

Minutes  
Faculty Senate Meeting  
8:00 AM, Mar. 4, 2004  
Mountain Con Room, SUB

- Call to order 8:00 AM by Chair John Brower. Members present: Rod James, Denise Solko, Mary MacLaughlin, John Metesh, Chip Todd, Susan Leland, Andrea Stierle, Grant Mitman (8:30). Absent: Danette Melvin  
Others present: Chancellor Gilmore and registrar Ed Johnson
- The minutes of last meeting as prepared and circulated by Denise Solko were approved.
- Denise Solko, secretary of the Faculty Senate, tendered her resignation as secretary effective immediately. The Senate nominated and elected Andrea Stierle as new secretary for the remainder of the semester.
- Committee reports.

a. *Chancellor's Advisory Committee* – Denise Solko had circulated her notes from the CAC by email and had no additional comments.

b. *Space committee* – John Metesh reported on the latest Space committee mtg. Two areas of discussion concerned South campus space utilization and use of MG building office space. There is some discussion over space needed by the newly created Historic Preservation program and the RAVE. There is also discussion that administration may be expanding its offices in the MG building and computer support is concerned they will be affected.

General discussion ensued as to why most committees do not post either official minutes or notes of their meetings in the public folders, or even disseminate minutes to committee members. General faculty notes are available as hard copies in the Academic Vice Chancellor's office, the Faculty Senate and a few other committees post to public folders. Chancellor Gilmore commented that administrative committees (including Space Committee) have not historically posted minutes but he would ask committees to post to public folders if desired.

c. *Committee on Student Evaluation of Course Instruction* – Mary MacLaughlin reported that the committee emailed an update to the faculty at large, hoping to get some “buy-in” to the direction the committee was taking. The options currently under consideration by the CSECI include

- the use of the “Nupher 40 form” as a voluntary midterm formative evaluation, followed by an end of semester mandatory short form for summative purposes.

The committee is creating the short form questions to serve as a synopsis of the Nupher 40 evaluation material.

- the use of the “Nupher 40 form” as the mandatory end of semester evaluation

The CSECI does not want the form to be used to generate a single numeric that can be used by administration to rank faculty against each other. VC Patton has assured fellow CSECI committee members that she will use this form strictly to improve teaching excellence not as a punitive tool.

Concerns still to be addressed – if the Nupher 40 is used, how long will it take to administer? What scoring will be used? How will it be quickly scanned and returned to faculty?

4. John Brower moved that the following items (old business) be tabled to allow Chancellor Gilmore and registrar Ed Johnson to speak to the Senate. The Senate agreed and John said some of these items would be handled through email communication.

- a. *Mission statement: review and comment.*
- b. *Handbook revision for “sanctioned events” language: defer to next meeting.*
- c. *Handbook revisions: dean’s council proposals.*
- d. *Handbook revision: responsibility for identifying early promotion potential candidates - Wolfgram memo.*

#### 5. **New business.**

##### a. *Update by Chancellor Gilmore on status of deans’ positions*

Chancellor Gilmore was invited to update the Senate on the status of the deans’ positions following the vote by faculty to eliminate the deans’ positions (4/23/02 – *vote to eliminate dean positions with the exception of dean of students and COT. As excerpted from Faculty Meeting minutes* – “There were 20 yes votes and 16 no votes”). The Senate invited the Chancellor Gilmore to give to the Senate a brief history of the structure of MT Tech relative to the number of deans.

Chancellor Gilmore is not in favor of eliminating the dean positions. He believes it will increase VCAAR’s workload which is already heavy. He would also like to eliminate combined “dean-department heads”. Cost will be covered by funding from grants aimed at strengthening the institution (\$350,000 per year for 5 years). MT Tech has submitted a grant application for the last three years and has not been successful, largely because of our lack of minority students compared to other institutions in the country.

According to Chancellor Gilmore, it will cost \$12,000 per year to convert to full-time deans, unless we also need to hire additional faculty members to cover courses. This will increase the cost substantially (\$65,000 per new faculty, wages and benefits)

Chancellor Gilmore maintains his commitment to keeping MT Tech's classes the smallest in the system and keeping our student/faculty ratio constant. He and VC Patton prefer full-time deans. In response to questions, Chancellor Gilmore agreed that changing the status of the deans to full-time is largely financial.

*b. Grade change policy statement –*

Registrar Ed Johnson reported that students sometimes pressure faculty to change grades because of the need to maintain scholarship or athletic eligibility to be competitive for graduate schools, etc. Students sometimes offer to turn in extra work after the semester is effectively over or ask to retake the final exam to get a better grade. Johnson asked the Faculty Senate to consider his bringing the following item before the faculty at the next general faculty meeting:

**Reports of Grades and Grade Corrections.**

Grades are reported to the registrar for all courses at the end of each academic session and at mid-semester for undergraduate courses (see deadlines in the academic calendar).

The assignment of grades and corrections of grades are the sole prerogative of the instructor and are reported by the instructor directly to the Registrar's Office via Orediggerweb. All grades except N and I are considered final when assigned by an instructor at the end of a term.

An instructor may request a grade correction when a computational or procedural error occurred in the original assignment of a grade. **No final grade may be revised as a result of re-examination or the submission of additional work after the close of the semester.**

Grade corrections must be processed within one year of the end of the term for which the original grade was assigned. In the event the instructor leaves the university, the departmental administrator may assign the final grade.

The senate moved and approved the motion to bring this statement before the general faculty for consideration for inclusion in the MT Tech catalog.

Ed Johnson also discussed the possibility of assigning mid-term grades to all undergraduate students, not just freshmen and COT students. At the present time, undergraduates who have earned more than 29 credits do not receive mid-term grades.

(Both of these discussion items were emailed to "All Faculty" 3/5/04.)

*c. Academic calendar:*

John Brower and Ed Johnson led the discussion concerning revisions to the current academic calendar. Ed made it clear that some of the calendar decisions are based on the needs of academic support personnel to accomplish necessary tasks

associated with teaching concerns. One of the biggest concerns relative to starting classes after Labor Day are timing of freshman orientation and timing of end-of – semester break relative to Christmas travel plans. Chancellor Gilmore is concerned about alcohol abuse in the dorms if freshman orientation is held either Thursday-Friday before Labor Day. Senate members asked why staff could not be present and why activities could not be scheduled to keep students occupied in a nondestructive fashion. Discussion ensued on comp time and scheduling issues for staff members. Residence Hall personnel are already on contract at this time so the problem does not seem insurmountable.

Another concern has been raised because the Veteran's Administration has tied their payments to a mandate that students midterm break cannot exceed 30 days.

The academic concerns behind the requested calendar change are essentially the number of Mondays lost due to the current schedule. Fall semester has 16 Mondays (including finals) and Spring semester has only 12. For those with a Monday only lecture or lab, the loss of instructional time is a real problem.

Chancellor Gilmore agreed that the Board of Regents may be mandating common calendars for all MUS, so any problems will simply be dealt with as they arise. Notes of a meeting convened by the Chancellor discussing calendar options are included below.

d. *Fee schedules*

The possibility of increasing student fees to meet rising costs of education has been mentioned on campus in recent weeks. The Chancellor left the following documents with the Senate to read and to make available to the rest of the faculty. These documents have been added to the public folders as jpegs and hard copies have been placed in the Faculty Senate folder in the library:

1. Item 122-1502-R0304 – Authorization to Increase or Implement Fees; Montana Tech of the University of Montana
2. HPER Swipes
3. Congressionally Mandated Studies of College Costs and Prices (National Center for Educational Statistics)

6. Discussion of agenda items for upcoming general Faculty meeting on Wed. March 10<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 PM. Items will include elections of Faculty Senate members to replace those whose terms are expiring. These include Grant Mitman, Mary MacLaughlin and Chip Todd, faculty-at-large, and Denise Solko who is resigning at the end of the first year of her 2-year term. The two-year terms for John Metesh (Bureau) and Andrea Stierle (part-timers) are also expiring. Their replacements will be determined within their constituencies and will be approved by the faculty-at-large at the last general faculty meeting of the year.

*The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM.*

Respectfully submitted by Andrea Stierle, Faculty Senate Secretary

Addendum:

**Academic calendar discussions, Mar. 1, 2004.  
Notes by John Brower, Faculty Senate representative.**

Chancellor Gilmore convened a meeting on March 1st, including John Brower (faculty senate), Ed Johnson (Registrar), Paul Beatty (Dean of Students) and Susan Patton (VCAAR). The purpose was to discuss concerns about the academic calendar, and see if there could be alternatives that the faculty might prefer. The issue of Monday classes being hit hard by both new student orientation and legal holidays prompted a re-examination. The calendar is a mix of factors such as the number of required contact hours for accreditation, legal mandated holidays, faculty and staff contracts, tradition and local preferences. There are probably a few other factors that could be added.

The Issues: (1) Some faculty members would like to have classes start on a Monday instead of on Wednesday. (2) Some would like the semester to start after Labor Day. (3) Student Services wants to open the dorms on Sunday, and hold freshman orientation immediately on Monday and Tuesday. Note: the Board of Regents may require all of the campuses to be on the same academic calendar. The soonest likely time would be AY 2005-06, due to some key dates already being in print or otherwise hardened. But they could do it any time that they choose.

**Pro Monday** start (both fall and spring semesters) instead of Wednesday:

- (a) Too many Monday instructional days are lost to Monday holidays. Monday orientation just makes it worse.
- (b) Returning students skip the rest of the short week and show-up the following Monday, resulting in instructors “treading water” the first week or having to help late students get caught up.

**Con Monday** class start - stick with Wednesday start.

- (a) New students would be brought-in on Friday or Saturday, before other dorm residents have arrived. Experience has been bad in terms of bored students (no homework yet) damaging the dorms.

(b) Student Services/ dorms, Registrar, and food services have to provide week-end staff. No budgets to pay for overtime. Faculty advisors have to be on-hand.

**Pro Post Labor Day start:**

- (a) The holiday hitting right after classes start practically destroys the first week.
- (b) Lots of students hang on to summer jobs and don't show up until after L-Day.
- (c) Prime Montana summer days are lost if we start classes sooner than necessary.
- (d) Lots of other campuses start after L-Day and manage to end before Christmas. MSU-Billings holds 60-minute classes in order to get in the requisite number of contact hours (per accreditation requirements).

**Con Post Labor Day start:**

- (a) Not enough time to get done by Christmas break; 75 instructional days are required. We count finals as instructional days. In certain years, finals and therefore grade submission day would hit too close to Christmas for faculty to get grades in, and for the Registrar to "roll" the grades for spring semester decisions by students.
- (b) Labor Day can hit in the first week as early as Monday, Sept. 1st, or in the second week, Monday, Sept. 7th, depending on which year's calendar. If it hits on the 1st, there is time to get things done before Christmas, but if it hits on the 7th, an entire week is lost, and grade submission day hits too close to Christmas.
- (c) In the tight years, students who fly home would have trouble getting discount plane tickets.
- (d) Orientation would probably be Tuesday and Wednesday, with classes starting on Thursday (a two-day week instead of the current 3-day week).

**Aug. 25th (Wednesday) vs Sept. 1st (Wednesday) starting for Fall 2004.**

- (a) Starting on the 25th would get a week of instruction in before Labor Day, and would be an incentive for students to report to class on schedule.
- (b) Starting on Sept. 1st gives students and faculty an extra week of summer to enjoy, but does not provide enough classroom and business days to get done by Christmas.

**Conclusions:**

(1) Notices regarding financial aid, admissions, etc. have to go out now to students expecting to start in Fall 2004. Any change to the calendar would have to be made in a day or two at the most, so there isn't time to contemplate several alternatives that might be implemented.

(2) Working backward from Christmas and Spring graduation determines the starting dates. At present, this makes Fall semester start in late August, as there are not enough classroom days to fit-in a post-Labor Day start, unless the Billings model is adopted. January is more flexible, with a post-MLK holiday start date (e.g., Jan. 20 this year) easily accommodated, but fixing graduation on or about the third weekend of May.

(3) The Board of Regents may override any or all calendars in any case. We should know before long on that, due to lead times necessary for implementation.