

Montana Tech Faculty Senate Meeting
Friday February 17th, 2017
Pinter Room - noon-1:30pm

Attendance

Senators present: Glen Southergill, Scott Risser, Conor Cote, Charie Faught, Atish Mitra, Vicki Petritz, Dan Autenrieth, George Williams, Abhishek Choudhury, Michael Webb, John Morrison, Bill Drury, John Getty, Diane Wolfram

Guests: David Bentz

Welcome & Minutes

- I. Welcome and Minutes
 - i. Found online at <http://www.mtech.edu/about/facultysenate/minutes/index.htm>
 - ii. Glen Southergill noted a mistake in the minutes. The motion under Item II.c.x. should have read to strike “instances” and be replaced with the term “charges.” **Motion to amend minutes:** *Change language to “Additionally, it is a duty of Faculty, Staff and Administrators to report ~~instances~~ charges of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs through the online reporting form.”*
 - iii. *Motion passed.*

Informational Items

- II. Online Learning Program/Degree/Certificate Questionnaire, guest David Bentz, Director of Distance Learning
 - i. David Bentz spoke to the Senate on a number of items related to distance learning.
 - ii. In parallel with the new website launch this year, Distance Learning is seeking to update all information regarding distance learning programs. A questionnaire was developed to gather this information:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/11YHE96nP1i2WIPZrtoS8ZyotPf5iTbipHFCcr_172X8/eddit
 - iii. David provided an example of the direction the new Distance Learning website will take:
<http://www.online.colostate.edu/>
 - iv. David provided an update on the online Masters in Engineering working group’s progress. The group is currently exploring opportunities for new online degrees and certificates, working on delivering a proposal based on discussion with faculty and the campus.
 - v. George Williams asked whether or not it will be up to departments to create an online graduate degree. David Bentz said there won’t be pressure from Distance Learning but that the administration is encouraging departments to look into offering more online options.
 - vi. Charie Faught suggested creating electronic application forms for distance programs; David said he is working on that.
 - vii. Glen Southergill recommended that faculty and departments reach out to David. David’s office is in MUS 307 and he has an open-door policy.
 - viii. Distance Learning is looking for funding for a second Summer Teaching Institute. The focus is on distance learning but will cover a spectrum of instructional topics. Last year’s opportunity was tied in with the Moodle Mountain Moot in Helena. Following the Moot a retreat was held on campus. Awardees were asked to prepare a presentation for other

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faculty. Last year, Jim Aspevig and Charie Faught applied and split the \$1,000 stipend. Look for more on this opportunity from David soon.

Action Items

III. CRC Recommendations

- i. Items forwarded from the CRC include:
 - i. Expansion to Job Shadow Program (MT 295/395/495)
 - ii. Computer Science changes:
 - Alter Computer Science Prerequisites (CSCI 311, 347, and 361)
 - Add CSCI 444 as a requirement for the Computer Science Minor
 - Remove CSCI 136 & 232, and add CSCI 112, 117, or 135 requirement as well as 1 credit Capstone to Computational Science Minor
 - iii. Require EGEN 324 as a prerequisite for MIN 456
- ii. Discussion
 - iv. For the items under ii above, the required Dean's signature was replaced with "ok". Charie Faught suggested that the Senate get confirmation that Dean approved of the CSCI changes, as usually information is distributed to faculty if there is potential impact on other departments.
 - v. George Williams spoke in support of the job shadow programs program recently offered in the Petroleum department. It gives students more opportunities, is not required, and the commitment is up to the student and company.
 - vi. **Motion:** To approve item i. (Expansion to Job Shadow Program) and iii. (Require EGEN 324 as a prerequisite for MIN 456) above, and wait to get confirmation on the items proposed under ii. (CSCI changes). *Motion Passed.*

IV. Changes to the Montana Tech Faculty/Staff Handbook

- i. Current FS Handbook:
http://www.mtech.edu/about/facultystaff/Fac_staff_Handbook.pdf
- ii. Scott Risser provided a list of changes made to the Faculty/Staff Handbook to facilitate the finalization of Montana Tech's accreditation documentation to Senators at the beginning of February and asked for Senators to forward it to their departments. Most changes involve aligning the CBA with Handbook and updating out of date information.
- iii. No specific objections or concerns were raised.
- iv. **Motion:** To approve all changes to Faculty/Staff Handbook as presented. *Motion passed.*

V. Proposed Resolution – Deny Special Accommodations based on Limited English Proficiency

- i. Discussion of University of Montana Limited English Proficiency.
<http://www.umt.edu/eo/equalop/lepqa.php>
- ii. A Proposed Resolution from Senator Getty and the Geophysical Engineering Department was forwarded to the Senate.
- iii. John Getty pointed out that accommodating based off of English proficiency presents many logistical issues. Hopes to open a discussion about necessary preparations, is there reasonable expectation that students will have passed TOEFL exams before being accepted at Tech and are therefore not LEP (Limited English Proficiency)? What are instructors' current obligations when they receive a request? Is it up to the individual instructor to grant the request? These questions should be clarified.

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- iv. Glen Southergill asked if there is no obligation to grant the request, is the proposed resolution necessary? Several faculty members noted that pressure might be put on an instructor to grant the request if other faculty members choose to so do.
- v. Several instructions expressed concern that Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students would get same accommodations as students with disabilities. How do we determine if a student is LEP, and in what case would a LEP student be admitted to Tech? How is this fair to the other students?
- vi. Glen Southergill expressed strong disagreement with the resolution as it stands, it is too broad and may fall out of the purview of the Senate's duties.
- vii. Conor Cote suggested the Senate wait to endorse any resolution until we've had legal input. George Williams said he would support the resolution; these requests could become problematic.
- viii. Abhishek Choudhury said that allowing a student to use a dictionary gives them an advantage. Even if students' conversational skills are not strong, they should be familiar with technical terminology in English.
- ix. Dan Autenrieth said that while he agrees with the concerns brought forth, the resolution as it stands may be too broadly applied.
- x. **Motion:** To approve the resolution put forth to the Senate as written.
 - a. 5 votes yes. 9 votes no. *Motion did not pass.*

Discussion Items

- VI. Advisory Committee for Special Focus Institution and Program Prioritization
 - i. Senate leadership provided an updated job description for committee members based on feedback from last meeting.
 - ii. The Senate discussed how the nominations should be solicited. Suggestion that the Rose and Anna Busch model for nominations proposed.
 - iii. Vicki Petritz asked who is eligible for nomination, suggesting limiting nominations to full-time faculty members due to the workload. There was agreement from the Senate on this.
 - iv. Question about course buy-outs. Scott Risser said they have been requested but not yet approved and may not be approved until after appointments are made. Suggests adding "efforts could continue in additional semesters" to denote that work could continue after 1 year. Vicki Petritz suggested adding something like "but are not guaranteed" to the description of course buyouts.
 - v. Scott Risser said that the Chancellor and Chair of the Faculty Senate will be Ex Officio members. He recommends that two faculty members from each college facilitate the nominations for their college next week, and forward a list of names to the Senate Chair and Secretary.
 - vi. The Chancellor will have final say on the makeup of the committee, and may end up appointing additional members.
 - vii. Volunteers for Coordinating Nominations
 - a. George Williams and Abhishek Choudhury from SME
 - b. Vicki Petritz from Highlands; Scott will ask Laura Young and Tony Patrick as well
 - c. Charie Faught and Atish Mitra from CLSPS
 - d. Glen Southergill and Dan Autenrieth from Grad School
 - viii. Officers will make suggested edits to the job description; nomination process will start next week.
- VII. Meeting adjourned