



MUFA Newsletter

McMASTER UNIVERSITY FACULTY ASSOCIATION

March 2023 - Volume 49.4
Editor: Katherine Cuff

MUFA Faculty Council Meeting: Thursday, March 23rd at 10:30am via Zoom

For our upcoming MUFA Faculty Council meeting, there are a few forthcoming Senate policy revisions and operational/administrative changes affecting all faculty members that we would like to raise awareness about and discuss.

On the administrative/operational side, the planned Faculty Council topics for discussion include student accommodations (SAS) and the new course outline portal, Simple Syllabus. On the Senate policy side, we will provide updates and answer questions about the status of the revisions to the Faculty Code of Conduct, the Terms of Reference for Department Chairs, and any other Senate policies with a Faculty Association Observer.

If you have questions or comments about any of the above, please reach out to your MUFA Faculty Council member. Click [here](#) for contact information of the MUFA Faculty Council member in your department.

For Senate policies, you can also reach out to the faculty senator in your Faculty. Please see the current Senate membership [here](#).

We'd also like to receive your feedback and comments on any other faculty-related issues, such as the recent CP/M policy revisions. If your Faculty Council member is unable to attend, please send your feedback/questions to mufa@mcmaster.ca.

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HR Updates

Important update about Sun Life changing their Pharmacy Benefit Manager effective March 1st 2023
McMaster's benefit plans are administered by Sun Life. To help process your prescription drug claims directly with pharmacies, Sun Life uses a Pharmacy Benefits Manager. Effective March 1st 2023, Sun Life is changing their Pharmacy Benefits Manager from Telus to Express Scripts Canada. This change will happen behind the scenes and no action is required on your part. Sun Life has been working with pharmacies across the country to inform them of the change and prepare for the transition so that it is an automatic change managed in the pharmacy's system. The change will have **no** impact on your benefit plan provisions, the amount covered by the plan or the experience at the pharmacy.

The McMaster contract number (25018) and ID number (your employee ID number) will remain the same. Should you or your covered dependents have any issues while visiting your local pharmacy on or after March 1, 2023, you can tell the pharmacist that the new Pharmacy Benefits Manager is Express Scripts Canada. Pharmacists will have access to support from Express Scripts Canada if they need it. You can also call Sun Life at 1-800-361-6212.

You can obtain an updated Sun Life drug card by either:

- Accessing a new version of your drug card through mysunlife.ca or the [mySunLife mobile app](#). The new drug card that will show Express Scripts Canada's name and logo can be downloaded on or after March 1st.
- Printing the drug card template that will be available on the HR website on March 1st. The template will show Express Scripts Canada's name and logo, include the McMaster contract number and you can simply write your employee ID number in the Member ID number section.

Additional information about this change is available on the [HR website](#). Any questions can be directed to your HR representative.

T4 and T4A Slips

McMaster T4 and/or T4A slip(s) as applicable are now available for viewing and printing through Mosaic - Employee Self Service, for payments made to you by Human Resources Operations.

Tax slips are provided to McMaster employees by electronic delivery through Mosaic as the standard delivery method in accordance with recent amendments to the Income Tax Act. Canada Revenue Agency recognizes electronic delivery as a valid means of providing T4 slips to individuals. It is a fast, secure, and convenient way for employees to review, print, or download their tax slip(s).

If you have previously withdrawn your consent to receive electronic T4A slips, paper slips will be sent to the mailing address currently on file in the Mosaic HR system. You may also access the same T4A slip(s) via Employee Self Service in Mosaic at the time of issue. Paper slips will be mailed in accordance with the deadlines indicated by the Canada Revenue Agency.

T2200S forms for eligible employees who wish to claim remote work expenses incurred working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic will be distributed later in March 2023.

For more information and a User Guide on how to access and print your T4 and/or T4A slip(s) please visit <https://hr.mcmaster.ca/employees/payroll/tax-information/>.

If you have any questions, please email hr.mcmaster@mcmaster.ca or call 222-HR (22247).

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ryan Ahmed

Mechanical Engineering

Danielle N. Brewer-Deluce

Pathology and Molecular
Medicine

Elizabeth Christine Cates

Pathology and Molecular
Medicine

Anthea Christoforou

Kinesiology

Javad Doliskani

Computing and Software

Ceilidh Eaton-Russell

Pediatrics

Mohamed Elamien

Electrical and Computer
Engineering

Lucy El-Sherif

Global Peace and Social Justice

Lauren Fink

Psychology, Neuroscience, and
Behaviour

Bryan Elliott Jung Lee

Materials Science and
Engineering

Alfred Liu

Accounting and Financial
Management

Telex Magloire Ngatched

Nkouatchah

Electrical and Computer
Engineering

Lea Ravensbergen

Earth, Environment & Society

Irena A. Rebalka

Pathology and Molecular
Medicine

Get Involved with MUFA!

A voluntary organization such as MUFA can succeed in serving the interests of its membership only to the extent that the members participate in formulating and executing policy. At any given time, approximately two dozen individuals carry the burden for all of the members and after a few years most of them are exhausted by the tasks which they have voluntarily borne. Their valuable experience and wisdom is then lost to us. The best way to lessen this attrition of talent is for more of the membership to give some time and effort to the Association.

If you are interested in putting your name forward to participate on future Executive Committees, ad hoc committees, MUFA committees, or as a MUFA representative on University committees, please let us know by completing this [form on our web-site](#).

COMPLETED EXTERNAL REVIEWS - REPORTS AVAILABLE

- [MacPherson Institute](#) - The Progress Review of the MacPherson Institute is a means to better understand recent changes and their impact across McMaster.
- [Equity and Inclusion Office](#) - The External Review of the Equity and Inclusion Office, McMaster University, identifies new opportunities for future development.

Equity and Inclusion Requires Accountability and Transparency

We read with great interest the [External Review](#) of the Equity & Inclusion Office (EIO) that was conducted in the fall of 2022 and recently posted on the Provost's website. The EIO played a central role in some highly publicized events in the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour (PNB).

In 2020, the Administration initiated investigations against multiple members of PNB under the *Sexual Violence Policy* and the *Discrimination and Harassment Policy*. Our understanding is that the EIO's involvement led the Administration to impose strict interim measures on the members of PNB, including placing some on administrative leave and declaring them *persona non grata*, and otherwise restricting them from interacting with students.

The interim measures completely disrupted our department. New supervisors had to be found for 11 graduate students and approximately 50 undergraduates; 27 graduate students had to have their supervisory committees restructured; replacement instructors had to be found for eight undergraduate and two graduate courses; many administrative committees in PNB had to be restructured.

To our knowledge, no members of PNB were invited to participate in the External Review. Nevertheless, we agree with many of its constructive criticisms. We summarize and provide context for these criticisms so the McMaster community can learn from our experience and prevent similar harm in the future. Please note that our criticisms of the EIO are not directed towards the current occupants of that office.

The External Review Team recommended “that senior administrators receive communication training on how to respond publicly to high stake cases.” (p. 8)

We concur. At the onset of every investigation, the administration sent out emails to members of PNB and/or

posted a public announcement on the *Daily News* website. The information contained in these communications allowed people to deduce the identity of the respondents. The administration's public communications also used biased language implying that the respondents were guilty and the department was in need of cultural reform, which tarnished the reputations of the respondents and the entire department, even though no investigations had yet been initiated and no conclusions had yet been reached.

The administration and the EIO failed to take adequate care in their communications at the outset of investigations. When the investigations ended, they made no attempt to rehabilitate the reputations of the many respondents who had not violated policy.

“All decisions pertaining to the office and its role need to be made in a manner befitting the ethical commitments of the institution and the transparency needed to rebuild trust and confidence, which may have been compromised due to a perceived lack of adherence to due process in the past.” (p. 5)

According to an interview given to the *Hamilton Spectator*, the EIO often conferred with complainants before they filed complaints, and the purpose of these consultations was to help build “stronger” cases against respondents. Our experience is that these consultations were not conducted in a reliable manner and may have contaminated complaints, and many in PNB consequently lost confidence in the EIO.

“Hiring decisions at McMaster need to be done in a transparent and consistent manner. The bar is even higher in the EIO.” (p. 5)

During the 2020 PNB investigations, a spousal relationship existed in the EIO, and we have grave concerns that it

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Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Association or of its Executive.

dramatically affected how those matters were investigated. Policies regulating the hiring of family and spouses exist to ensure that such relationships do not interfere with professional duties, but they need to be respected in substance rather than just in form, and they may need to be strengthened. As the External Review Team stated (p. 11), “transparency in decision-making with respect to hiring and resource allocations is of central importance to maintaining the credibility and integrity of the office.”

The External Review Team also recommended that the EIO “address the need to treat all staff equitably.” That the primary office in charge of promoting equity at McMaster should require a reminder that it must treat its own staff equitably is stunning.

“The range of activities and responsibilities associated with the EIO and McMaster are broader than a typical university office’s mandate.” (p. 4)

In 2019, the team that revised the *Sexual Violence Policy* and the *Discrimination and Harassment Policy* concentrated much of the power relating to sexual misconduct investigations into the hands of a single person in the EIO. We have serious concerns that this concentration of power affected the PNB investigations.

For instance, a single person provided consultations on how to write strong complaints and was also the primary intake person to receive the complaints that they helped write. This person was also a member of the Response Team that interpreted these complaints to: (1) determine whether they should be investigated; (2) make recommendations about interim measures based on the allegations in the complaints; and (3) make suggestions about the public communications about the investigations. The External Review Team noted, “it is nearly impossible for the EIO to fulfill all of the accessibility-related demand for

consultation, advocacy, complaints resolution, and strategic development with only having one person dedicated to this effort” (pp. 3-4).

Relatedly, the External Review Team also recommended that “the AVPEI [Associate Vice President of Equity and Inclusion] role be arm’s length from the investigations function of the office” (p. 4).

In short, the staffing structure of the EIO lacked sufficient checks and balances to counteract bias, incompetence, and conflicts of interest, all of which tainted the PNB investigations. As the External Review Team said, “getting clarity and separation of duties and responsibilities will help greatly in bringing the EIO in line with *wiser* practices across the post-secondary sector in Canada and abroad.” (p. 4, emphasis added)

Again, our criticisms do not apply to the current acting AVPEI or staff of the EIO and SVPRO. Nevertheless, the problems that we and the External Review Team have highlighted must be acknowledged and addressed. The activities in the EIO affect everyone on campus, and when it goes astray, the damage to individuals, to entire departments, and to the university, can be severe, lasting, and irreparable. We want a strong equity-focused university, but that cannot be done without accountability and transparency or by assuming that people are guilty before they have been fully investigated.

Finally, the senior administration needs to rebuild trust with the McMaster community. It can do that by accepting more oversight and working collegially with the McMaster community, including the Senate and MUFA members of Joint Committee.

**Paul Andrews, Senator, Associate Professor of PNB
Paul Faure, Senator, Professor of PNB**

We want to hear your opinion!

MUFA will be offering space in our newsletter for MUFA members’ OpEd pieces. Anyone wishing to contribute to the MUFA Newsletter is invited to send submissions to MUFA at mufa@mcmaster.ca.

This forum is meant to foster conversation and information-sharing among MUFA members; it is not an endorsement of any particular position by MUFA or its Executive. Submissions will be accepted and published on a rolling basis.

Everything You Need to Know About Retiring from McMaster's Pension Plan

Retirement is a significant and life changing chapter and it requires careful and thoughtful planning because it involves gathering lots of information and making important decisions about Finances, Lifestyle, Activities, Next Career, Learning, Volunteering to name just a few.

If you are considering retiring in the next few years, be sure to check out Human Resources' [Planning for Retirement website](#).

Retirement Process

We recommend starting to plan for your retirement a minimum of 6 months in advance. This allows you time to make sure you are comfortable with your decision before making the arrangement formal.

The first step in the process should be meeting with your manager to discuss your decision to retire. You will want to have some leeway regarding the business / work flow when you tell your manager of your impending retirement. Be thoughtful of your relationships: your team, department and manager to determine appropriate notification.

Human Resources requires 3-4 months notice of your intent to retire. This will ensure ample time to prepare your retirement package. A formal notification in the form of an email or letter should be provided to Human Resources. Your HR Advisor will handle additional processes to ensure records are updated in the system.

Human Resources will meet with you 2-3 months in advance of your retirement to discuss information which may include pension amount and options, post-retirement benefits, University services for Retirees and the McMaster University Retirees Association.

Deciding When to Retire

As outlined in the 'Retirement Process' there are dates of notification that you need to consider in making your retirement decision.

For members of the McMaster Pension Plans, retirements will always commence on the first day of a month, as outlined in the Pension Plan texts. Important dates to understand when considering when to retire include the normal retirement date, early retirement date and special retirement date which are defined in the applicable pension highlights document.

Understanding Your Retirement Income

It is important to understand the financial decisions that come with retirement. There are three sources of income that may contribute to your retirement:

- Government Plans (CPP, OAS)
- Personal Savings (RRSP, TFSA)
- McMaster Pension Plan

There are a number of resources that can assist you in understanding the McMaster portions that contribute to your retirement income. Human Resources is committed to providing information on these areas, however, we are unable to advise on the best option to meet your needs. You may wish to seek assistance from a financial planner or financial advisor with your banking institution.

Creating a Transition Plan

Creating a transition plan with your manager will help you and your team as you prepare for retirement.

The plan will help you take appropriate actions to transfer your important knowledge and experience to others, so that the work you leave behind can be continued successfully by others. Here are some examples of what a transition plan may include:

- Explicit knowledge: Updating files, documents and relevant information, making sure it is accessible
- Tacit knowledge: sharing your organizational knowledge, unwritten experiences through mentoring and cross training others, development coaching so others can learn from your expertise.

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These important activities will help you to stay engaged and contribute high value during your transition to retirement.

Pre-Retirement Programs and Policies

McMaster offers a number of programs and policies to support transition into retirement, which are specific to each employee group.

Your HR Advisor can support you through what is available to you, based on your various personal factors.

[Pre-Retirement Reduced Workload Policy](#)

Ensuring Accurate Information

To ensure you receive your retirement package and other documents in a timely manner, review your personal information on Mosaic Employee Self Service including: home mailing address, email, telephone number, marital status and beneficiary's name and date of birth.

[Contact HR](#) if you have changes that require updating as to best reflect accuracy in your retirement package.



HR Retirement Workshops

These workshops are intended for active employees enrolled in the Contributory Salaried Pension Plan.

In these workshops, participants will:

- explore an overview of the Contributory Salaried Pension Plan, including how your pension is calculated and the pension options available to you.
- review key ages and dates in the retirement process.
- learn about the retirement process, including key steps and important timing leading up to retirement.
- review highlights of the post-retirement services and benefits.
- explore ways to stay connected to McMaster after retirement

Upcoming Workshop Dates:

May 2, 2023

2:00pm-4:00pm

Register for this workshop [here](#).

May 4, 2023

10:00am-12:00pm

Register for this workshop [here](#).

SVPRO Drop-In Support

for McMaster community members who:

- Have questions about consent, gender-based or sexual violence (GBSV)
- Have experienced GBSV
- Are supporting survivors in their lives

Tuesdays from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

- January 31st to April 25th (inclusive)
- University Hall (UH) 104
- Check in with the front desk to let them know you're here for drop-in hours



Who are we?

The **Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office** (SVPRO) provides consultation, support, and education to all members of the McMaster University community. Please contact **Natalie Lafleur** (she/her), *Sexual Violence Response Case Manager* at lafleurn@mcmaster.ca with any questions or accommodation requests related to drop-in support.



svpro.mcmaster.ca/dropin



Sexual Violence
Prevention and
Response Office

**2022-23
Workshop Series
Hosted by the
Office of the
Provost**

**Tenure, Permanence & Promotion
Workshop for Chairs, Directors & Ad-
ministrators**

As Chair or Director, navigating through the Tenure, Permanence, and Promotion (T/P/P) process, at times, can have its challenges. This workshop promises to provide Chairs, Directors and Administrators with:

An overview of the [Policy and Regulations with Respect to Academic Appointment, Tenure and Promotion*](#)

- An overview of the teaching portfolio
- Remarks and guidance on policy and process-related issues from each of the six Faculty T/P Committees
- An opportunity to ask questions

Day: Thursday, March 23, 2023

Time: 10:00 am - 12:30 pm

Location: Online (Zoom)

[Learn more and register here.](#)

New Faculty Workshops

These workshops expose faculty to McMaster's various management and support structures and involve guest speakers from across campus to present critical topics for career success. Each peer-to-peer workshop format provides an excellent opportunity to hear from reputable faculty and/or senior leaders on aspects of the academy to help junior faculty develop their intellectual pursuits and campus community connections.

Topic: Knowledge & Scholarship through Experiential Learning

Day: Friday, April 14, 2023

Time: 3-5pm

Location: West Room, Faculty/
University Club (Alumni Memorial Hall)

[Learn more and register here](#)

**ALL FACULTY ARE INVITED TO THE
FOLLOWING SESSION:**

Internationalization at McMaster

This session is being hosted by the Office of International Affairs & the Office of the Provost. You will hear from [Dr. Bonny Ibhawoh](#), Vice-Provost (International Affairs) and [Dr. Matheus Grasselli](#), Deputy Provost. A Q&A session will follow the presentation.

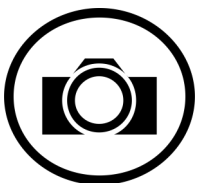
The internationalization of higher education gives us valuable insights into a world that is more interconnected than ever before. At McMaster, internationalization centers on inclusive global engagement through the integration of intercultural and global dimensions of student experience, support for international research through global partnerships, and strengthening McMaster's global identity.

Day: Wednesday, March 29, 2023

Time: 11:30am – 12:45pm

Location: In-person (L.R. Wilson, Community Room 1003) & Remote (Zoom)

[Learn more and register here](#) *Attendees will have the option to attend in person or watch a live stream of the event and participate via zoom*



MUFA is always looking for pictures that represent McMaster and faculty to use on our website (www.macfaculty.mcmaster.ca) and in our newsletters. If you have any pictures you would like to share, please email them to mufa@mcmaster.ca.

Long Term Disability Renewal for 2023: Update for Members of MUFA

This memo is to update faculty members about the July 2023 renewal of Long-Term Disability (LTD) premiums. Faculty members who are members of MUFA currently pay 0.360% of base salary (plus 8% sales tax) for LTD coverage.

Premium rates can fluctuate each year based on the plan experience for MUFA. The number and cost of claims determine whether the premium rate increases or decreases.

As a result of this year’s renewal discussions, Sun Life has agreed to guarantee that the current premium rate of 0.360% for members of MUFA will remain in effect until July 1, 2025. This is a very good outcome as the 0.360% is the lowest premium rate that Sun Life will offer for LTD under their entire block of business (based on MUFA plan design).

The chart below includes sample salaries and how pay deductions are calculated:

	Current Premium Rate Effective July 1, 2022
	0.360%
Annual Salary	LTD Premium (plus tax) per Biweekly Pay (24 deductions per year) *
\$100,000	\$16.20
\$150,000	\$24.30

* Calculation is: ((Annual Salary x Full Premium Rate)/24)*1.08 (PST)

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers About LTD

What is LTD?

Long Term Disability (LTD) insurance provides employees with income protection in case they are unable to work for an extended period due to illness or disability. If an employee becomes unable to work and loses their employment income as a result, as long as they meet disability criteria as evaluated by the insurer, they receive LTD benefits. The LTD Plan provides income replacement based on 85% of net income to a maximum monthly benefit of \$10,000.

LTD is an employee-paid benefit; therefore, the LTD benefit payments an employee receives when on LTD are not taxed as income. McMaster University is not permitted to contribute any portion of the premium as it would render the benefits taxable, as per the Income Tax Act. Participation in the LTD Plan is mandatory and is a condition of employment for eligible employees. The LTD Plan is provided through Sun Life Financial. The University is the contract holder with Sun Life and Sun Life adjudicates and pays claims and maintains reserve funds to cover expected disability claims.

How are LTD premium rates determined?

The LTD Plan is a yearly renewable contract. The premium collected in a given Plan year should be sufficient to pay all the claims incurred in that year plus Sun Life’s costs to administer the Plan and all applicable taxes. An LTD claimant may receive payments for many years since the benefit may be payable up to age 65. Premiums must fund both current and future claims.

Premium rates are experience-based by employee group. LTD rates are renewed each year and different premium rates are set for participating employee groups based on the volume and duration of claims incurred by members of that group. Each year, information about LTD is shared with representatives of MUFA to enable an understanding of the required change in premiums.

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Is the current premium rate indicative of the future premium rate?

The premium rates will fluctuate year to year depending on experience. The current premium rate of 0.360% is guaranteed not to increase before July 1, 2025. It is likely that any increase in LTD claims and costs will result in a higher premium rate in July 2025.

What initiatives does McMaster have in place to help reduce time away from work associated with LTD?

McMaster University promotes a work environment that is inclusive, respectful, healthy and safe. The University has a variety of programs designed to support the health, safety and well-being of the campus community, including an assortment of Workplace Well-Being Programs at McMaster:https://hr.mcmaster.ca/employees/health_safety_well-being/.

Programs are also in place to support faculty and staff to continue meaningful participation in the workplace through workplace accommodations. The Employee Health & Well-Being team also partners with employees, Unifor representatives and leaders to lessen the duration of absences due to illness or injury. This includes management of medical leaves during the Salary Continuance entitlement period, early and safe return to work planning, and workplace accommodations to enable participation in the workplace.

Faculty members have access to mental health benefits of \$3,000 per person per benefit year for the employee and each of their eligible dependents. Please refer to your Sun Life benefit booklet to see the list of eligible mental health practitioners.

All of these programs and policies are aimed at providing support to employees and reducing the number and duration of employee absences.

Additional Information

Should you have any questions regarding the LTD Plan, please refer to the Total Rewards webpage for [MUFA](#) or contact your area [HR Representative](#).

Additional information is also available in the [LTD FAQs](#).

Beautiful Burlington Townhome for Short-Term Rent (up to 7 months) Guire Common, Burlington

We are seeking any new faculty members or visiting scholars looking for short-term rental in 2024 (January to July). Located in a quiet north Burlington community, it is ideally located near several major highways (403/QEW/407) with easy access to Go Transit and McMaster campus (15-20 minute drive).

This semi-furnished bedroom modern townhouse has 3 bedrooms and laundry on the top level, a renovated kitchen, plenty of living space on the main level, and finished basement. There is also a private backyard, including a deck with bbq, that backs into green space.

Available beginning January 2024 (flexible), rent is \$3000 inclusive of utilities. No pets.

Interested parties can contact Matt Kwan at kwanmy@mcmaster.ca.



MUFA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, April 26th

1:30pm

Great Hall, University Club

PASSAGES

Regina Browne

Nursing

January 1, 2023

Donald Sprung

Physics and Astronomy

March 7, 2023

Gerhart Teuscher

Languages

March 3, 2023

Ronald Vince

English

January 27, 2023

Observers Needed!

Required: members of the Faculty Association—yes, RETIREES also qualify—to serve as observers for appeal and grievance hearings.

The role of the Observer is to report on the adequacy of the procedures, with a view to making recommendations to improve relevant policies, not to comment on the conduct or the judgement of the tribunal. Hearings usually take place over one or two days.

For more information, send us an email at mufa@mcmaster.ca.

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