

Mount Allison Faculty Association's Guide for New Faculty and Librarians 2023-2024

The Mount Allison Faculty Association (MAFA) would like to extend a warm welcome to all new faculty and librarians. To help you make the transition to the Mount Allison community, MAFA has prepared this guide.

If you have any questions about any of the information in this booklet or any other issues, please contact Geoff Martin, MAFA Professional Officer & Executive Director, at 364-2289 or mafa@mta.ca.

What is MAFA?

MAFA was founded in the 1950s by a group of academic staff who recognized the need for an organization where matters that affect faculty and librarians in their work and relationships with the university could be freely and openly discussed. More specifically our constitution lists the objectives of the association as:

- (a) *To stimulate and improve teaching, research and creative activity, and to encourage cooperative relations among members of the University.*
- (b) *To promote the professional interests and welfare of the University and its academic staff.*
- (c) *To protect freedom of expression, thought, teaching and research within the University.*
- (d) *To cooperate with other associations with similar interests, in particular with provincial, regional, national and international associations of university academic staff.*
- (e) *To act as a bargaining agent within the meaning of the Industrial Relations Act and in that connection to regulate employment relations through collective bargaining between the Employer and all employees.*
- (f) *To seek the fullest representation of all employees in the academic operation of the University.*
- (g) *To deal with other matters considered to be congruent with the interests of the Association or its members.*

Under our two collective agreements between MAFA and the Board of Regents of the university, all faculty and librarians automatically pay MAFA dues which are deducted from their pay (as members of the “bargaining unit”). Full membership in the association is voluntary and you will be asked to sign a form indicating your desire to become a member. Only members of MAFA (“members of the association”) are eligible to vote in MAFA elections and to participate in MAFA events.

MAFA and the Collective Agreements

An important function of MAFA has been to act as bargaining agent for faculty and librarians. In 1982 the association became a union through certification under the New Brunswick Industrial Relations Act. Since then we have negotiated for full-time faculty and librarians a series of collective agreements that outline terms and conditions of employment. In 2003 MAFA also became the official bargaining agent for all part-time faculty at Mount Allison. You should have received your copy of the current collective agreement for the Full-time unit (2019-2024) or the Part-time unit (2019-2024) when you received your offer of employment. If you did not receive one you should ask for a copy from People and Culture. These documents can also be viewed on the web at www.mafa.ca.

We are now in the preparation year for new agreements

This is the final year of our current collective agreements so please look out for email on our preparations for bargaining, which will begin this fall. These negotiations will be very important in shaping the terms and conditions of our work over the next several years, so we urge you to participate.

MAFA Meetings

Full meetings of the membership are held in the fall and in the spring, with additional meetings called to deal with any special issues of interest, such as bargaining. We also normally have at least two social events, a New Members' Party in September and a Retiring Members' Party in April. It is also our custom to sponsor one or more activities during Fair Employment Week in October. Stay tuned.

MAFA Executive

The executive of the association is normally made up of nine officers who are elected to serve a one-year term. Currently the executive members are:

Mount Allison Faculty Association, 2021-22 Executive and staff

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>E-Mail</i>
Bamford, Karen	President	kbamford@mta.ca
Betti, Matt	Collective Bargaining Officer	mbetti@mta.ca
Grey, Melissa	Part-time Officer	mgrey@mta.ca
Khattab, Lara	Membership/Advocacy Officer	lkhattab@mta.ca
Nurse, Andrew	Vice-President	anurse@mta.ca
Patten, San	Equity Officer	spatten@mta.ca
Pomare, Carol	Grievance Officer	cpomare@mta.ca
Pearse, Linda	Treasurer	lpearse@mta.ca
Ricker, Laurie	Past President	lricker@mta.ca

MAFA has one employee:

Geoff Martin, 364-2289, Professional Officer & Executive Director, mafa@mta.ca

The executive meets regularly to discuss all issues that arise or have been brought to its attention. You should always feel free to ask any member of the executive to look into any of your questions or concerns.

What should I do if I believe that I am being treated unfairly or that the collective agreement is not being followed?

It is the role of any member of the MAFA Executive to review and discuss any concerns brought forward by academic staff. In many cases the executive member may be able to answer your questions or solve the problem immediately. At other times it will be necessary for the whole executive to consider the issues. Sometimes the executive will take it forward for discussion with the employer at the Joint Liaison committee that is established under the collective agreements. All of these steps are informal ways to handle such situations.

If however a member or the executive believes that there is a violation of the collective agreement, another mechanism for seeking a resolution is to file a grievance. This process is outlined in Article 36

of the relevant collective agreement. Do not hesitate to contact the union even if you are not sure whether your concerns merit a grievance. We will discuss potential grievances with you and if a grievance is filed, will ensure that the proper process is followed.

How does MAFA use my dues?

Your union dues enable MAFA to support the role of faculty and librarians in a number of ways. At the local level we maintain an office where the executive and MAFA committees meet and where files of correspondence and documents as well as other resources allow research on a wide variety of issues. To assist with grievances, negotiations, or any other issues with legal implications, MAFA consults a lawyer who specializes in New Brunswick labour law. One of our committees is a Donations Committee that annually recommends the distribution of some MAFA funds to worthy local causes. MAFA also holds social events for members.

Some of MAFA's resources are used to cover the cost of our membership in the Federation of New Brunswick Faculty Associations (FNBFA). This organization allows the faculty associations at six New Brunswick public university campuses to share information and concerns. One of its important roles is to keep postsecondary education in the public eye. This is done through scholarships and medals awarded to high school students and opinion pieces and new stories in provincial newspapers. Another important role for the FNBFA is to lobby the provincial government concerning support for universities. You will be receiving notices of FNBFA news and can check the web site at www.fnbfa.ca.

Since 1958 MAFA has also maintained membership in the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT). This national organization supports local faculty associations like MAFA through workshops, legal and collective bargaining advice, research, and other resources. It also takes up issues of national importance and lobbies the federal government concerning postsecondary education. Arising from our membership in CAUT, MAFA is also a member of the CAUT Defence Fund. This fund has over twenty million dollars and gives financial support to academic staff associations that are on strike or are locked out. MAFA members receive the CAUT *Bulletin* regularly and it is also available in the MAFA office or you can check the web site at www.caut.ca. We are also a member of the National Union of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (NUCAUT), which provides MAFA members with affiliation with the Canadian Labour Congress.

Helpful hints

This will be a busy time for you, as there are a lot of tasks to attend to in addition to preparing for the routine of the academic year. The following are some of the things that you should expect and that you will need to do.

All members should:

Arrange to open your e-mail account by contacting Computing Services at 2473, if they have not done so already.

Determine what classrooms or labs you are scheduled to teach in (for both terms) and decide whether they suit your needs. If you think that a different room would be more appropriate, or if you need different equipment in the room that you have been allocated, ask your departmental administrative assistant or head about how best to address this.

Full-time Members should:

Make sure your office is reasonably well-equipped. You should have all the necessary furniture (desk, chairs, filing cabinets, bookshelves) and equipment (telephone and computer). If any of these things are missing, you should speak to your department head or program director to find out when you can expect delivery.

Make sure your workload is what you expected. There are some departmental variations in teaching duties, but you should ensure that your teaching workload is comparable to the other members of your department, and consistent with the nature of your contract.

Ensure that you are properly reimbursed for your moving expenses. Your expenses need to be submitted to Financial Services using the Self Service software.

For full-time members, get the account number for your own Professional Expenses Reimbursement Account (PERA) and for any other funding accounts you may have. You can charge various research-related expenses as outlined in clause 29.06 through 29.08 of the Full-time collective agreement. If you have questions we suggest you ask your head or program director or contact Financial Services or People and Culture. Please be aware that in claiming money from this account you must conform to university financial policies. It is better to ask in advance rather than deal with problems later!

Part-time Members should:

Remember to consider whether you are eligible to apply to the “professional activities fund,” for reimbursement of employment-related expenses over \$250 as outlined in Article 29.01 ii) of the part-time collective agreement. **A new feature is that part-time members are able to get funds up to \$250 per academic year under Clause 29.01 i) by filling out the proper form in Self Service. You then send it to Financial Services and you do not need an account number for this. You can also apply for larger sums as outlined in the same part-time article.**

Every summer, when you are teaching in the coming year, consider applying for one of the research stipends outlined in Article 29.02 of the collective agreement. For the latter, you must have an appointment in the academic year in order to be eligible for a research stipend in that year. Applications are due on August 31 of each academic year.

Check with your department head or program director with regard to arrangements for use of office, computer, telephone, and any other resources you might need.

If you can think of any other helpful hints or enhancements to this guide, please send them to mafa@mta.ca or call 2289.
