

**Part-Time Faculty Task Force
Draft Final Report
30 April 2010**

Charter and Membership

The Part-Time Faculty Task Force was created in Fall 2009 with the following mission:

Mount Royal has gone through the transition from College to University and, like most Universities, continues to rely to a large extent on part-time faculty for the delivery of instruction. Part-time faculty members are thus a crucial part of the Mount Royal Academic community. Given their importance, this Task Force will examine the role and contribution of part-time faculty and develop strategies to ensure that they continue to have fulfilling careers at Mount Royal.

Task Force membership included:

Robin Fisher, Provost and Vice-President Academic, Co-Chair
David Hyttenrauch, President, MRFA, Co-Chair
Heather Faas, Instructor, Bissett School of Business
Carol Krol, Instructor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Indy Lagu, Chair, Department of Math, Physics and Engineering
Collette Lemieux, Instructor, Department of Math, Physics and Engineering
Gerard Lucyshyn, Faculty Representative, MRFA
Tom MacAlister, Associate Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology
Megan Melnyk (Alternate), SAMRU
Sherry Pinzon, Clinical Instructor, School of Nursing
Lorraine Royall, Laboratory Instructor, Department of Chemical and Biological Sciences
Donna Schroeder, Analyst, Human Resources
Eily Sweeney, Vice-President Student Life, SAMRU
Anne Vernon, Chair, Department of Psychology
Len Wilson, Instructor, Department of Policy Studies

Process

The Task Force sought information from a number of sources during its initial process of identifying issues. Significant sources included:

- elected results of the MRFA 2009-2010 bargaining survey as they related to part-time issues
- A detailed Faculty Profile of credit delivery demographics at Mount Royal, developed by the Office of Institutional Analysis and Planning

- A series of focus groups led by committee members among various faculties
- A submission on part-time issues related to negotiations from the MRFA President
- Feedback from chairs
- Discussions with Human Resources and Payroll related to certain process issues
- Ongoing discussion within the Task Force of various experiences of part-time faculty

Using these sources, the Task Force compiled a list of major recurring issues as a means to understand the most critical issues affecting part-time faculty. The Task Force then extended its discussion by preparing a set of draft statements of principle, designed to reflect as broadly as possible the faculty, departmental and institutional interests in enhancing the experiences of part-time faculty. After further refinement, the draft statements of principle were formalized. Finally, these became the basis for the Task Force's preliminary recommendations.

Given the overlap between the Task Force's work and recommendations and the beginning of negotiations on the Collective Agreement between the Faculty Association and the Board of Governors, the Task Force considers that any recommendations which cannot be implemented in the current round will require further attention. This may mean that a new working group is established, or that the scope of the Task Force's charter is adjusted to continue necessary work.

Principles

1. Contract faculty at Mount Royal are a diverse group of academics and professionals with widely varying career experience and aspirations who perform many different teaching functions.
2. The term "part-time faculty" is inaccurate in many cases and does not recognize either the amount of teaching or the long-term connection offered by many contract faculty at Mount Royal.
3. Contract faculty currently deliver the majority of teaching at Mount Royal, and make an indispensable contribution to the university's core mission as "a learning community that focuses on instruction."
4. The contract faculty role does not include the service, governance or scholarship obligations associated with the full-time faculty role. Where non-teaching activities (including department activities, curriculum coordination and orientation) are expected of contract faculty, appropriate compensation should be offered.
5. The extensive use of contract faculty serves both a structural need (driven primarily by budget) and an academic one (offering flexibility to meet delivery needs and draw on the expertise of academics and professionals), but these two strategic uses of contract faculty are in real tension as they affect the institutional status, employment opportunities and aspirations of contract faculty.

6. The teaching contributions of contract faculty deserve meaningful recognition reflective of successful performance and length of service.
7. Mount Royal ought to support the academic career aspirations and credential development of contract faculty, especially for those with significant prior service who may be vulnerable to changes in expected credentials as a result of the university transition. Careful consideration should be given to recognizing and maintaining prior credential expectations where long-serving contract faculty have performed effectively over time, rather than removing such faculty from consideration if the credential expectation for new appointments changes.
8. Contract faculty should have proportionate access to the same professional and teaching supports as full-time faculty, including faculty orientation and formative teaching development.
9. While recognizing the complexity and uncertainty departments face in ensuring and arranging coverage of courses, contract faculty should be entitled to transparency and to departmental and institutional consistency in employment decisions, especially related to selection criteria and processes. They should be entitled to reasonable consultation on such criteria and processes.
10. Contract faculty should be entitled to greater transparency and better communications about contingencies such as budget and enrolment which may affect their immediate employment circumstances. They should also be entitled to reasonable advance notice of contracts to facilitate appropriate course planning.
11. Contract faculty (and indirectly their students) are entitled to rigorous, meaningful and formative performance evaluation comparable to the teaching evaluation of full-time faculty, and should have equitable access to comparable appropriate professional development supports to improve teaching as needed over time. Exceptional performance should be recognized with appropriate incentives.
12. It is important to begin to consider thoroughly and communicate the nature and value of the contract faculty role to students as it relates to instructional quality, and access to professional and academic expertise.
13. Contract faculty deserve access to work spaces which are appropriate to instructional needs including teaching preparation, evaluation of students, and private consultation, with equitable access to communication and information technologies.
14. Enhanced recognition of and support for the important role of contract faculty would likely lead to a reciprocal increase in engagement and participation in the life of the university.

Recommendations

1. Establish a category of employment that provides a greater degree of permanence for colleagues who have been teaching full time hours (i.e. 384 SICH) on a part time contract for some time. This initiative may start with a pilot project involving some faculty members.
2. The institution should identify an appropriate and better title for those who are now “part-time faculty”. It may not be possible to use a single term as Laboratory and Clinical Instructors are separate groups.
3. Mount Royal University needs to establish greater clarity and transparency around the appointment of part-time faculty. Then the criteria and process need to be clearly communicated to all faculty members. Some of these matters may be addressed in the current round of collective bargaining but, if there is still more work to be done, a working group should be established to recommend further solutions. For example, we need better ways to measure experience and performance and greater clarity on how they are used in selection processes.
4. We should develop a new part-time faculty guidebook.
5. Improve access to services for part-time faculty teaching in the evening and/or off site.
6. Find ways to increase the loyalty of part-time faculty to Mount Royal by recognizing their importance to the teaching mandate of the University. This work could include enhancing the orientation program for part-time faculty and providing equitable professional development support for teaching.
7. Increase the maximum number of SICH that a part-time faculty member may teach without the approval of the Dean.
8. Include a part-time faculty member on Dean and Vice President Academic search committees.
9. Increase the number of part-time faculty representatives on General Faculties Council and allow for alternates.