will cover the basics of bicameral governance for GFC, to empower members to work at GFC, knowing that they are supported and safe to shake the cage. We don't want any member to work out of fear ever, so the session will focus on resilience strategies, such as attending the Academic Liaison Committee (ALC) sessions, and working with their colleagues on GFC strategies and tactics.





Taking the risk to play: Accepting and offering invites

Presented by: Stasha Huntingford

Location: Walker Room

Facilitator: Teresa Merrells

Format: Workshop (80 minutes)

Learning to play allows us to view concepts in new ways, and puts the joy and creativity back into social justice work, including teaching. Unconventional learning experiences are retained in a way that lectures will never accomplish. We know this, and yet, have we forgotten how to play??

In this workshop we will examine an example of embedding play into classrooms; of course this learning will be accomplished through playing together! Part of play is embracing the unknown! By attending the workshop, you have already accomplished the first learning outcome!!

In the first half of the workshop, I will reveal a playful action engaged in over two semesters with anonymous social work students. In this action, we attempted to normalize a formation of classrooms where we were not discussing abuse and social justice issues, while staring at the back of each others' heads.

I will share some of the learning, and negative and positive impacts in terms of 1) accessibility, 2) epistemology, and 3) opening opportunities for students to engage in social justice actions in one of their own communities. I will ask workshop participants for an ethical review of this game, so that the students and I can improve our social justice play.

In the second half of the workshop, we will bravely introduce ourselves, and that is all I can reveal about that game, because we have yet to create it.

Note: If you swear not to peek, I will also give each workshop participant a personal prediction in a sealed envelope, to be opened at the end of the conference.

11:20 – 11:30am – Coffee/Tea Break – refreshments in lobby area

11:30 – 12:20pm - Session 2

A presentation from MRU Community Leaders.

Presented by: Chad London, Lee Easton, and Michelle Logullo

Location: Silver/Bronze Room

Facilitator: Lee Easton

Format: Panel (50 minutes)

One of the strategic directions articulated in *Opening Minds and Changing Lives, MRU's strategic planning framework for 2021 to 2026* is to "strengthen diverse communities", and there is mention of commitments and opportunities to advance Indigenization and decolonization, and equity, diversity and inclusion, throughout the framework. Cross-institutional plans such as the Academic Plan, Indigenous Plan, and the EDI Plan, provide the opportunity to operationalize the commitments made in the high-level aspirational university plan. This panel will facilitate discussion about the tangible ways that MRU is addressing its commitments in these areas, with a focus on the critical role of faculty members and staff in advancing this work.

12:20 – 1:10pm – Lunch

Location – Silver/Bronze Room





1:10 – 2:00pm – Session 3

From assigned readings to assigned listenings: ways to bring podcasts into the classroom

Presented by: Meg Wilcox

Location – Silver/Bronze Room **Facilitator:** Peter Houston **Format:** Individual Presentation (50 minutes)

Are you looking to introduce podcasts into your courses, but unsure of where to start? Have you already started using podcasts, but don't know how to take it to the next level? Meg Wilcox has been producing podcasts for a decade, and teaching podcasting at MRU since 2017, and in this session she shares how she incorporates podcasts in her courses, both as readings and assignments. From finding good podcasts and developing a great "listening lineup" to tools to help students engage critically with what they hear, this presentation will look at a variety of ways to use podcasting in the classroom and leave lots of room for your podcasting questions and queries. Meg will also share some early findings from a current SoTL research project that investigates how students engage with podcasts compared to traditional readings.

Reflecting Back, Imagining Futures: Enacting Social Change through Feminist and Queer Pedagogies

Presented by: Irene Shankar, Corinne Mason, Mary-Lee Mulholland, Leah Hamilton

Location – Gold Room **Facilitator:** Nadine Van Wyk **Format:** Roundtable (50 minutes)

Teachers have long been understood as agents of social change. As feminist and queer theorists committed to social transformation, each of us has carefully constructed classrooms and course content to address systemic and structural inequalities. In this roundtable, we will use reflexive analysis to look back at our pedagogical practices and hold space for imagining future feminist and queer praxes aimed at creating social change. Through an immersive and in-depth conversational exchange, discussants in the roundtable will welcome all participants to collectively identify strategies to dismantle structural barriers to social justice within and outside of the classroom.

Applying autoethnography to education

Presented by: NancyAngel Doetzel

Location – Champion Room **Facilitator:** Karen Pheasant-Neganigwane **Format:** Individual (50 minutes)

When students and educators participate in autoethnographic research, they come to better understand how their own beliefs and culture frame the meanings they attach to theirs and other's experiences. One major goal of conducting "autoethnographic research" is to assist researchers and educators to better comprehend how they frame their perceptions of students, data and assignments. An autoethnography is a reflexive account of one's own experiences situated in culture. It puts into play a questioning of the "positionality" and the constitution of the self in autobiography. Catherine Russell is convinced that, as literary genres, autobiography and ethnography both have a commitment to actuality, or factuality. She refers to Michael Fischer's discussion of the writing tactics of autoethnography as 'ethnic autobiography': they are meta-discursive, in that they draw attention to their linguistic and fictive nature. Students writing autoethnographic life course papers within Sociology classes, have claimed they experienced major personal growth and gained a greater understanding of self, after completing their autoethnographic life course papers.

In this session, we will discuss the pros and cons of autoethnographic research and encourage one another to reflect and share highlights of life experiences, which changed the way they view the world.





Looking Forward to Student Writing

Presented by: Michelle Briegel, Tiffany Doherty

Location – Walker Room **Facilitator:** Teresa Merrells **Format:** Individual Presentation (50 minutes)

Are you struggling with student writing skills in a four year cohort program? In this session, Michelle and Tiffany share their experiences designing and implementing asynchronous learning modules for first year students with the purpose of learning how to become a university writer and find their academic voice. The presenters will show the modules they designed, how they were used in class, how they were connected to writing assignments, the writing outcomes of students, and student feedback about the modules.

2:00 – 2:10pm – Coffee/Tea Break – refreshments in lobby area

2:10pm – 3:00pm – Session 4

Sharpening Our Understanding of Faculty's Role: Applying Gramsci's Model of Organic versus Traditional Intellectuals

Presented by: Marc Schroeder

Location – Silver/Bronze Room **Facilitator:** Karen Pheasant-Neganigwane **Format:** Individual (50 min.)

In an essay in his Prison Notebooks, early 20th century Italian philosopher, writer, and politician Antonio Gramsci laid out his now-well-known conceptual model of the organic versus traditional intellectual. Gramsci's insight was founded in the observation that, whereas all human beings are capable of and participate in intellectual activity, some in society are intellectuals by social function. His concern was therefore not with some romantic notion of the intellectual but with the structural role played by certain categories of thinker in directing the work of society and its institutions. For Gramsci, no matter the ways in which some may flatter themselves, intellectuals tend to serve as the functionaries of a dominant class, thus playing a key role in the maintenance of social control. By contrast, for Gramsci, hope for a better world requires much more widespread, organic development of the capacity to play directive roles in our shared affairs. In this session, we consider this analysis in the context of academic workers at Mount Royal University. What are the implications for how we educate our students? What are the implications for how we collectively develop our ability to collegially govern our public university?

Is Allyship Enough

Presented by: Christina Tortorelli and Audra Foggin

Location – Gold Room **Facilitator:** Nadine Van Wyk **Format:** Individual Presentation (50 minutes)

As social workers and faculty at Mount Royal University we engage regularly in the exploration of self in relation to colonization and indigenization with students, agencies, and within the MRU community. As presenters we bring both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous experiences to a presentation and dialogue about allyship.

This is a complex space. Choices about when, where and how to engage in reconciliatory action can and should involve deep consideration about the intent, required knowledge and skills, topic, potential barriers, strategies, outcomes and impacts through the lens of one's social location.

There are four key terms used to describe the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. These terms fall on a continuum and include the roles of actor, ally, accomplice and co-conspirator (Clemens, 2017; Olser, n.d.; Radke et al., 2020)





Being an ally has become common language in discussions around boardroom tables. The inclusion of Indigenous people on committees, on stage for public announcements are questionable as allyship (Nixon, 2019; Yomantas, 2020). Are these authentic gestures – or are they duplicitous efforts to portray an acceptable image?

No matter the term that is used, it is the intention in words and concerted actions that are critical. Exploring one's positionality and how they have interacted in the past might give way to further insight about how one wants to interact in the future. This presentation unpacks these four key terms and asks the question "Is allyship enough?" and what does it mean to move beyond Allyship (Clemens, 2017).

Leadership networks: A strategic approach for the development of new academic administrators

Presented by: Leda Stawnychko

Location: Champion Room **Facilitator:** Lee Easton **Format:** Presentation / Workshop (50 minutes)

The interactive workshop will begin with a 20 min introductory presentation drawing on the results of an empirical study conducted at a Canadian university exploring the leadership experiences of new department chairs. The participants will be invited to analyze the importance of social networks in the context of their own leadership development and explore strategies to develop and nurture them.

Communicating Copyright to Your Students

Presented by: Taylor Stevens, Francine May

Location – Walker Room **Facilitator:** Peter Houston **Format:** Individual Presentation (50 minutes)

There is often anxiety around copyright matters. Educators may worry about copyright "policing," procedures around sharing works, what is acceptable under their user rights, how students understand copyright, and more. There is a lot to evaluate, and it can be overwhelming. These anxieties are understandable and there are ways to ease the stress and bring copyright confidence into the classroom. The session will propose ways for educators to positively communicate copyright to students. It will touch on the recording of lectures, use of student work, copyright considerations when creating student assignments, and how to approach students as fellow creators and establish an environment of respect and trust.

3:00 – 3:10pm – Coffee/Tea Break – refreshments in lobby area

3:10pm – 4:00pm – Session 5

An assessment of past and future possibilities for fostering a culture of academic integrity at Mount Royal University

Presented by: Amanda Williams

Location: Silver/Bronze Room **Facilitator:** Teresa Merrells **Format:** Workshop (50 minutes)

This presentation explores some of the wider broad strategies for cultural change provided by the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICIA, 2021), which include:

"re-envision[ing] pedagogy to include demonstrated competencies and learning outcomes so students have opportunities to practice, make mistakes, and learn from them";





“ establish[ing] on-campus partnerships and collaborations to help faculty create positive pedagogical environments and promote integrity in the classroom”; and,

“re-evaluat[ing] pedagogy institution-wide to reduce incentives for academic dishonesty” (ICIA, 2021, pp.11-12).

This discussion will start with a personal reflection regarding how my practices as an instructor, and the coordinator of multi-section suite of courses, at Mount Royal has changed with these strategies as guideposts. I will then address future challenges requiring additional pivots such as Artificial Intelligence, social media groups, and shifting professional identities for educators.

Participants will then be invited to consider ways to personalize these strategies within their own specific disciplines; and how such shifts might contribute to creating more inclusive, equitable and accessible learning spaces across campus.

Cultivating Creative Collaboration in Learning Teams

Presented by: AnneMarie Dorland

Location: Gold Room **Facilitator:** Karen Pheasant-Neganigwane **Format:** Workshop (50 minutes)

Do you struggle with getting the most out of student teams? Is team-based work the most dreaded part of your term? Do students groan when you announce the team assignment each year? Building, supporting and assessing team-based assignments can be a challenge – for both instructors and learners. Effective collaboration in a student team is about more than harmony, assignment completion or participation: it is also about working together creatively to surface ideas and to turn learning insights into action. In this workshop we’ll explore how cultivating creative collaboration in team-based learning environments can catalyze impactful and insightful learning experiences for our students. Together with colleagues, you will develop the skills and techniques you need to foster creative collaboration in your classroom and to unleash the creative potential of your student teams. By the end of this workshop, you will be able to design impactful team-based assignments, you’ll have new tools to choreograph teamwork in a creative and exciting way for your students, and you’ll learn new frameworks for integrating feedback and creative collaboration in student teams of any size.

An autobiographical/sociological theoretical search for life giving social order.

Presented by: Don Swenson (Professor Emeritus)

Location: Champion Room **Facilitator:** Nadine Van Wyk **Format:** Individual Presentation (50 minutes)

This paper's focus is an autobiographical looking at my career background with a look toward the future. I have been at MRU for thirty years, in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, with a focus on sociological theory underlying the sociology of the family and religion. After having reviewed the major theories in the discipline of sociology (functionalism, critical theory, symbolic interaction, conflict theory and feminism), I have focused on neo- functionalism (in my text, 2004) as a theory which best explains social order in a Western Society. To me it is intriguing that all persons, (for example in Canada) live a life of social action with independent visions and goals. Yet, social order is basically socially constructed. I will present two examples. One example, is the Nazi Holocaust that illustrates total disorder. This example is taken from my publication on a history of Judaism and Christianity (2021). The other one of a high level of social order is my own work, a case study, on a Christian Community in Augusta Georgia (Swenson, 2018). This provides my looking a back towards looking forward.





EDI Curation: Principles, Values, Ethics and Rights for a Safe Workplace

Presented by: Audra Foggin, Diamond Reid, Gabrielle Lindstrom, Naureen Mumtaz, and Jacqueline Musabende

Location: Walker Room **Facilitator:** Khosro Salmani **Format:** Presentation / Workshop (50 minutes)

In this panel, we will host an inclusive, dynamic, and interactive discussion that reflects the diversity of our communities. The discussion aims to identify the specific challenges related to EDI and Indigenization, where individuals from different backgrounds will be invited to share their perspectives on the challenges and barriers for a safe workplace. We will share success stories and highlight the best practices we have learned from undertaking EDI and Indigenization work. We will conclude by exploring the EDI emerging opportunities aimed at developing a safe workplace.

4:15pm – Group Photo

Location – Waterfall / Pond in the center of the resort



4:30pm – Recreational Activities

- **Hatha Yoga** – *Dawson/Stewart room* - Karen Pheasant-Neganigwane (bring your own mat)
- **Photography Nature Walk** – *Meet at Registration table* - Shiraz Kurji
- **Meditation in the Mountains** – *Champion Room* - Brian Nichols

6:30pm – 1:00am – Dinner, Music Trivia, Facilitated Games and Dance

Silver/Bronze Room

Dinner, Trivia, Dance & Karaoke

Sinclair / Dawson Room

Facilitated games and non-alcohol spaces and for the faculty Band





Day 2 – April 25

Checkout early and store your bags in a room next to the registration table

9:00 – 10:30am – Breakfast and Lightning Rounds

Location – Silver / Bronze Room **Facilitators:** Lee Easton and Peter Houston

Lightning Rounds: Hear from new MRU faculty members about their experiences and journeys which have brought them to MRU, their passions, their research endeavors, and their interests. In a time when many of us have not been able to meet with each other face-to-face, this will be a particularly great opportunity to get to know some of our colleagues. And, hear from some of our long standing members on their experiences as they prepare to transition into retirement.

10:30 - 11:00am

Getting to Know Other Faculty Positions

Presented by: Janet Mille, Jennifer Owen, Guy Obrecht, Richard Hayman, Andrea Phillipson

Location – Silver / Bronze Room **Facilitator:** Lee Easton **Format:** Panel (30 minutes)

Join with your colleagues for an opportunity to learn about different types of faculty positions (both contract and permanent) that encompass our association. Building a common understanding will support and connect us as a community while we move forward to advocate for all members' rights and improve the working conditions for all members.

Making Service Count for You

Presented by: Shelley Rathie, Michelle Briegel, and Marty Clark

Location: Gold Room **Facilitator:** Peter Houston **Format:** (30 Minutes)

Our Association continues to evolve to meet the changing needs and interests of its members, over the past year we have revitalized our Mission, Vision, and Values, and we have undergone a reorganization to better engage and serve our members. There are more opportunities to engage in different ways wherein you can do the service work that matters most to you. Make your service count! Work with your colleagues to champion collective excellence in teaching, scholarship and community engagement. Our work is collaborative and grounded in equity, diversity, and community. We are united in our commitment to upholding the highest of standards for post secondary education, celebrating the power of collegial governance, advancing the rights of our community, and advocating for a better future.

CAQC - So What? Now What?

Presented by: Nadine Van Wyk and Sydney Gray

Location – Champion Room **Facilitator:** Khosro Salmani **Format:** Presentation (20 minutes)

In 2000-2021, the Health and Physical Education Department program underwent two major accreditation processes; Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC) and Canadian Council of University Physical Education and Kinesiology Administrators (CCUPEKA). Throughout these two processes we discovered areas of strengths and areas for improvement, more importantly these gave us the opportunity to reimagine and redesign content and curriculum. This session will share the process undertaken and how the student voice was included and represented in shifting curriculum to be more intentional and aligned with program outcomes.





11:00am – Checkout if you haven't already done so*
Bags can be stored in a room next to the registration table.

Two 3 hour and Two 80-minute sessions to choose from with a lunch break and a lunch after, respectively...

11:00am – 3:00pm

12:20 – 1:10pm – Lunch

Location – Silver/Bronze Room

The Future of Collective Bargaining at Mount Royal

Presented by: Kirk Niergarth, Pearl Herscovitch, Lee Easton, Anupam Das

Location: Silver/Bronze

Facilitator: Khosro Salmani

Format: Panel (80 min: 11:00am – 12:20)

MRFA negotiators past and present will reflect on the recent and anticipated future changes in the PSE collective bargaining landscape. Both internal and external factors will make the next round of bargaining significantly different than previous ones.

Externally, what will be the impact of the Ontario Superior Court's judgment that government-imposed mandates violate Charter rights? What will be the outcome of CAFA's legal challenge to the interference of the provincial government in the most recent round of agreements?

Internally, how will the new structure of the committees charged with negotiations change the process for the MRFA? How will bargaining relate to various internal committees and taskforces, including those on workload and systemic racism? Should the MRFA move from the "interest focused" process to a more conventional approach to collective bargaining?

Join MRFA current and former negotiators for a roundtable discussion that will cover these and other questions that will shape the MRFA's approach to bargaining in 2024.

Unlearning Racism: A Workshop for White Faculty Who Want to Know Better, So We Can Do Better

Presented by: Kim Williams

Location: Gold Room

Facilitator: Teresa Merrells

Format: 3 hr Workshop w/ lunch break

- Are you a faculty or staff member of European descent?
- Do you want to support and advocate for MRU's Black, Indigenous, and other people of colour (BIPOC) students, faculty and staff?
- Are you wondering what all this EDI stuff is about, and maybe frustrated or confused by it?
- Do you (still) have questions about why EDI now, and some of the language and terms being used?
- Are you afraid to talk about race or skin colour (your own or someone else's) because you don't want to say the wrong thing?
- Do you believe that MRU should be a truly diverse and inclusive campus community?
 - If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, this workshop is for you!





Led by longtime racial justice educator and inclusivity expert Kim Williams (she/her, WGST), this workshop will offer a brave space for white faculty members to have difficult conversations about our own complicity in upholding white supremacy and other related systems of oppression. We will discuss the context and core concepts driving the urgent push for inclusivity at MRU before unpacking our own power and privilege(s) with the goal of learning how and when to use them to support and advocate for our BIPOC students and colleagues. Each participant will leave the workshop with at least three concrete ways that they can help make MRU more inclusive.

An Introduction to R & R Studio

Presented by: Sara Smith

Location: Champion Room

Facilitator: Nadine Van Wyk

Format: 3 hr Workshop w/ lunch break

**Please Note: to make the most effective use of time in this session, participants are encouraged to [get R&R Studio set up on your laptops- bit.ly/RRsetup](https://bit.ly/RRsetup) in advance of the session. Bring your laptop, power bars to plug into will be available. In advance and during the session, additional materials will be distributed via [google drive - bit.ly/RR-workshop](https://bit.ly/RR-workshop).*

Statistics, quantitative data analyses, and data analytics are required for our research and teaching more now than ever. Whether we need a more robust and replicable environment for analyses in our own research, or we want to equip our students with coding and data visualization skillsets they can continue to use post-graduation, R is a flexible, powerful, and open-source software that meets all these needs. The R community develops and publishes a wide variety of packages that can be applied in a range of fields, including (but not limited to) finance, sciences and tech, healthcare, and marketing. In this workshop, we'll cover an introduction to the language and environment of R, importing data and data manipulation/tidying, as well as data visualization. Basic statistical tests and discussion of quantitative data analyses will be included, but advanced/discipline-specific analyses will not be formally presented. Participants will get the most out of this workshop by having a computing device with R and RStudio installed – a Linux, Windows, or Apple laptop would be best. Registered participants will receive instructions on how to download R and R Studio before the start of the workshop. All skill levels are welcome!

Human Bias: Moving forward with a more nuanced and complex understanding

Presented by: Mirjam Knapik

Location – Walker Room **Facilitator:** Khosro Salmani **Format:** Individual Presentation (80 min: 11:00am – 12:20)

There is much evidence that human cognition includes biased processing tendencies. Some tendencies are optimal for our day-to-day functioning while others constitute fundamentally flawed reasoning processes that do not serve us well (Kahneman, 2011). Across time, in diverse locations and cultures, people have found ways to address errors in thinking by applying reasoning skills and developing cognitive tools and protocols that produce more reliable knowledge (Pinker, 2021). However, there are some biases relevant in the social domain that are particularly challenging. In such instances neither knowledge-making protocols, awareness of bias, intelligence, nor facility with cognitive tools seem sufficient to address the challenges that emerge when people with different perspectives and world views attempt dialogue about what is good or true (Stanovich, 2021). In this presentation, I provide a sampling of various types of biases. I then elaborate on the conditions that contribute to a kind of motivated thinking bias that interferes with a community's efforts to find a way forward together through dialogue. Recognizing that biases that emerge in the social domain are complex and challenging to address, I propose that, for a community wishing to openly explore the issues at hand, and live well and benefit from difference, both individual strategies and skills, and community initiatives would serve the maintenance of positive relations without requiring agreement or compromise.





Writing Residency (*Participation is [by application only](#)*)

[April 25 – 5:00pm Reception and April 26-27 Workshop](#)

Location: Walker and Champion Rooms

Facilitator: Andrea Phillipson

Format: Workshop

Shaped by successful faculty writing support models (e.g., Moore, Felten, & Strickland 2013; Ambos, Wiley, & Allen 2009), this Writing Residency provides faculty with an intensive opportunity to make significant progress on their scholarly activities by working in a low-distraction environment of supportive peers, facilitated by an academic writing specialist.

Thank you for joining us for the 2023 MRFA Spring Retreat

This event continues to be an annual success thanks to your participation!

Please take a moment to complete the post event survey here:

surveymonkey.com/r/MRFARetreat2023

We look forward to seeing you all again next year.

Save the Date – April 29-30, 2024!

