

# MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY

## Faculty Council Minutes

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

4 pm, on Teams

**Members Present:** J. Dryden (chair), L. Pearse and G. Cruttwell (secretaries), S. Andrews, K. Bell, A. Beverley, G. Briand, R. Bruening, A. Cockshutt, A. Comfort, K. Crosby, J. Devine, M. Farina, N. Farooqi, O. Griffiths, L.D. Hamilton, J. Hennessy, A. Inkpen, K. Johnston, J. Kalyn, D. Keeping, L. Kern, A. Koval, H. Lane, R. Lapp, S. Law, A. LePage, M. Levesque, V. Lloyd, C. Lovekin, C. MacDougall, V. Meli, E. Millar, G. Miller, A. Morash, J. Mullen, J. Ollerhead, R. Polegato, C. Pomare, T. Reffenstein, T. Roberts, P. Sianchuk, V. St. Pierre, D. Thomas, J. Tomes, L. Wasylkiw

**Observers:** L. Decker Hawthorne

**Regrets:** P. Berry

1. Land acknowledgment
2. Approval of the agenda
  - moved by A. Cockshutt, seconded by T. Roberts
3. Approval of the minutes of October 19 (attached).
  - moved by V. St. Pierre, seconded by G. Miller
  - correction: Brent White needs to be added to the list of attendees (attended in part)
4. Business arising. (J. Dryden)
  - *Dates for Winter FC meetings:* will be announced soon
  - *Voting procedures* will use the click (thumbs up) to indicate your vote; by not clicking, your vote will be noted as abstaining
  - Updated proposal concerning Health program. Program proposal is posted to the Faculty Teams channel; comments are invited until Friday November 27, 2020.
5. Discussion concerning future PCTC resources. [*estimate: 25 minutes*]
  - The Dean of Arts discussed the following proposal (after consultation with A. Nurse, the current Purdy Crawford Professor of Teaching and Learning, who supports it):
  - Up until quite recently, the Purdy Crawford Teaching Centre had a full-time Director who organized regular programming, professional development workshops, and consultations about postsecondary teaching and learning.
  - The Centre played an important role in the professional development of early career faculty (e.g. Assistant Professors, Postdoctoral Fellows) through the delivery of useful workshops on topics such as creating

teaching portfolios, developing teaching philosophies, and interpreting student evaluations of teaching.

- More experienced faculty members also benefitted from the PCTC's programming through workshops on new ideas in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, one-on-one consultations on developing new courses and pedagogies, and participation in the PCTC's collegial programs, such as Teaching Triangles.
- Although appointed Purdy Crawford Teaching Professors have worked to keep up some of this momentum, it is impossible for a faculty member to organize and offer pedagogy-focused professional development opportunities to their colleagues, while also doing their full-time job.
- Wouldn't it be exciting to have a Teaching Centre staffed by a professional Educational Developer who would offer their expertise to this teaching-centered university community? Imagine having a go-to person who knows Mount Allison academics and is up-to-date on the latest and best strategies in university education. A fully staffed Teaching Centre could offer:
  - classroom visits and course-specific feedback
  - research into recent SOTL
  - ideas for implementation of "best practices" across disciplines
  - training in curricular design, course design, inclusive and accessible teaching strategies, etc.
- A centre with a full-time professional can also bring together experts in many areas for workshops on a wide range of topics:
  - education and mental health
  - education and EDI
  - pedagogy innovation
- Comments on the proposal from members:
- The Maple League was developing a position that could help support these needs; however, their program may not be suited to replacing our local MtA PCTC resource
- A member of the Teaching and Learning committee mentioned that the consensus on the committee was that this resource was needed
- While supportive, one member asked for more details: who will pay for it? What is the position? In response, the Dean of Arts noted that at this point it was just a discussion and will need to go to Senate
- Many other members voiced their support for the initiative
- One question was about the previous head of the PCTC recommending dismantling this position; in response, it was noted that this was due to cost-cutting; her preference was to expand the centre and include an admin. assistant
- The Provost recognized that there were not enough supports in place for faculty and leadership in teaching and learning under the current system and also thought it would be useful to a physical Teaching and Learning centre

- Concern was again raised about resources: the resources for the PCTC have been directed elsewhere: could we be pitting one resource against another?
  - The Provost asked whether the person in this position should be an admin. Position or a staff position; in response, it was noted that it was preferable if the person came from an academic background
6. Information about faculty research project on accessibility at Maple League  
[estimate: 10-15 minutes]
- J. Dryden – Described a project funded through Maple League that considers the experiences with disability of faculty and students. Reminder for faculty to fill out the survey. Survey is available on the Faculty Teams site. This is a faculty driven research project with student research assistants. Goal is to know what is working and what is not in our university environments. A report will be produced and made public in late Winter early Spring.
7. Discussion concerning sexual violence on campus and how faculty members can support students [estimate: 25-30 minutes]
- L. Shumka began the discussion: she was relieved that admin. responded quickly to the concerns raised from the recent protest, but was worried about gaps in the response. For example, the SHARE page is no longer available on the website. What are we doing for students who were on the caseload previously? What we will do for students before Christmas? She also noted that have been issues with no contact orders and how they are used.
  - B. Clayton mentioned a meditation session they were having to help campus and community members (the poster for the event was later circulated)
  - One member had spoken with the president about some of these issues; the president was aware of the gap in services and they were working on putting stopgap measures in place
  - Another member mentioned that they were discussing some of these issues in their department and found a lack of clarity around many issues, eg., what, exactly does a campus ban mean in a virtual setting? Clarity is needed going forward, as is interim resources for faculty
  - Anne Comfort, the new VPISA, discussed what they were doing. She just started last week, so is still getting up to speed, but provided the following information: any SHARE cases that were in progress are being handled; Crossroads is available to help with new cases; they have been looking into issues around contact orders.
  - One member noted a concern with Crossroads: since its full name is “Crossroads for Women” it might not support non-binary people or men
  - Another member agreed, and noted an incident where a man was victim-blamed by someone in Admin.; they would not feel comfortable going to Crossroads
  - The Provost described how these events have been devastating; he is very sorry about all this, and recognized that trust has been eroded with students. He also asked faculty what is our role in all this? How can we address this in the classroom?
  - Several questions were raised in regards to information: should we know more when deciding TAs or writing letters of recommendation?

- Another member noted that we need more training and information for faculty; right now all we get is a single day of training when we start; more information is required. Many agreed with this, including the Provost.
  - As member of a working group on this, L.D. Hamilton noted that they will be asking for input from everyone about what is required, and believes that more education is important
  - Several members noted past occurrences of incidents like this; we need to do something substantive this time. Members noted that the policy on this was recently renewed, but clearly it isn't working "on the ground"
  - The provost shared links to some resources:
    - <https://www.couragetoact.ca/skillshare>
    - <https://www.couragetoact.ca/report>
8. Discussion of how we might coordinate winter course offerings and expectations in order to streamline or facilitate combined experience for students [*estimate: 15-20 minutes*]
- The chair noted several student concerns from a previous meeting: usage of multiple platforms, and an increase in many smaller assignments (rather than fewer larger assignments); the chair asked if we as faculty could coordinate ideas to improve the student experience in these regards
  - Several members noted that many students did appreciate many smaller assignments, and it could be due to the survey design that this particular issue stood out. Another member noted that some students felt like having too many smaller assignments meant they did not have time to learn.
  - One member noted that many students liked a suggestion to have five "free days" of late assignments to help with workload
  - Another point noted was that students may be experiencing difficulty simply because everything is new
  - Another noted that it was important to be sensitive to differences between upper and lower year students when creating course plans
9. Adjournment occurred at 5:23