

Montana Tech Faculty Senate Meeting

Thursday, February 28, 2013

7:00-8:00 a.m.

Location: Pintlar Room

MEETING MINUTES

Senators present:

Laurie Battle, Chris Danielson (V. Chair), Jerry Downey (Chair), Gretchen Gellar, Katie Hailer, Scott Juskiwicz, Raj Kasinath, Tom Moon, Chad Okrusch, Vicki Petritz, James Rose, Bill Ryan, Celia Schahczenski (Sec.), Glenn Shaw, Jack Skinner, Rita Spear, Miriam Young

Senators absent:

Hugo Bertete-Aguirre, Merle Benedict, Tom Camm, Bill Good, Tim Kober, John Nugent, Mary North Abbott

Vacant senate seats:

Research Faculty, Center for Advanced Mineral and Metallurgical Processing (CAMP)

Guests:

Don Blacketter (Chancellor)
Butch Gerbrandt (General Engineering)

Call to Order: Jerry Downey, Chair

Roll Call: Celia Schahczenski, Secretary

Jerry reminded senators of the importance of professionalism at our meetings.

Actions Items (vote required)

Review and approval of minutes from the 31-Jan-13 Senate meeting

Minutes were approved unanimously.

Discussion Topics

- Administration response to previous Senate actions

Chancellor Blacketter was asked to respond to the senate recommendations resulting from the last Faculty Senate survey.

Academic Calendar:

The senate voted on two alternative versions of an academic calendar. The results were 11 to 7 to recommend the second alternative. The Chancellor reported that the academic calendar has been published for the next two years, and stated that the calendars are a combination of the two versions that the senate developed and voted on. The published calendars have fewer instructional days than our current calendar. One factor in the decision was that the students preferred finals to be split over a weekend so that is included in the published calendars.

Materials Science PhD:

The Senate voted 17 to 1 to approve the Materials Science Ph.D. Proposal to the MUS Board of Regents. The Chancellor stated that the Material Science Ph.D. Proposal will not appear on the agenda for the March Board of Regents meeting. Since it will not be on that agenda, he would like to see the proposal discussed when the Board meets on the Montana Tech campus in September 2013. He observed that the composition of the Board of Regents keeps changing, with members going on and off the board. The membership is expected to be determined by April 15th.

Chancellor Blacketter expects the proposal to be split into two issues: the collaborative PhD program and Tech granting the PhD diploma. He suspects that the first issue will be supported. The second issue is more controversial.

Professor of Practice:

The Senate voted 18 to 2 to endorse the establishment, at Montana Tech, of a Professor of Practice (PoP) faculty classification as described in the PoP senate document, which was forwarded to the Administration with the results of the Senate vote. Senate Chair Downey reminded the group that a cap to the number of PoP positions (for example, 10 or 15% of total instructional faculty) was discussed during the January 28 Senate meeting but the cap perhaps did not receive sufficient emphasis in the memorandum.

Chancellor Blacketter asked the Senate to provide a more concise description of the PoP classification. As to the cap, Don would like to see this be a guideline. The Chancellor asked if faculty in the PoP category could receive promotions. He would like to see PoPs be non-tenurable but promotable to the Associate level.

Discussion:

- The PoP classification, as discussed previously in the Senate and as recommended by the Senate, did not include promotion or tenure. It was similar to a visiting position with a limited contract, and a three year term (cap) was discussed.
- The PoP classification relates to departmental standards. Some departmental standards allow promotion to Associate level without a terminal degree (Nursing and the Library

are examples). Other departments do not. The Chancellor suggested that the Tech community needs to decide if promotion to the Associate level without a terminal degree is acceptable. Side note: Previously the senate voted on and recommended that promotion and tenure criteria be defined entirely in departmental standards. The Chancellor concurred with the recommendation, but wanted the wording to be modified, mainly by eliminating words such as “entirely” and “any.” The Senate Chair plans to amend the Senate’s recommendation as recommended.

- Butch Gerbrandt (General Engineering) handed out copies of a draft of General Engineering’s Departmental Standards, which includes a PoP classification. Their version of PoP includes the possibility of promotion. General Engineering wants to be able to hire and promote people with only a master’s degree but considerable experience under a new PoP classification. General Engineering currently has a position announcement drafted which requests applicants for either a PoP or Instructor position. If it is decided that the PoP classification is allowed, they would publish this advertisement and they expect that the initial salary offer for a PoP would be higher than what would be offered an Instructor.

The Senate Chair proposed that the Senate aim for closure on the PoP classification and Departmental Standards this semester, and the statement that was endorsed by the Chancellor. The Chair suggests that the Senate bring these issues to the entire Faculty at the next Instructional Faculty meeting.

- Select the date for the Spring Instructional Faculty Meeting Suggest the afternoon of Thursday, April 4?

No objections were given to April 4th as our next Instructional Faculty Meeting.

- Reinstitution of a Faculty Satisfaction Survey

It was decided to discuss appropriate questions for a Faculty Satisfaction Survey via email and at the March Senate meeting. A subcommittee will undertake that task.

The following issues were either not discussed or discussed earlier.

- Clarify and streamline CRC and Grad Council committee functions.
The specific question is whether the Graduate Council should become the Faculty Senate’s review/advisory body regarding academic policies, curricular changes, certificate programs, and other topics related to graduate-level education at Montana Tech?
- Further considerations regarding Professor of Practice classification (Butch Gerbrandt)

- Academic Standards and Integrity (time permitting)
Faculty concern about electronic signature process (for grade changes, etc.)

New Business

Other new business items

Chancellor Blacketter asked for Senate opinion in regard to rehabilitating students who are caught cheating rather than just flunking or expelling them. He would like to consider ways for students to redeem themselves. For instance, on this campus some students had their transcripts changed. A staff person at Tech enabled this to occur. Now these students are not able to get a degree from their efforts here at Tech. The Chancellor would like to see our campus do something new in regards to cheaters. He would like some way to change behavior, not just continue on as we have - handling cheating in the same way as other schools handle cheating.

Discussion:

- Cheating is something that needs to be addressed before it occurs. Perhaps modules could be created that all students take so that they are aware of the issues before they happen.
- There was an earlier effort to address cheating. Research showed that 20% won't cheat and 20% will cheat. When cheating occurs we'd like to know if they are in that 20% that will continue to cheat and get those people out of the school.
- There is a difference between a freshman cheating and a graduate student cheating.
- In Nursing lying means that you are out. There are ethical standards that must be followed.
- There needs to be an increase in awareness of what is going on and an awareness of best practices to combat cheating.

A senator expressed his concern over House Bill 240 which would restrict the Board of Regents control over gun control. He requests that faculty members take action or at least understand the bill.

Verify the times and dates of the Spring Semester Senate meetings:

7:00-8:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 28 in the Pintler Room

7:00-8:00 a.m. on Friday, April 26 in the Pintler Room

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 a.m.