

Faculty Senate Minutes

9/25/2020

1-2 pm

Kelly Steward SUB 113 and Virtual Meeting via Zoom

In Person: Charie Faught (Chair), Peter Lucon (Vice-Chair), Mathew Haines, Ulana Holtz, Atish Mitra

Zoom: Karen Wesenberg, Rita Freebourn, John Ray, Miriam Young, Tamara Harp, Tony Patrick, Phil Curtiss, Katherine Zodrow, Glen Shaw, Courtney Young, Abhishek Chaudhury, Sue Schrader, Dan Autenrieth, Jackie Timmer, Ron White, Richard LaDouceur

Quorum @1:00 pm

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

Approvals for September 11, 2020 meeting minutes

Motion to approve, and seconded. **PASSED.**

Action Items

- II. CRC Items
None at this time
- III. Committee Assignment
Courtney Young may present next time.

Informational Items

- IV. BOR Discussion with Faculty Senate Representatives

Chair: Attended virtual BOR meeting last week. On behalf of the senate, we raised concerns of faculty well-being during the COVID period. BOR is appreciative of faculty efforts. The senate has informed the BOR that we want a seat at the table, and greater participation in future decisions. They promised to open up future communication channels. We let them know our concerns that we didn't have enough of a voice as decisions are being taken too quickly.

Comments from senators: Is there a commitment from the BOR that Montana Tech will remain open no matter what is the progression of COVID? Chair: no absolute commitments, but there is a provisional commitment to open next semester for face-to-face classes. Senator: does that mean hybrid / online courses may not be offered unless the faculty qualifies for disabilities? Chair: This seems to more of a Montana Tech's decision, not a BOR decision. Senator: There are concerns from faculty that HR is making academic decisions, such as whether courses will be online /hybrid etc. Some departments have passed resolutions that these decisions should be departments'. Comments from senator: HR may be acting as the voice of students. Senator: Faculty who has family members with high risk should not be forced to have face-to-face meets - same as in the case of students. Chair: Students seem to want face to face, based on a student survey. Chair: Will confirm with administration about queries about spring break. Chair: Whether an entire department may offer courses online is CRC's decision. Senator: if majority of a class has COVID, further class meetings should be online. Otherwise, test giving is difficult in such cases for hybrid courses – not equitable Chair: suggest faculty take training for online course

delivery anyway. Senator: students may be changing their minds about face to face - maybe we can consult with ASMT to get further information.

Discussion Items

V. Intersession teaching due to longer semester break

Chair: Spoke with administration (provost) as per last meeting's discussions. Provost will discuss this issue at Deans' council. Will check with him and report back.

VI. Concern regarding lack of mask requirement outside buildings

Chair: The question from last senate meeting was asked to the administration. Response from administration: no change in the policy at moment – so there is no mask requirement outside of buildings.

VII. E-mail policy protocols

Chair: There is no official policy about the “reply to all” function on our email system. The Chancellor has formed a small workgroup (of which the faculty senate chair is a member) to address the issue. The chair will report back to the senate on this issue.

VIII. Instruction types, modalities, methods of instruction for Spring 2021

Discussed earlier

IX. Current situation and impact on Special Focus

Chair: no changes are planned on special focus designation. Budget was discussed in BOR: while our campus is down, it is better than was expected under current circumstances.

X. Impact of declining enrollment on future budgets and allocation of resources

Chair: There have been 7 cuts (4-5 on North campus) and 3 Highlands. In-state enrollment is up, out of state is down.

XI. Activities and priorities for the upcoming year

a. Strategic Planning

Chair: leadership team has just started the process. Will report back.

b. Faculty Satisfaction Survey

No updates

XII. Other Items

a) Tamara Harp: There is a dedication of memorial gardens for Vicki Petritz at 4:00pm

b) Request from senator for Provost to come and address the senate on some of these topics. Chair: He has been overbooked and hasn't been able to come recently.

Motion to adjourn @ 1:50pm and seconded. Next meeting at Highlands #145