

MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY

FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday, Aug. 17th, 2020, 1:00-2:30

Online via MS Teams

Members Present: J. Dryden (chair), G. Cruttwell (secretary), S. Andrews, E. Austen, S. Baldwin, K. Bamford, K. Bell, M. Betti, A. Beverley, F. Black, C. Brett, A. Cockshutt, M. Cormier, R. Pascoe-Deslauriers, J. Devine, L. Diehl, A. Dodson, A. Ede, E. Edson, I. Ehrman, M. Farooqi, C. Forstall, O. Griffiths, L. Hamilton, K. Hele, J. Hennessy, A. Inkpen, C. Ionescu, K. Johnston, L. Kern, H. Lane, R. Lapp, M. Lee, M. Levesque, M. Litvak, C. Lovekin, T. MacCormack, C. MacDougall, D. Mawhinney, L. Michaelis, E. Millar, G. Miller, K. Morse, R. Moser, V. Narayana, A. Nurse, J. Ollerhead, L. Pearse, C. Pomare, T. Reiffenstein, L. Ricker, T. Roberts, B. Robertson, R. Schellenberg, L. Shumka, V. St. Pierre, E. Steuter, E. Stregger, D. Thomas, J. Tomes, B. Walters, L. Wasylikiw, B. White, A. Yoshizawa

Observers: K. Meade, I. Okello

Regrets: P. Berry

1. Land acknowledgement

2. Approval of the agenda

One small correction to the original agenda was noted: the approval of minutes includes the minutes from the Oct. 1st, 2019 meeting as well as the notes from the Jan. 28th, 2020 meeting.

3. Approval of the minutes

The minutes from the Oct. 1st, 2019 meeting were approved and the notes from the Jan. 28th, 2020 meeting accepted.

4. Chair's remarks on FC bylaws and meeting timing

The chair made the following remarks:

- Introduced the new members of faculty council (chair J. Dryden, secretary G. Cruttwell, ex-officio member J. Hennessy, members E. Stregger and L. Pearse), noting this was the first time the chair was not the university president

- Noted the timing of future meetings: at least one per term required; planning on two meetings this fall term
- Goal as chair is to facilitate conversations
- Channels will be added to the MS Teams site to facilitate asynchronous post-meeting conversations

5. Discussion of transparency at the administrative and board levels of the university (est. 15-20 minutes)

- Some members mentioned their appreciation of the board's recent town hall, but others were concerned that as yet no concrete action has been taken in response to the letter from faculty to the board regarding layoffs
- One comment was that the new format of FC gives one less opportunity for faculty to interact with the president; in response it was noted that the president is considered a faculty member and so is an FC member
- A suggestion was made for a review of the communication structure from the flow through the board to the admin to the faculty, staff and students
- One of the faculty representatives on the board noted that the board members themselves really liked the town halls and saw them as a positive step forward, and thought there should be more of these
- It was noted that the power is still with the administration: if they recommend a course of action, the board will probably not refuse it
- A suggestion was made to invite the board to a faculty council town hall to reciprocate their gesture to us
- The chair mentioned that a channel will be setup on the FC Team ("Board and faculty and librarian communication") to continue the conversation about faculty/board communications

6. Discussion of anti-racism at Mount Allison and in Sackville, in light of Black Lives Matter (est. 20-25 minutes)

- The VP of student affairs introduced Ivan Okello, returning as Mount Allison's Black student Advisor and Diversity Educator
- Ivan described his role, and noted that many students weren't aware of the University's anti-racism policy; he asked if more faculty could help make students aware of it via their syllabi. He also mentioned that he was happy to work with faculty individually or in groups.
- On the policies, there was a concern that the current Mt. A EDI policies are a closed loop; a 3rd party should be involved; a suggestion was made for an EDI working group/consortium, acting as a deterrent and sounding board for when things go on the fritz
- It was noted that the current policy was made in 2017 and did not get a (scheduled) review in 2018; the policy is planned to be given a more complete review in 2021
- Several members expressed interest in reviewing and/or revising both the policies and procedures around anti-racism
- The chair mentioned that a channel will be setup on the FC Team ("Anti-racism policy and procedures discussion") for further discussion of this issue

- Concern was also expressed with “voluntourism” and support for activities such as Global Brigades
- Another conversation was started in regards to curriculum issues around EDI, including a suggestion to require that all Mt. A students take some courses in relation to anti-racism and/or EDI
- The chair will also setup a channel for “Anti-racism in curriculum and programs” to discuss these issues
- A final comment was that we need more indigenous representation on faculty; this may form a later agenda item for FC

7. Discussion of plans for teaching this Fall and Winter

- Some faculty expressed concern with the Aug. 28th deadline for deciding what mode of delivery winter courses will use
- The provost noted that this was a soft deadline, and was to help give students and their parents some idea of what possibilities will be available in the winter term
- A question was raised regarding sanitation between classes; in response it was noted that students will be required to wear masks, use sanitizer when they come in, and to sanitize their own desks before taking their seat
- Another question was raised about ventilation; this is being considered by facilities management
- Concern was raised in regards to student’s right to privacy while learning online; the teaching and learning group is working on this for senate, and a request was made for language that faculty could use in their syllabi, etc. in regards to this issue
- Some concern was expressed with the ability of faculty to teach with masks, and information was requested about the efficacy of face shields
- The chair will start a new channel for “Teaching and policy concerns during COVID-19” for further discussion of these issues.

8. Adjournment

- Adjournment occurred at 2:30; it was noted that the next FC meeting is planned for the end of September.