

FACULTY SENATE MEETING  
Minutes of Meeting  
December 2, 2003

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Brower.

Senate members present: Brower, James, Leland, Solko, A. Stierle. Absent: Todd, MacLaughlin, Melvin, J. Metesh, Mitman.

Others present: Chancellor Gilmore.

The minutes of the 11/18/03 meeting were noted as approved electronically and posted in the Faculty Senate's public folder.

Stierle reported on the Committee on Student Evaluation of Course Instruction (CSECI). The Committee has been meeting every Monday. Pfeifle, ASMT VP, did a survey of the students. It seems that students may not take the instrument seriously since it seems that nothing is ever done with it. The IDEAS instrument that was priced several years ago at \$50,000 per year now seems to be available for a campus like ours for \$20,000. One problem with the IDEAS instrument is that it does not provide feedback in the form of the comments. It, therefore, seems summative rather than formative. The IDEAS instrument was one of three commercial instruments that were tested on campus several years ago. No testing body was completely satisfied with the instrument they tested.

Some time in the mid to late 1980's the IIC sponsored a campus-wide workshop on evaluations. It was well-attended and offered very useful information about evaluations and the process. Unfortunately, nothing resulted from it.

Regarding the evaluation forms, the Committee feels that comments must be included. There is also concern about anonymous, condemning comments that students make that could damage the careers of the teachers. AAUP says no termination action can be taken based upon an unsigned student evaluation. The teacher must know who the accuser is and be provided opportunity for a hearing. There is a Website for the IDEAS evaluation form. The University of Wisconsin seems to have a very good instrument.

The question rose as to who should be compiling the evaluations. Included in the discussion was concern about security and confidentiality.

Solko and James provided brief comments from the last Chancellor's Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting. Solko noted that, other than some routine discussion, the two items that seemed to be important were the student absences for college-sanctioned events and concern about the quality of preparation some students have to succeed in college. James noted that the item that has stirred the most discussion in quantity and emotion was the 15 mph speed limit area.

Absences for college-sanctioned events was next on the senate agenda. Stierle had visited with some students to determine how much of a problem students thought the absence issue was. Students indicated that they were always accommodated in some way but that the teacher may do a little grumbling about the extra effort to accommodate. The following wording for inclusion in the catalog was furnished via an e-mail received from a person involved in the discussion from the CAC.

"It is the policy at Montana Tech to support and encourage student participation in sanctioned curricular and extra-curricular activities and programs. As such, we strongly encourage faculty to accommodate students' educational needs when

conflicts in class times and sanctioned activities arise."

It was suggested that this preface the one-statement policy that currently is printed in the catalog. Concern was expressed once again that there still is no definition of a sanctioned event. It was suggested that some wording also be included to advise the students of steps that can be taken should such accommodation be refused.

The Senate members agreed that it still seems appropriate to make this an agenda item for the next instructional faculty meeting on December 9. Chairperson Brower said he would put in the request.

Discussion of the proposed handbook changes will take place at the next meeting. The next meeting will be held December 16 at 8:00 a.m. Members would be polled to see that a quorum can make this time, since the 16th falls on the last day of finals.

A motion was made and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise E. Solko  
Secretary