

TO: All MUNFA Members  
FROM: The MUNFA Executive Committee  
DATE: April 5, 2017

SUBJECT: Merging and Amalgamating Departments in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

---

Currently, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) is going through a process aimed at the amalgamation or merger of various departments within the faculty. Many faculty members have raised concerns about the lack of clarity regarding the process for restructuring and about why the amalgamation of departments has become an apparently urgent priority for Memorial's administration. The following dates have been set for action on the part of the various departments within the faculty:

- April 5th, 6th: other meeting times for discussion
- April 17th: commitment to new configurations
- April 18th: mail ballot will go out
- April 25th: mail ballots will be received by the Dean's office; counted with observers
- To have informed voters you need regular consultations with all members of the proposed integrated unit
- April 28, 2017: Submission of new configuration of HSS Faculty to the Board
- Commitment + next steps

This timeline for reorganizing an entire Faculty is aggressive. Much more time is required to introduce a single new course into the University calendar. The Memorial University Faculty Association (MUNFA) shares its members' concern that this accelerated timeline precludes measured consideration of the implications of reorganization.

Two key problems have been raised alongside mergers: the university's need to cut costs; and declining enrolments in some academic units. The administration has acknowledged that merging departments will do little to address these problems. In that context, many Academic Staff Members (ASMs) have told MUNFA that they are concerned that amalgamations might be a vehicle for ASM layoffs (see MUNFA IB 2016/17: 30). However, the Dean of HSS told ASMs in a recent Faculty Council meeting that the amalgamation of departments will actually protect ASMs from layoffs.

In this context, MUNFA will be seeking a Memorandum of Understanding with the University guaranteeing that the restructuring of HSS will not lead to ASM layoffs or to the eradication of academic disciplines. We encourage ASMs to await the results of this MoU request before voting for any proposed reconfiguration of the Faculty. We further encourage all ASMs to read Clauses 25.39 to 25.53 of the Collective Agreement before voting in support of amalgamating or merging departments. We also refer our members to MUNFA IB 2016/17: 30, which can be accessed here: <http://munfa.ca/academic-unit-integration-and-the-layoff-of-asms/>.