

Faculty Senate Agenda

2/12/2021

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

- I. Welcome and Minutes (<https://www.mtech.edu/facultystaff/facultysenate/minutes/index.html>)

Approvals for January 29, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Action Items

- II. CRC Items
 - a. January 25th items will be placed in Outlook Calendar
- III. Conflict of Interest Process Change (see attached form)
- IV. Language regarding Land Acknowledgement (see attached e-mail, with update)

Informational Items

- V. None at this time

Discussion Items

- VI. Teaching and Learning Center
- VII. Resolution Submitted to Faculty Senate (see below)
- VIII. Faculty/Staff Satisfaction Survey
- IX. Activities and priorities for the upcoming year
 - a. Faculty and Staff Recognition- roundtable
 - b. Strategic Planning
 - c. Fall semester planning
 - d. Review of FS Standards as Compared to MTFA Standards for Instruction, Research and Scholarly Activity, and Service
- X. Other Items

Dear Charie,

Thank you for the invitation to appear before Faculty Senate this Friday. I will attempt to be present but have another meeting at the same time and may not be able to sneak out.

Just in case I am absent, below please find additional information for consideration by the Senate. I've cc'd my Senator as well as Professor Ray in the hopes that they will help shepherd this concept or offer suggestions for revisions before appearing before the body.

Here's my suggestion:

A Resolution, as follows

~Whereas the Faculty of Montana Tech wish to respectfully acknowledge and honor the Native Americans who lived in the areas now served by Montana Technological University prior to European arrival,

~Whereas Land Acknowledgements have become a common practice to promote organizational learning and advance constructive relationships between Native Americans and Institutions of Higher Learning nationwide,

~Whereas the Draft of the Strategic Plan described by Chancellor Cook in his February "State of Tech Remarks" included values and goals of vibrancy amongst the student culture, diversity/inclusion, and programs of distinction,

~Resolved: The Faculty Senate of Montana Technological University formally recommends that an appropriate Land Acknowledgment process resulting in an Acknowledgement Statement be incorporated into Montana Technological University's Strategic Plan.

Additional Information: For any Senators unfamiliar with Land Acknowledgements, some relevant sources appear below.

Sample Statements: <https://landacknowledgment.colostate.edu/> (Colorado State), <https://www.northwestern.edu/native-american-and-indigenous-peoples/about/Land%20Acknowledgement.html> (Northwestern), <https://ias.umn.edu/about/ias-land-acknowledgement> (U. Minn IAS).

[IAS Land Acknowledgement | Institute for Advanced Study](https://ias.umn.edu/about/ias-land-acknowledgement)

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities is located on traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of Indigenous people. The University resides on Dakota land ceded in the Treaties of 1837 and 1851.

ias.umn.edu

Select Background: <https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>, <https://www.canr.msu.edu/nai/about/land-acknowledgements>,



[A guide to Indigenous land acknowledgment - Native Governance Center](#)

Native Governance Center co-hosted an Indigenous land acknowledgment event with the Lower Phalen Creek Project on Indigenous Peoples' Day 2019 (October 14). The event featured the following talented panelists: Dr. Kate Beane (Flandreau Santee Dakota and Muskogee Creek), Mary Lyons (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe), Rose Whipple (Isanti Dakota and Ho-Chunk), Rhiana Yazzie (Diné), and Cantemaza ...

nativegov.org

[Guide to Land Acknowledgements - Native American Institute](#)

A land acknowledgment is an optional statement, often given at the beginning of organized events, celebrations and activities, or published in printed materials. A shortened land acknowledgment can also be used for email signatures. The purpose of a land acknowledgment is to recognize, respect and affirm the ongoing relationship between Indigenous people and the land.

www.canr.msu.edu

[Land Acknowledgement: Native American and Indigenous Initiatives - Northwestern University](#)

Northwestern is a community of learners situated within a network of historical and contemporary relationships with Native American tribes, communities, parents, students, and alumni. It is also in close proximity to an urban Native American community in Chicago and near several tribes in the Midwest. The Northwestern campus sits on the traditional homelands of the people of the Council of ...

www.northwestern.edu

[Land Acknowledgment | Colorado State University](#)

CSU's land acknowledgment is a statement crafted by a variety of Indigenous faculty and staff, as well as other officials at CSU. The statement recognizes the long history of Native peoples and nations that lived and stewarded the land where the university now resides.

landacknowledgment.colostate.edu

I hope to make it and understanding if I am not able. I also appreciate any thoughts or suggestions from the cc'd Senator-Colleagues.

Kindly,

gts

Dr. Glen T. Southergill

Pronouns: He/Him/His
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From: Southergill, Glen <GSouthergill@mtech.edu>
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 7:48 PM
To: Ray, John <JRay@mtech.edu>; Haynes, Matthew <mhaynes1@mtech.edu>
Cc: Faught, Charie <CFaught@mtech.edu>
Subject: Faculty Senate Recommendation: Land Acknowledgments

Greetings, esteemed colleagues

I write to encourage Faculty Senate to draft a recommendation for adding lines for a land acknowledgment in Montana Tech's standardized auto signatures and for possible inclusion in syllabi. Although I trust the Senate to understand the rationale for why these actions matter and consider what sort of language may work best, a simple sample appears below. Please let me know if I can help draft language for the Faculty Senate to discuss.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Many Indigenous peoples, including the Niimiipuu (Nez Perce), Piikani (Blackfeet), Seliš (Salish), and Agai-deka (Shoshone) have traditional claims to the lands upon which Montana Tech physically sits. Indigenous histories and perspectives are acknowledged and respected by the Faculty, Staff, and Administration of Montana Technological University.

Dr. Glen T. Southergill

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Associate Professor of Writing

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The following is the resolution on free speech, right of assembly, academic freedom, and a safe working environment that I would like discussed and acted upon at the next meeting of the Montana Tech Faculty Senate.

Given that there is great interest in this issue both on and off campus, please distribute widely to the entire campus community so that we may receive their input. Please also indicate how they may participate and provide input in the meeting.

I will handle other needed notification.

Dr. John W. Ray

Resolution Submitted to Faculty Senate

Whereas, Academic Freedom is the life blood of institutions of higher learning, and

Whereas, threats, intimidation and violence directed toward faculty, staff and students threatens academic freedom, undermines the purpose of an institution of higher learning, thwarts the development of knowledge and the pursuit of research and creates an atmosphere hostile to intellectual pursuits, and

Whereas, being members of the university community imposes on all—students, staff and faculty—the duty and obligation to show respect for others, to defend intellectual honesty, conduct disagreements civilly, and to defend free speech and,

Whereas, academic freedom is protected, cherished and nourished on the Montana Tech campus, and

Whereas, students, faculty and staff retain all of their rights to free speech and the right to form political organizations, and

Whereas, the free and peaceful expression of ideas is necessary for a healthy campus environment where knowledge is advanced through healthy discussion and disagreement, and

Whereas any attempt to limit academic freedom, freedom of speech and/or freedom of assembly contradicts our goals as a university and obstructs our educational mission.

Therefore, be it resolved, that we call upon all student, faculty and staff clubs and organizations at Montana Tech and the Montana Tech administration to make sure that said clubs and organizations respect and nurture academic freedom, freedom of expression free

from threats of intimidation or violence and the right to form organizations again free of the aforementioned threats of intimidation and violence.

Be it resolved further, that we call upon all student, faculty and staff clubs and organizations to agree to abide by and actually abide by all Montana Code laws and regulations, Montana University System Board of Regents policy and all policies in place at Montana Tech that stipulate acceptable activity by recognized groups on campus which policies include but are not limited to the Student Handbook, the Faculty/Staff Handbook, Free Expression and Academic Freedom Policy and the ASMT By-laws pertaining to clubs.

Background pertaining to the Resolution

Academic freedom to investigate, explore, discuss, and debate controversial ideas is fundamental to an institution of higher learning. Without free discussion and debate, a university cannot fulfill its mission to educate, in all meanings of the word. To function properly, this open discussion and debate must be conducted in an atmosphere free from threats, intimidation, and violence. Achieving a balance between the right to free speech and the right to a safe academic environment is not easy or simple.

Recently, on the Montana Tech campus, a group called Turning Point USA has sought formal recognition. Several faculty and students have expressed concern about this group and its association with right wing positions that are problematic to the practice of academic freedom and civil discourse. For example, several faculties in my department are concerned with the publication by the Turning Point USA of a Professor Watch List that seeks to identify liberal professors who supposedly proselytize their liberal philosophy to their classes. In some cases, it appears the criteria for inclusion on the list is espousing a topic or examining a position of which the group disapproves. The list has been associated with threats and intimidation of the faculty listed. Given the polarized political environment we have, it is possible in the future that left leaning groups might also seek recognition. While clearly supporting the right of free speech and the right to form political organizations, Montana Tech must also ensure a safe working environment as well as an environment that supports and nurtures academic freedom.

There is no intimation or suggestion that Turning Point USA has directly caused these problems as an organization. However, given the divided and tense nature of political discourse at present, every effort must be made to ensure that discourse is conducted civilly, free from threats of violence or intimidation. Given that guns may soon be allowed on campus, the urgency of maintaining civil discourse free from threats and intimidation is particularly acute.

The purpose of this resolution is not to judge any group or to limit the legitimate free speech rights of any group. The purpose is to ensure that freedom of discussion and debate is protected from threats of violence and intimidation so as to flourish. This resolution calls upon the Tech administration to strongly enforce current rules and regulations regarding speech on campus that will help ensure that debate decorum and civility is respected.