

Montana Tech Faculty Senate Meeting
Wednesday April 20, 2016
3:30pm, Pintler Room (SUB)

Guests:

Vice Chancellor Doug Abbott
ASMT President Kerry Lombard

Senators Present:

Stella Capoccia, Abhishek Choudhury, Conor Cote, Gretchen Geller, John Getty, Bill Gleason, Larry Hunter, Atish Mitra, Tony Patrick, Scott Risser, Rick Rossi, Sue Schrader, Glen Southergill, Rita Spear, Michael Webb, George Williams, Miriam Young

- 1) Welcome and Roll Call – Susan Schrader
- 2) Approve Minutes from Last Meeting – Motion to approve without changes: Larry Hunter;
2nd: Glen Southergill.
- 3) Discussion of Consensual Romantic or Sexual Relationship Policy
 - a) Doug spoke to the Senate about ongoing efforts to update the current Consensual Relationship language in the Faculty Handbook with a more detailed policy. One of the reasons identified for an updated policy stems from efforts to remove power imbalance if a consensual relationship forms in order to protect those involved. Director of Human Resources and Title IX Coordinator Vanessa Van Dyk has written a very preliminary draft of a policy and Doug Abbott passed it along for Senate feedback.
 - b) Discussion was raised over the issue of pre-existing relationships such as the hiring of a married couple. The Senate agreed that the Conflict of Interest form takes steps to prevent a power imbalance in this situation. Another concern was how to handle a relationship that develops in the middle of a semester. Scott Risser noted that there are procedures that can be implemented in this case. The Senate expressed that the policy will need to be carefully drafted in order to account for the complexities involved. The MFTA will also be reviewing and providing input on the draft policy.
 - c) The Senate acknowledged that this issue requires feedback from the faculty as a whole. The Senate agreed to solicit feedback on both the idea of having an updated policy on this issue, as well as the specific language of the draft policy. Faculty can provide feedback to Sue either directly or at the next Senate meeting.
- 4) Calendar – Graduation Issues

- a) The Senate met to discuss the academic calendars for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, specifically the issue of Graduation being held the weekend between finals weeks. Graduation cannot be held the following weekend as the Civic Center is already booked for May Fair. The Senate discussed the possibility of moving the event to an alternative location but no viable alternative was identified. Moving to the HYPER would prevent many members of students' families from attending. Moving to the Football Field would be contingent on the weather.
 - b) ASMT President Kerry Lombard was present and shared the students' views. A poll of the student body indicated that a one-week finals with a Friday or Saturday graduation was strongly preferred by the students. The students' preference would be not to have tests scheduled the week before finals, but the Senate did not feel the faculty could commit to that. Sue noted that the practice of some faculty to hold actual finals before finals week is a concern, but that condensing finals into a single week might help to discourage this.
 - c) Larry motioned for the Senate to recommend revising the Calendars by removing the Tuesday non-instructional day and implementing a 4-day Tuesday - Friday finals. The current commencement dates would remain as they are. The motion was seconded by Bill Gleason and the Faculty Senate voted unanimously in favor.
- 5) CRC Business – Given that the CRC has a final meeting on May 3rd Sue proposed to table this business until the next meeting.
- 6) Faculty Opinion & Satisfaction Survey (FOSS) – The Faculty Survey received 94 responses. Elyse Lovell won the drawing for a gift certificate. Sue passed out the Qualtrics report for the survey and proposed discussing the results at the next meeting after everyone has a chance to review them.
- 7) Introduction of New Senate Members
- a) George Williams taking over for Sue Schrader to represent Petroleum Engineering.
 - b) Brian Kukay will be taking over for Larry Hunter to represent General Engineering
 - c) Atish Mitra will be taking over for Rick Rossi to represent Mathematics & Statistics. The Mathematics and Statistics departments agreed to alternate representation each year.
 - d) Abhishek Choudhury will be taking over for Scott Rosenthal to represent Mining Engineering.
 - e) Rita Spear is looking for someone to take over for her to represent HCI as her term is ending.

- f) Sue will check on that status of BIT and CS department representation.
 - g) The Senate does not currently have representation from Electrical Engineering or Adjunct faculty. Stella asked if graduate students that are also adjuncts are able to participate. The Senate was not clear if this would be a conflict of interest, but Sue said she would ask for Bev Hartline's thoughts on the issue.
- 8) Nominations for Officers – Sue asked everyone to send nominations for Senate Officers to her before the next meeting.
- 9) Last meeting – Sue will send out a time for the Senate's final meeting of the year. It will be sometime after May 3rd. The Senate will also have a list of graduates to approve at that time.
- 10) Motion to adjourn: Glen Southergill. Seconded: Miriam Young. All in favor.