

Faculty Research Activities Committee Report

In its second year, the Faculty Research Activities Committee has continued to pursue its mandate to enhance the research culture and profile at King's. The Eighth Academic Review directed the Committee's focus towards specific tasks and we have met three times during the 2012-13 academic year to broach some of those responsibilities as well as to discuss issues relevant to research at King's.

While there is still much to be done, the committee members feel that some very positive accomplishments have been made. We report these changes as clear indication and confirmation that King's has much world-class scholarship to offer and its faculty's strength in research and publication enhances and complements its strength in the classroom. The basic premise and motivation for the committee continues to be that King's supports research and publication in a generous and consistent manner as an institution. One of the committee's ongoing challenges is to find ways for our community to maximize the impact of that support and to make sure that all of the various elements directed towards research and publication are reasonably coordinated so that the whole becomes more effective than its individual parts.

Research on the website: At our first meeting we discussed and analyzed the Research page on the College's new website. This led to concrete suggestions by the committee to highlight the various components of research and its institutional underpinnings. The new webpage thus focuses upon celebrating our faculty colleagues who have received External Research Funding, as well as publishing the names and projects of those members who have been granted internal funding. It also lists various External and Internal Research Funding Opportunities, Faculty Publications, Research Ethics and Research Accounting and publicizes the Research Seminars.

This commitment to celebrating and disseminating King's research output was greatly aided by the Cardinal Carter Library's creation of a Faculty Publications page that is linked directly from the Research page. Again in an effort to maximize the impact of our work and to coordinate the various units at the College, the new Faculty Reporting Tool will also be directly linked to the Faculty Publications page so that authors will only have to report their publications once. The FRAC is also

committed to using the Reporting Tool to glean announcements of awards and recognition for publications that our faculty colleagues have been granted and to disseminate them through the webpage. These might include prizes for publications, external honours and recognition etc.

Faculty Research Dissemination: The FRAC discussed at length the frustrations experienced by various community members as they seek to highlight the accomplishments of our colleagues both within King's and to the larger University and local community. FRAC has agreed to coordinate more closely with the Faculty Seminar Series and the Research Grants Committee to draw upon the ready pool of researchers to present their work at the Faculty Seminars.

Research Days: FRAC has also passed a motion to create more public forums at King's for researchers to present their work. To that end FRAC has resolved to organize one or two Research Days each academic year. This will involve research presentations in a variety of formats by faculty members so that the entire community will have access to ongoing developments in our research profile.

Book Launches: Another aspect of this dissemination undertaken by the Principal and Dean's offices is the organization of book launches for monographs published by our faculty. This initiative, which will begin in the fall, was applauded by FRAC and the committee passed a motion expressing its appreciation to both the Principal and the Dean.

Faculty Publications Celebration: The committee has also discussed several different formats designed to enhance the Faculty Publications Celebration and looks forward to working with the Dean's Office to implement these ideas.

Faculty Workload: FRAC continues to consider the structural issues related to publications and teaching. The committee recognizes that these are the purview of our Terms and Conditions of Employment agreement, however members have referred to the financial benefits of teaching extra courses and the lack of like compensation for publishing. This fact remains a preoccupation as we try to encourage faculty to pursue scholarly research and publication even as they continue to teach a relatively heavy load. The incentive to publish can be diminished in these circumstances and FRAC hopes to mitigate that outcome by continuing to table discussions of this reality as we seek solutions.

Research Officer or Office: FRAC discussed the viability of having a Research Office or Officer at King's. The majority of the members agreed that we were reluctant to use scarce resources for such a position because there is such an intermittent demand. We also do have access to the expertise of some of the research officers at Western. The Associate Academic Dean has agreed to organize a workshop for faculty members thinking of applying for SSHRC funding in early May so that colleagues can get the information they need early enough to present strong applications. The Dean's office continues to support the services of Erin Hunner, SSHRC grant reviewer from Western, who has agreed to review our submissions. We also recognize that peer review is critically helpful for successful grants and so the Associate Dean's office will continue to coordinate such peer review when it is requested.

Research Niches: The research activities survey that was done last year by FRAC helped the committee to gain information related to research niches. Thus we have the raw data to start addressing the possibilities of applying our research interests more coherently to our academic programming as well as informing each other's work in critically interdisciplinary ways. The committee is committed to undertaking this component of its mandate as a priority but was unable to do so this year. Thus it will be a major issue of focus for the next academic year.

As chair of the committee, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the committee members. Our colleagues who participated in this committee are often one and the same as those who are active members of other Research-oriented committees such as Research Ethics, the Research Seminar Series, and Research Grants committees. The crucial role played by faculty research and publication in assuring the well-being of King's as an institution of higher learning is recognized by these colleagues and their willingness to spend their time and energy enhancing our success as a University is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted by:

Renée Soulodre-La France

