

BOARD NOTES

Highlights of the Board of Governors Meeting
Held on Monday, October 26, 2009

FACULTY PRESENTATIONS

At each Board meeting, a faculty member makes a presentation on his/her teaching and scholarship activities in order to provide opportunities for Board members to get to know Mount Royal's outstanding faculty members. Representatives from the Students' Association of Mount Royal University (SAMRU) also make a presentation on a student issue.

Dr. Robert Boschman, Associate Professor in the Department of English, made a presentation on Mount Royal's 2010 interdisciplinary conference, "Under Western Skies: Climate, Culture and Change in Western North America," which will coincide with the University's 100th anniversary. Dr. Boschman chairs the steering committee for this conference.

Representatives from the Students Association of Mount Royal University (SAMRU) Robert Jones (VP External), Erin Delamont (VP Academic), and Eily Sweeney (VP Student Life) made a presentation on "The Student Experience." The report focussed on exploring the experience of Mount Royal students in and outside of the classroom by examining some of their needs and how these needs are being met.

GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL

The President and Chair of GFC, made a presentation on the roles and responsibilities of the GFC highlighting that the GFC is the governing body responsible for making decisions on academic policy and academic matters. The GFC also serves as a recommending body to the Board on matters that fall within the Board's purview but also have academic implications.

The Board received a written report on the September 17 and October 15 GFC meetings.

H1N1 REPORT

The Board received an update on H1N1 influenza and preparedness plans at Mount Royal.

POLICY MATTERS

The Board approved the following Human Resources policy changes:

Conflict of Interest Policy (POL 960-15)

- An overview section has been added indicating that Mount Royal recognizes its responsibility for maintaining public trust and confidence, and must therefore deal with conflict in a fair, open, consistent and practical manner. It also indicates that all members of the Mount Royal community share in the responsibility to appropriately address conflicts of interest.

- The scope of the policy has been expanded to extend to adjunct faculty, students, former employees and members of committees who continue to have a relationship with Mount Royal and any person acting as an employee or on behalf of Mount Royal.
- The previous policy did not include an actual policy statement – a detailed, specific policy statement has been added.
- The definition of “conflict of interest” has been expanded and is much more specific.
- Other definitions have been added, including “Person”, “Person’s Family”, “Person’s Close Personal Contact”, and “Outside Party”.
- More examples of conflicts of interest have been offered, including three examples specifically relating to research contracts and programs.
- Romantic relationships between members of the Mount Royal community have been addressed as they pertain to conflicts of interest.

Vacations: Management (POL 950-2.3)

- Principles have been added; namely, that managers should take their earned vacation, and that supervisors of managers have the responsibility to ensure that they do.
- “Vacation entitlement in excess of 25 days as at December 31 shall be forfeited” has been removed.
- “Extreme exceptions to accrue vacation entitlement over and above 25 days at the end of the calendar year require approval of the Board’s Human Resources and Compensation Committee” has been removed.
- In exceptional circumstances and with approval, there are now three ways in which excess vacation will be dealt with. In preferred order, these are:
 1. carried forward to the next year with a plan to use it that year;
 2. paid out on January 31; or
 3. banked for payout on termination of employment at the rate of pay in effect on December 31 of the year during which it was earned.

Group Insurance Plans: Management, Support Staff and Exempt (POL 950-5)

- Health Care Spending Account has been added to the list of benefits provided by Mount Royal – the amount available for each employee group has been spelled out (namely, \$835 per year for full-time support staff and exempt; \$800 per year for management; \$500 per year for part-time support staff and exempt working 17 or more hours per week).
- Benefits eligibility (excluding long term disability) has been extended to employees working 17 – 24 hours per week.
- All references to Alberta Health Care have been deleted.

Relocation Expenses: Faculty and Management (POL 910-3.2)

- The previous policy 910-3, Interview and Relocation Expenses: Faculty and Management, has been split into two policies – 910-3.1 for interview expenses and 910-3.2 for relocation expenses.
- The scope of the policy has been defined to apply to candidates relocating from a distance of 130 kms or more from Calgary. The policy may now also apply to term positions of less than two years' duration at the discretion of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic (for faculty) or the Associate Vice-President, Human Resources (for management).
- A principle has been added, consistent with government regulations regarding the hiring of foreign workers, that "In selecting candidates for hire, it should be kept in mind that Canadians and permanent residents should be given priority".
- A principle has been added that "Reimbursement of relocation expenses is intended to cushion the financial impact ... not to necessarily cover every expense associated with the relocation".
- Expenses must be reasonable, necessarily incurred and not covered by other sources. What is "reasonable" is determined at the discretion of the Associate Vice-President, Human Resources and/or the Provost and Vice-President, Academic.
- New employees shall incur the up-front costs of the move and then be reimbursed upon presentation of original receipts.
- It is the responsibility of the employee to disclose any funds received under this policy to Canada Revenue Agency.
- What is and is not covered is spelled out in more detail:
 - The following expenses have been added to the list of things that are covered: airfare or mileage for two people to travel to and from Calgary for one house-hunting trip; provincial vehicle inspection fees; initial work permit fee for employee only.
 - The following expenses have been added to the list of things that are not covered: vehicle registration; driver's license; vehicle upgrades required as a result of a vehicle inspection; legal fees for immigration matters; expenses related to an application for Permanent Residency; travel costs associated with obtaining a work permit.

Interview Expenses: Faculty and Management (POL 910-3.1)

- The previous policy 910-3, Interview and Relocation Expenses: Faculty and Management, has been split into two policies (see Relocation Expenses above).
- The scope of the policy has been defined so as to exclude expenses incurred by Mount Royal employees (i.e. members of the selection committee). Such expenses (e.g. picking up the candidate at the airport, taking them out to dinner, etc.) may be covered by the hiring department at their discretion.

- A principle has been added, consistent with government regulations regarding the hiring of foreign workers, that “In selecting candidates for interviews it should be kept in mind that Canadians and permanent residents should be given priority”.
- Expenses must be reasonable, necessarily incurred and not covered by other sources. What is “reasonable” is determined at the discretion of the Associate Vice-President, Human Resources in consultation with the appropriate Vice-President.
- Candidates will normally incur the up-front costs associated with the interview and then be reimbursed upon presentation of original receipts.

Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP) (POL 950-6)

- Language has been tightened up and eligibility for participation in the plan has been clarified.
- A clause has been added to indicate that contributions to the plan are made by both the employee and the employer, consistent with current practice.
- A clause has been added to indicate that when a participant in the plan becomes unable to work and is receiving long term disability benefits, Mount Royal will pay the employee’s portion of the LAPP contributions during the period of LTD, consistent with current practice.
- Eligible earnings for pension contributions has been expanded to include:
 - Chairs’ stipends
 - Salary supplements
 - Acting position pay, provided that the employee leaves his/her current position and assumes the new acting position.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Board approved the Mount Royal College Audited Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ended June 30, 2009. Representatives of the Office of the Auditor General met with the Board Audit and Finance Committee prior to the Board meeting to present the statements and the audit report.

The Board approved year-end appropriations and reserve funds transfers as follows:

- annual allocation to the Athletics/Mount Royal Recreation Equipment Reserve: \$200,000
- annual allocation to the Parking Reserve: \$1,575,000
- allocation in support of the Research Reserve to fund critical research: \$214,000
- annual allocation to the Board Scholarship Reserve: \$8,100
- allocation in support of exam accommodation assistance for students: \$351,634

The Board received the quarterly operating and capital budget report to September 30, 2009 and approved a supplemental budget for 2009-2010 which incorporates additional government grants and tuition, reduced investment income and donation contributions, and salary settlements.

The Board authorized the University to sign a contribution agreement with the Government of Canada for their contribution of \$20 million in support of the new Conservatory and Performance Hall.

The Board received investments reports to June 30 and September 30, 2009 and a major capital projects report for information.

BUDGET MATTERS

The Vice-President, Administrative Services provided an update on the budget development process and implications for 2010-2014.

CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

The Board approved the Business Plan for the new Mount Royal Conservatory and Performance Hall. The business plans outlines how the Conservatory will be able to cover the annual operating costs for the new facility and decrease the existing subsidy. The Conservatory in the new facility will work closely with Continuing Education to increase the net revenue. The new facility, expanded programs and performance hall will give the Conservatory a higher profile on campus and in the community.

Jane O'Connor
Executive Assistant to the President
October 31, 2009