

MAFA NEWSLETTER

Mount Allison Faculty Association

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2024 RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY FAIR

by Christelinda Laureijs, Matthew McIssac, SunMin Park and Rin Takai

On October 23, the University Club was buzzing with activity at the Research and Creative Activities Fair. Organized as part of the 2024 Fair Employment Week, the event celebrated the rich and diverse expertise that contract academic staff contribute to teaching and learning in higher education. Faculty from departments such as Mathematics & Computer Science, Sociology, English, and Music showcased an impressive array of projects, highlighting the breadth of creativity and passion within our academic community.

While recordings performed by Music faculty (Karin Aurell, Adam Ciccillitti, Joel Cormier) played in the background, attendees mingled and explored the table displays, enjoying refreshments prepared by Brian Neilson.

This year's fair had an assortment of interesting displays, ranging from crocheted hippos demonstrating the shortcomings of generative AI tools (Dr. Meghan Allen; Mathematics & Computer Science) to fish coprolites—fossilized feces (Dr. Melissa Grey; Biology)! The fair was a fantastic opportunity to explore the creative projects and activities that part-time faculty and contract staff engage in outside of their time at Mount Allison.

The fair was also the site of an exciting new book launch featuring the work of Dr. Geneviève Robichaud (English)!



Dr. Robichaud's book *The Poetics of Translation* (McGill-Queen's University Press) examines translation as an artistic medium. Robichaud explores how translation is not merely the process used to transform information from one language to another, but rather a unique form of expression deserving of its own research.

This year's fair was a testament to the invaluable contributions of part-time and contract academic staff and a celebration of the creativity and passion that fuels our university community.

This event was organized by the Mount Allison Faculty Association (MAFA), with assistance from Master's students in BIOL/CHEM 5991: Graduate

Professional Development. Thank you to Brian Nielson and the team at the University Club for hosting a great event!



JOINT LIAISON REPORT

The Joint Liaison Committee operates under the authority of Article 6.03 (Union Employer Relations) of the MAFA Full-Time and Part-Time Collective Agreements. Its mandate and mode of operation are specified under Articles 6.04 to 6.07. Article 6.04 notes, "The Committee shall review matters of concern excluding any dispute which is at that time being resolved under the grievance and arbitration procedures set out in Article 36. The Committee shall attempt to foster good communication and effective working relationships between the parties and shall attempt to maintain a spirit of cooperation and respect between the parties."

The Joint Liaison Committee has met monthly since September, following the installation of our new Provost. From September to November, MAFA's representatives on Joint Liaison were Meghan Rose Allen and Laurie Ricker. From December on, MAFA's representatives are Meghan Rose Allen and Matt Betti. Geoff Martin serves as the recording secretary. The Employer's representatives are our new Provost, Richard Isnor, and, continuing from last year, Dean of Libraries and Archives, Rachel Rubin.

Issues raised by MAFA that appear to be resolved are:

- *Lack of consultation on installation and redesign of in-classroom cameras.*
 - In future, consultation will be solicited.
- *Mandate of an appointee in the Extended Learning Office appearing to be an overreach.*
 - The appointee is not just in the Extended Learning Office but is also a replacement for an employee on leave in another office.
- *Anomaly in correspondence appointment letters compared to collective agreement provisions.*
 - Mount Allison agreed to honour the payment structure of partial payment mid-semester rather than lump-sum at the end.
- *Hires for part-time, for-credit instructors requiring full-time member involvement as per the Collective Agreement.*
 - It was determined that full-time members were involved in a Summer 2024 hire, as required by the Collective Agreement.

Ongoing issues raised by MAFA are:

- *The recruitment and training of equity representatives.*
 - While the recruitment issue was resolved early in the Fall, it is not clear that training for Equity Representatives has been updated to reflect changes in our new Collective Agreement.
- *Issues in Self-Service.*
 - These include confidentiality issues related to seeing third-party invoices and home addresses of students and employees. There are also issues related to entering grades and functionality lost in the transition from Connect.
- *Review of timetabling.*
 - The Provost is in discussions with the Registrar about continual issues with proper timetabling, including

downloading the work of checking the timetable to Heads/Program Directors.

- *Artificial intelligence concerning intellectual property and academic integrity.*
 - We are still waiting for updated policies on Artificial Intelligence use, especially with respect to the Student Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity.
- *Waitlisted students and Moodle access.*
 - Waitlisted students do not have access to Moodle pages, leading to additional work to keep waitlisted students informed, especially for instructors who have courses with large waitlists.
- *Classification of union dues of full-time members also teaching under the part-time agreement.*
 - MAFA is concerned about the implications of Arbitration Award #2024-03, not just on union dues, but also on how it relates to full-time members teaching overload and correspondence courses *vis-à-vis* appropriate Collective Agreement coverage.
- *Timely and appropriate composition of support staff hiring committees.*
 - There were delays in replacing a retired support staff member, causing increased workload for other employees. The majority of the hiring committee were non-academic employees despite the academic content of the job.
- *Manulife Sick Leave Management.*
 - A member was referred to Manulife without any conversation with or inclusion of MAFA, contrary to People and Culture's past indications that MAFA would be included in future communications regarding Manulife Sick Leave Management.
- *Recording of a member's teaching:*
 - While the reasoning for said recording has been explained, there are still issues with the

communication regarding and the dissemination of these recordings.

The following were moved from Joint Liaison and were addressed in the Collective Bargaining process:

- *Depreciation of computer equipment for those leaving the university.*
- *Roles and workload of Heads/Program Directors.*
 - A committee was struck to discuss workload of Heads and Program Directors. However, with new requests from People and Culture for Heads to perform additional duties with respect to MASA employees, this issue has returned to the Joint Liaison agenda list.

For the upcoming term, we will continue with all unresolved items and raise issues regarding physical accessibility on campus.

Discussions of most of these issues fell over multiple meetings, as Richard Isnor often needed to bring concerns back to other managers who do not send representatives to Joint Liaison. It would be preferable if there were some inclusion of non-academic administrators at Joint Liaison for speedier resolution of issues.

Please reach out if you have any issues you would like to be raised at Joint Liaison.

Respectfully submitted,

Meghan Rose Allen

FOUR MEMBERS RECEIVE RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY STIPENDS

MAFA is pleased to advise members of the four part-time members who have won Research and Creative Activity Stipends for the 2024-25 year. As usual, they represent the range of research and creative activity here at Mount Allison.

Erin Bardua (Music) received a research stipend for her project entitled "Cross-training for Voice

Pedagogy: Decoding and Re-codifying Contemporary Commercial Idioms." From Social Science, Kristin Cavoukian (Politics and International Relations) received support for her project entitled "Parental Rights," Government Wrongs: The Policy 713 Education Battle in New Brunswick."

Another successful candidate was Emily Douglas (Feminist and Gender Studies), who was awarded a stipend for her project entitled "Sick Time: A Critical Phenomenological Analysis of Temporality in Medically Unexplained Chronic Illnesses." Finally, Susie Vokey (Feminist and Gender Studies) won a stipend for "Creating Reflective Resilience: Addressing Social Worker Burnout through an Art-based Reflective Circle."

The stipend, currently valued at \$8003, is salary support for research and creative activity. Under Article 29.02 of the part-time collective agreement, applications submitted by part-time members are considered by the Senate Research and Creative Activity Committee. Applications for each annual competition are due August 31.

This is the tenth year in which four stipends have been awarded. "These stipends provide crucial support for part-time members in their research and creative activity, demonstrating the variety of their contributions," says MAFA President Laurie Ricker. At the same time, the "awarding" of these stipends highlights an important difference in the conditions of employment for part-time members compared to those for full-time members.

Whereas all full-time members are compensated for their research and creative activity, only a subset of part-time members receive compensation for this aspect of their work and those who do need to apply and have their scholarly projects ranked and funded.

"MAFA has been successful in negotiating some support for the research and creative activities of part-time members, and we are the envy of the region because other faculty associations have trouble negotiating these awards," Laurie Ricker says. "But we have a long way to go before we achieve working conditions that are fair and equitable for all members of our academic staff. Working towards such

improvements will continue to be a priority in future rounds of collective bargaining."



MAFA 2024-2025 EXECUTIVE

- Laurie Ricker, President (Math and CS)**
- Matt Betti, Vice-President (Math and CS)**
- Corrine Cash, Treasurer (Geography and Environment)**
- Martiza Farina, Past President (Modern Languages and Literatures)**
- Meghan Rose Allen, Collective Bargaining (Math and CS)**
- Amatoritsero Ede, Membership and Advocacy Officer (English)**
- David Fleming, Equity Officer (Physics)**
- Melissa Grey, Part-time Officer (Biology)**
- Carol Pomare, Grievance Officer (Commerce)**

- Geoff Martin, Executive Director and Professional Officer**