



Professional Development Committee Annual Report 2014/15

2014/15 - Committee Members:

Aida Patient (English)
Brenda Lang (General Mgt, Human Resources, Aviation) - **Treasurer**
Chantelle Anderson (Faculty Association)
Enrique Lopez (Languages)
Janet Miller (Counselling) - **Chair**
Jarett Henderson (Humanities)
Katharine Barrette (Library)
Marlene Kingsmith (Child Studies and Social Work)
Rod Corbett (ADC)
Sally Haney (Communication Studies) - **Secretary**

Principles that guided our committee's work this year were influenced by survey results from the Spring Faculty PD Survey, participant feedback from events, and direction from our MRFA Executive and current committee members.

Our committee was committed to providing professional development activities that would:

- include "something for everyone", but "nothing for all" – recognizing that we have diverse needs and that no single event will appeal to all of our members.
- appeal to full time members and to contract members
- include teaching-related PD as well as scholarship-related PD
- include on campus activities as well as off campus activities
- draw from internal expertise and external expertise
- and, offer a variety of formal and informal events

The following is a summary of our 2014/15 events which we believe have aligned well with these principles.

Fall 2014 Professional Development Event Communicating Our Value – Sharing the Cool Stuff We Do

Friday, November 21, 2014, 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm, 38 members attended

This event was jointly offered by the PDC and the MRFA Advocacy Committee. The event included presentations by Innovator Alex Bruton and educator, CTV health journalist and educator Karen Owen, MRU news media specialist Bryan Weismiller, Journalism educator Sean Holman, Business educator Melanie Peacock, and MRFA Advocacy Chair Roberta Lexier. Following a panel presentation, participants were engaged in a hands-on, boot-camp style workshop where experts provided high-impact advice aimed to improve communication and media skills. Faculty left with practical guidance about how to pitch and translate their research and teaching projects to speak to a broader audience.

February 2015 On Campus PD Event

Giving our Best and Getting Their Best

Wednesday, February 18, 2015, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm; 58 in attendance

This event was the result of a collaboration with executive members of the Students Association of MRU (SAMRU). Four students, Erik Queenan, Zoe Slusar, Kaylie McCarthy and Juan-Francisco???? and four faculty members Glenn Ryland, Isha Sharma, Melanie Rathburn and Shiraz Kurji shared their perspectives on how to give our best in the classroom and how to draw out the best from those we teach. Topics included: To Know and Be Known, Setting the Tone, Cultivating Creativity and Getting the Best.

Get Crackin' Series – 91 total participants

This year we offered seven Get Cracking sessions, alternating start times and day of the week with the hope of making the sessions more accessible to a variety of members. Sessions included:

- Driving the Migration to Google – October 17, 2014, 8:00 am – 9:30 am
- It's All Good: Is It? – November 14, 2014, 8:00 am – 9:30 am
- It's All Good: Is It? – November 14, 2014, 9:30 am – 11:00 am
- Get Cracking on Marking – December 9, 2014, 9:00 am – 11:00 am
- Get Cracking on Team Teaching – January 30, 2015, 8:30 am – 10:00 am
- Get Cracking on Class Sizes – March 20, 2015, 8:30 – 10:00 am
- Get Cracking on Sensitive Topics – April 17, 2015, 9:00am – 11:00 am

MRFA Book Club Event

March 19, 2015

How College Works, by Daniel F. Chambliss & Christopher C. Takacs

25 Registrants

Members met together to discuss this text, reflecting on what we might be able to do to improve the quality of education in an environment of shrinking budgets. These authors discuss the role that personal relationships play in determining a student's success, and put forth a set of small, inexpensive interventions that they claim yield substantial improvements in outcomes. Each participant received a complimentary copy of the book in advance of the meeting, and discussion included guided and open dialogue around some controversial and stimulating ideas. [Based on success, two more events are planned for 2015/16 academic year; several members already expressed interest in on an early sign-up.](#)

MRFA Spring Retreat

Annual Spring Retreat in Kananaskis

May 11-12, 2015

142 registrants (122 FT/LT and 20 Contract members)

This year's theme revolves around scholarship, teaching and service and has been celebrated as "Not your Average Retreat". The retreat includes 26 concurrent sessions offered by faculty from across the university. The opening keynote will be delivered by Janet Moore and Duane Elverum, the co-founders of CityStudio, an experimentation and innovation hub in Vancouver. CityStudio brings together city leaders with students from Vancouver universities and colleges co-create projects which support city programs and provide students with hands-on service learning opportunities. A workshop and "incubator session" will be facilitated by Duane and Janet which will include a dialogue between faculty and representatives from the City of Calgary and the office of the Mayor. In response to member feedback, this year's Retreat was offered at a reduced rate to contract faculty; we have seen an increase in the number of contract faculty participating in the retreat.

Writing Retreat

May 10 – 13, 2015

In response to faculty interest, the PD Committee has organized a writing retreat to run in conjunction with the Spring Retreat in Kananaskis. Participants will have access to peer-sharing sessions, structured activities facilitated by Miriam Carey and opportunities to receive feedback and support.

ACIFA Connection

ACIFA Innovation in Teaching Award Nominations:

This year the MRFA PD Committee was proud to support two nominations for the Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association Innovation in Teaching Award: Katrin Beker and Carolyn Sternenberg, and Sarah Hewitt.

ACIFA Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award:

This year the MRFA PD Committee did not receive any applications from our members for this award so none will be nominated to ACIFA.

Awards Committee Membership/Liaison

The PD Committee had members appointed to the MRFA Awards Committee and to the ACIFA Awards Committee.

Budget Report

This year's PD Committee budget report is available through the MRFA office. Annual spending was \$675 under budget for the 2014/15 fiscal year.

Many thanks to a wonderful committee,
Respectfully submitted on April 23, 2015

Janet Miller
Chair, MRFA PD Committee 2014/15