

MRFA Professional Development Committee
ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011

Members: *Katharine Barrette, Darlene Dawson, Enrique Avila-Lopez, Janet B Miller, Elaine Mullen, Jodi Nickel, Jennifer Pettit, Melanie Rathburn, Alice Swabey*

Activities 2010-2011

The MRFA Professional Development Committee organized the following professional development activities during the 2010-2011 academic year:

Spring Retreat: “Road Trip! Are We There Yet?” – May 10th & 11th, 2011

This year’s Spring Retreat for faculty will be held at the Delta Lodge at Kananaskis. 180 faculty members are currently registered for the retreat which will consist of 25 concurrent sessions and two plenary sessions. Presentations by MRFA members, guests and even some faculty-student collaborative teams will make for an engaging program. The event once again promises to be a fun and informative opportunity for faculty to meet, mingle and learn from one another.

February Professional Development Day 2011:

“Feeling a Bit Rusty? Rev Up Your Teaching With Some High-Octane Creativity!” - February 23rd, 2011

This year’s PD event consisted of a half-day panel presentation, performance and workshop featuring Dr. Frank Robinson, University of Alberta Vice Provost and Dean of Students, along with colleagues and students from the innovative *There’s a Heifer in Your Tank* program. A highly creative and unique approach to student engagement, service learning and creativity in the classroom, this program is a product of Dr. Robinson’s re-development of the Animal Science 200 course at the University of Alberta. Dr. Robinson and his students performed and presented on the course and the program, explaining why this creative approach has worked so well in fostering both student and faculty engagement with the course and participation by the public. Attendees included 80 members of the faculty who had the opportunity to take part in group discussions with Dr. Robinson, his students and with each other.

Get Cracking - Breakfast Discussion Series 2010-2011:

Four Get Cracking breakfasts were held in the Faculty Centre on Friday mornings and included Mediterranean-style breakfasts and good, hearty discussions. Attendance was noticeably increased over last year and topics included:

- *What is the role of research within your teaching?*
 - October 1st, 2010
 - 30 faculty attended

- *Academic Freedom. What is it?*
 - November 26, 2010
 - 19 faculty attended

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- *How do your SEIs inform your teaching?*
 - January 11, 2011
 - 27 faculty attended

- *Do you have your Copyright right?*
 - March 18, 2011
 - 15 faculty attended

Webinar: “Academically Adrift: Findings & Lessons for Improvement” – March 4th, 2011

The MRFA PD Committee supported and collaborated with the Academic Development Center to host this compelling webinar discussion on the book *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*. The PD Committee provided coffee to attendees; the well-attended webinar provoked some interesting discussion among colleagues.

ACIFA Innovation in Teaching Award Nomination:

This year the MRFA PD Committee was proud to support the nomination of two MRFA members, Dr. Kenna Olson and Dr. Kit Dobson, for the Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association Innovation in Teaching Award. The team nomination was a wonderful representation of Mount Royal; the collaboration of two faculty members for their re-design of *English 1101: Critical Reading and Writing About Universities* demonstrated innovation in teaching and curriculum, as well as the power of student learning through greater understanding of the university in history and culture, of their own institution, and of their active role as students in shaping their academic success. Though the award did not go to Kenna and Kit, the ACIFA award committee commented on the strength and uniqueness of the nomination and we are very proud of our two nominees.

Looking Ahead 2011-2012

The Professional Development Committee continues to provide a variety of PD opportunities each year to MRFA members, including the annual retreat, workshops, panels, discussion groups and more. Participation in MRFA PD events continues to grow as we have witnessed increasing numbers of both new and existing faculty members at events throughout this year. We continue to work collaboratively with other groups such as the Academic Development Center and with colleagues across the institution to foster excellence in teaching, offer professional development opportunities, and to bring new and existing faculty together to discuss important and emerging issues. Our work continues to highlight the achievements, expertise and knowledge of Mount Royal faculty and to foster our institutional culture of collegiality.

Respectfully submitted by,

Katharine Barrette, Chair, MRFA PD Committee