

Faculty Recruitment and Retention Working Group

Process and Principles

12 November 2008

Process

The Faculty Recruitment and Retention Working Group was chartered by the University Implementation Committee in August 2007 to address the need to sustain Mount Royal's strong and committed cohort of faculty. Anticipated faculty growth related to the implementation of new degrees and of General Education, renewal of faculty as a result of institutional and national demographic trends, and expanding opportunities for various kinds of career development and mobility had all been identified as areas where deliberate and thoughtful recruitment and retention strategies would be appropriate. Mount Royal's transition raises a number of issues for faculty and their relationship to the institution.

Current term-certain and tenure-track faculty have been recruited in the midst of a redefinition of faculty roles following from the report of the Faculty Roles and Responsibilities Task Force and the prospective implementation of two templates for faculty work. And tenured faculty are engaged simultaneously in a comprehensive transformation of program base, implementation of new curriculum models including General Education, the potential redefinition of their own roles, and essential succession planning given a demographic trend that may point to increased turnover through retirements. Establishing principles, recommendations and sound working practices around recruitment and retention are all essential in an environment marked both by uncertainty and planned change.

Based on its charter, the Working Group's role is to "develop strategies and techniques to enable us to attract the best possible candidates for its faculty positions and to retain faculty members at Mount Royal."

As with the Faculty Roles and Responsibilities Task Force, the role of this Working Group encompasses many aspects of faculty life, some related to the Collective Agreement, some to administrative policy and practice, and some to faculty welfare. To acknowledge this scope, Dr Robin Fisher, Provost and Vice-President Academic, and Dr David Hyttenrauch, President of the Mount Royal Faculty Association, agreed to co-chair the group. It also included the Associate Vice-President of Human Resources, two members of Deans' Council, four faculty members (one appointed by the MRFA, one designated by the University Implementation Committee, and two appointed by the co-chairs), two department chairs, and two students appointed by the Students' Association.

Revised January 23, 2009

Major tasks accomplished by the Working Group after its creation in Fall 2007:

1. Developed goals and processes related to its two areas of responsibility, recruitment and retention;
2. Hosted a first Community Consultation designed to solicit ideas, concerns and suggestions related to its mandate;
3. Reviewed tabulated results of the Consultation to identify trends, refine its own process, and consider preliminary areas where recommendations should be developed;
4. Drafted and revised a set of principles (see below) to guide the group and its recommendations, based on the Community Consultation responses, other feedback from faculty, and its own deliberations;
5. Received and reviewed information on faculty demographic trends at Mount Royal and nationally;
6. Conducted focus group and survey work with faculty in the Instructional Support Program to capture the concerns of recently recruited full-time faculty;
7. Surveyed part-time faculty to capture a sense of their demographics, qualifications, career aspirations and concerns about career opportunities;
8. Surveyed tenured faculty regarding their own recruitment experiences and participation in selection processes, their views on retention, and their perceptions of the strengths of Mount Royal as a career environment;
9. Co-chairs met with Deans' Council to present, hear and discuss various issues related particularly to faculty recruitment;
10. Heard a presentation from the Arts Faculty on the successful Fall 2007 pre-recruitment trip to various graduate schools;
11. Met with representatives of Nursing to hear about particular concerns and strategies there related to shortages of Nursing faculty.

Principles

Following the first Community Consultation, preliminary discussion of some survey results and other feedback from faculty, and deliberation within the Working Group, the committee settled on a preliminary list of working principles:

Revised January 23, 2009

The committee's work will be informed by principles and values that preserve and enhance Mount Royal's outstanding faculty culture. The committee's recommendations will reflect:

1. Respect and appreciation for existing, new and potential faculty;
2. An acknowledgment that all faculty make an equivalent contribution whether they are on the TS or the TSS work pattern.
3. Mount Royal's ambition to become an employer of choice;
4. A teaching-intensive institution with meaningful opportunities for faculty to engage in scholarship and service;
5. A regard for issues of equity and diversity, including gender, age, culture and experiences;
6. An expectation of transparency of policy and process;
7. A recognition that the committee's work, where it bears on the collective agreement and negotiations, is advisory only;
8. A commitment to define, maintain, develop and communicate the strengths of Mount Royal's collegial culture;
9. Attention to both non-monetary and monetary strategies and solutions.

Recommendations

1. Establish a working environment where there will be opportunities to combine teaching and scholarship. Emphasise that teaching is the primary work of faculty and that teaching will be informed by scholarship
2. Emphasise the collegial culture of Mount Royal and the fact that, as an institution in transition, there are opportunities for new faculty to have a significant impact on courses, programs and the future development of Mount Royal.
3. Review and extend mentoring and peer support opportunities for new faculty at departmental and institutional levels.
4. Establish a system of academic rank.
5. Evaluate the salary scales and pay attention to the top of the scale, particularly if we introduce the rank of Full Professor.

6. Review the system of market differentials to see if it is meeting the needs of Mount Royal to hire faculty in highly competitive fields.
7. Take steps to improve the hiring process by developing an attractive, informative package of recruitment materials, making sure that search committees are consistently following the process and that candidates have a positive experience when they are interviewed at Mount Royal.
8. Establish the diversity profile of our current faculty complement and develop strategies to address those areas where we could do better.
9. Establish greater flexibility around the start dates of new faculty.
10. Provide course release or other course load adjustments in the first year for new faculty.
11. Where appropriate, provide start-up funds for scholarship and provide student research support.
12. Provide support and resources for faculty to complete PhD or other terminal degree programs.
13. Be open to the possibilities of spousal hiring and provide assistance for the spouses of new faculty members looking for positions in Calgary outside of Mount Royal.
14. Look at the possibility of providing, or assisting with, rental accommodation for new faculty.
15. Review the timing of hiring decisions – both the time in the academic year and the length of time that they take – to facilitate earlier and more expedient hiring decisions.
16. Review and evaluate our moving expense structure for new tenure-track and term certain faculty.

Appendix 1: Tenured Survey

Faculty Recruitment and Retention Task Force

Survey of Tenured Faculty

17 March 2008

Survey Goal: The Task Force is gathering information from various groups of faculty to inform its policy recommendations related to recruitment and retention policy. Information provided is anonymous and confidential, and will be used in the aggregate to identify recruiting and retention issues at Mount Royal. We are also trying to get a more qualitative sense of the experience of working at Mount Royal and in Calgary, and how the institution's and the city's culture affect career decisions. Questions about this survey may be directed to the co-chairs, Robin Fisher and David Hyttenrauch.

1. Demographic Information:

- a. Gender:
- b. Age:
- c. How long as Full-Time at Mount Royal?
- c. Highest degree and year completed:
- d. Faculty:

2. Recruitment Experience:

- a. How did you hear about Mount Royal? What attracted you to Mount Royal?
- b. What were the highlights and lowlights of your recruitment experience? What advice would you give to hiring committees at MR regarding the recruitment process?

3. Integration Experience:

- a. What expectations that you had coming to Mount Royal have not been met?
- b. What expectations that you had coming to Mount Royal have been met or exceeded?
- c. What are some key reasons for continuing to work at Mount Royal and in Calgary?

4. Retention:

- a. Are the reasons you are staying with Mount Royal different from the reasons you came to Mount Royal?
- b. What could Mount Royal do to address retention concerns?
- c. What advice would you give to hiring committees in terms of desirable profiles of new faculty?