

MAFA NEWSLETTER

Mount Allison Faculty Association

email: mafa@mta.ca Room G2, Centennial Hall Tel: 364-2289 Fax: 364-2288
E-mail: mafa@mta.ca Web: www.mafa.ca

SEPTEMBER 2012

NEW MEMBERS' PARTY!

All faculty members and librarians (and their partners or spouses) are invited to attend the annual MAFA New Members' Party.

Please join us on Friday 21 September beginning at 4:30 pm at the University Club (President's Cottage, between the Avard Dixon and the Biology buildings). There will be great food and every adult who attends will receive one drink ticket. Spouses and families are welcome, and child care costs and local taxi fares will also be reimbursed (on request, we will be happy to supply you with a blank receipt form at the welcome table).



We hope that you will be able to attend.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With the end of summer weather comes the beginning of a new Fall term. I hope your term has gotten off to an excellent start.

Over the past year, MAFA has undertaken a number of new initiatives. You will be hearing more about these at MAFA meetings and in future newsletters. MAFA has organized the teachers of non-credit courses on campus and an application has gone to the Labour Board for their certification. MAFA has some new committees: the Policy and Procedures Review Committee, the Retirement Issues Committee and the Mentoring Committee. The P&P Review Committee met frequently last year and provided excellent

“behind the scenes” advice to the Executive. The newly-formed Retirement Issues Committee is just getting started and we are expecting that members will appreciate this forum to discuss pre- or post-retirement concerns once the Committee gets underway. MAFA's new mentoring project has begun with the matching up of seven new members with mentors. If you were recently hired at Mount Allison and would like to meet with a tenured member of the Association for advice, please contact the Chair of the Mentoring Committee, Lauren Beck.

Last year, MAFA folded the activities of the Status of Women Committee into the activities of the Equity Panel and organized a meeting of the Panel at the end of the academic year to provide an opportunity for our Equity Panel members to carefully share insights gained from their experiences over the year. This meeting generated some valuable discussion of issues for upcoming collective bargaining. There will be another such meeting at the end of this academic year.

Other already-existing committees have been busy, too. In particular, the Collective Bargaining Committee has been reviewing proposals and meeting with members on a variety of topics in preparation for bargaining. Our collective agreements expire in June 2013. The next round of negotiations should begin sometime early in 2013. Members are encouraged to share their views on the contract with the members of the Executive, especially with Jane Mullen who is the Chair of the Collective Bargaining Committee.

This is perhaps a good time to remind us all that the Association will be seeking a member to volunteer to serve on the Negotiation Team as the Chief Negotiator. If you have any interest in being celebrated as MAFA's next Chief Negotiator - or you

want to nominate someone who is willing - please contact a member of the Executive.

Members who attended the Equity Panel Workshop on August 30 are welcome to provide their feedback to the MAFA Executive or to the MAFA representatives on the Joint Advisory Committee on Equity that was (re)established in the current contract: Amanda Cockshutt and Andrew Hamilton-Wright.

Although the Joint Liaison Committee was very active this past year, meeting frequently for discussion with the administration, many issues remain outstanding. However, not very many of these issues have developed or seem likely to develop into grievances at this time and we are hopeful that the number of violations of MAFA's Collective Agreements will continue to be small.

The most important part of my message in this newsletter is to invite everyone to our New Members' Party, on Friday, September 21, 2012, starting at 4:30 pm, in the University Club. There will be free soft drinks, food, desserts, and drink tickets plus a cash bar. For the new members, the highlight of the party is undoubtedly meeting returning members. Spouses, partners, children, etc. are invited. Child care expenses are reimbursed. The party is free.

You will read elsewhere in this newsletter about other upcoming events and workshops planned by MAFA which you will want to mark on your calendar. You have my best wishes for a satisfyingly productive and provocatively interesting year.

Stephen Law, President

GRIEVANCE REPORT

A variety of issues have been raised in the last few months regarding members. Here is a quick summary of some recent grievances or near-grievance issues.

Confidentiality continues to be an issue, both from our perspective and from the Employer's. A case in the spring involving the confidentiality of applicants' files for a position is an excellent example. MAFA filed a Union grievance on this issue and was assured that confidentiality would not be breached in this way again.

Another ongoing concern is the fair dealing of

part-time faculty and the allotment of stipends: sometimes the Employer attempts to offer these members only "guest lecturer" fees rather than the appropriate stipend and travel allowance. While a grievance was avoided in this area in early summer 2012, it's expected that this issue will rear its head again at some point.

Another potential grievance involved the wording in a recent external review of an academic program. The review committee overstepped the boundaries of inclusion in this report. Fortunately, both MAFA and the Employer agreed on this issue and were able to agree to remove some of the material that violated the C.A.

MAFA is continuing to work with the Employer to clarify procedures for faculty searches, especially for Equity processes (including such issues as gender counts, the interviewing of internal candidates, and other procedures which need clarification). The Employer has produced a document entitled "The Full Time Search Process" but it dates back to May 2012 and it's unclear whether any further revisions, or a final format, have been completed since then.

A recent concern involves hiring procedures in a department and the apparent exclusion of qualified internal candidates. MAFA is investigating the issue at this time.

Helen Pridmore
Grievance Officer

FNBFA HAS ACTIVE SPRING IN LOBBYING AND MEDIA WORK

For the first time in several years, the Federation of New Brunswick Faculty Associations (FNBFA) held a "lobby day" in Fredericton on May 2 and 3, 2012. Participating in the event were representatives of all six of the faculty associations of the public universities of New Brunswick, including MAFA represented by Richard Hudson, Erin Steuter, Geoff Martin and Christina Ionescu).

The main objective was to speak to policy makers about issues affecting academic across New Brunswick. The practical organisation of the event was carried out by the new Executive Director of the FNBFA, Elisabeth Hans, who has been very busy in Fredericton lobbying on behalf of the organisation.

All the FNBFA delegates met with Martine Coulombe (Minister of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour), Marc Léger (her Deputy Minister) and Yves Pelletier (Assistant Deputy Minister for Post-Secondary Education). It was a cordial and productive session in the course of which the Minister made the suggestion of keeping the channels of communication open between the FNBFA and her Ministry through regular meetings.

Various issues were brought up during this meeting, including but not limited to: fiscal transparency in university budgets, faculty participation in governance issues at the university level, limited access to research funds at the provincial level, the importance of maintaining accessibility to education and diversity of programmes, and the impact of cutbacks not only on the humanities but also sciences, social sciences and professional programmes.

FNBFA members emphasized the importance of taking into account, when establishing policies concerning universities, not only the most visible and vocal groups of stakeholders-administrators and students-but also professors across the province, whose careers generally span over a period of thirty years and who are invested members of local communities. As a consequence, we feel firsthand the impact of decisions made by their university administrators and the government, while witnessing the direct impact these decisions have on their communities.

The Minister concluded the meeting by emphasizing that she is well aware of the important contribution educators make to society and expressed her willingness to listen to the issues facing our associations. She added that, in a climate of fiscal austerity, marked by significant cutbacks in all areas, post-secondary education received an increase of 4 million dollars, which speaks to this Ministry's commitment to universities.

MAFA representatives also met with Michael Olscamp, Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries and MLA for the Tantramar constituency in which Mount Allison is located. The same issues were addressed more informally over lunch in a long and engaging conversation. In addition, Erin Steuter talked about the importance of retaining students in our province through job creation. It became apparent that the Minister was receptive to the idea of fiscal

transparency and welcomed the opportunity to learn more about the issues facing faculty.

MAFA representatives also met with Chris Collins, Liberal MLA for Moncton East and opposition critic for the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour. The possibility of legislative actions dealing with fiscal transparency was discussed at length. Richard Hudson situated this issue in the context of a Canada-wide concern with fiscal accountability of government funding.

A press release, in both official languages, was also circulated to draw the media's attention to this event.

Christina Ionescu
Member, FNBFA Board of Directors

Update on FNBFA Activities:

As the beginning of this month, the FNBFA filed requests with the four public universities in the province (Mount Allison, Saint Thomas University, Université de Moncton, University of New Brunswick) under the province's Right to Information act. Information on salaries and other payments to senior administrators (President, Vice Presidents, etc.) was requested. This information is public in other provinces, such as Nova Scotia and Ontario, but, up to now, not in New Brunswick. The Right to Information act became applicable to universities on September 1.

Richard Hudson
President, FNBFA

MAFA CONTINUES SPONSORSHIP OF MONCTON LUNCH N' LEARN SERIES

The MAFA Executive would like to announce that MAFA is once again the sponsor for 2012-13 of the Moncton Lunch and Learn series, held on a regular basis at the Moncton Public Library.



If you want to see what your colleagues are presenting, an updated schedule is available on the MAFA web site at: <http://www.mafa.ca>

This is a great way for our members, and the

association, to expose the wider community to the work we do at the university, MAFA President Stephen Law says.

Heather Patterson has agreed to continue to organize the series. Members interested in presenting should contact her as soon as possible at hpatters@mta.ca.

MAFA HONOURED FOUR MEMBERS AT RETIRING MEMBERS' PARTY IN APRIL

Four long-serving members of the academic staff were honoured at MAFA's Retiring Members' Party on Thursday, April 5th at the University Club.

RETIREEES Margaret Beattie (Math and CS), Peter Higham (Music Library), Ruthmary Macpherson (Bell Library) and Nancy Vogan (Music) retired from their full-time employment this past summer.

IMPORTANT DATES

SEPTEMBER

September 30

Professional Reports of members after sabbatical leave due - Article 23.25

OCTOBER

October 1

Completed applications for tenure and promotion for all academic staff due - Article 17.13, Article 17.31, Article 20.13, Article 20.31

NOVEMBER

November 30

Employer will tell member and Union which sabbatical leaves have been granted, including dates - Article 23.19

WANT TO GO PAPERLESS?

We now live in a world in which many people want to minimize the use of resources like paper. Every year, MAFA asks members to contact the office if they

want to receive only the electronic, PDF version of this newsletter.

People who said last year that they are content to receive just the efile will continue to receive it. If you get a hard copy over the next few days and you only want to get the efile, please email your preference to us.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS, 2012-13

Please mark these dates on your calendar.

Friday 21 September 4:30pm University Club, **New Members' Party**

October 22-26, Fair Employment Week

Friday 26 October 4:30pm University Club, **MAFA Contract Academic Staff social event**

Tuesday 4 December 10am (Room: Avarad Dixon G12), **MAFA General Membership Meeting**

Tuesday 4 December 4:30pm University Club, **MAFA End of term social event**

2013

Friday 12 April (Time: 3 pm) (Room: Avarad Dixon G12), **MAFA Annual General Meeting** and Election of Executive for 2013-2014

Friday 12 April 4:30pm University Club, **Retiring Members' Party**

MAFA 2012-2013 EXECUTIVE

Stephen Law - President (Economics)

Leah Garnett - Vice-President (Fine Arts)

Richard Hudson - Past President (Commerce)

Jane Mullen - Collective Bargaining (Commerce)

Helen Pridmore - Grievance (Music)

Lori Ann Roness - Part-time/Unit 2 (Geography and Environment)

Robert Rosebrugh - Treasurer (Math and CS)

Renata Schellenberg - Membership (Modern Languages and Literatures)