

MONTANA TECH FACULTY SENATE

Friday October 20, 2006

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Members present: Mark Sholes, Lance Edwards, Betsy Garlish, Miriam Young, Paul Conrad, Rod James, John Brower, Karen Porter

Attending without vote: Chancellor Gilmore, Vice-Chancellor Patton

Business

- The Senate reviewed all committee assignments for completeness.
- The initial three sets of Senate meeting minutes were collectively approved.
- The Board of Regents will meet November 16 & 17. Senate President Mark Sholes will attend. Senate vice-president will preside at the regular Friday November 17th meeting of the Senate.
- Mark reported on the Chancellor's Cabinet meeting 10/18/06. A principal topic was the receipt of one-time requests from across the campus related to expenditure of the **\$450,000 one-time dollars available**. Chancellor Gilmore reported that **117 requests were received, totaling about 2.3 million**; each is described in a folder in his office; the Budget Committee will develop the criteria for evaluation of applications and will do the prioritization.

Other topics

1. Montana Tech currently has a **student/faculty ratio of 14.5:1**, which is the lowest in the state. This ratio has been strongly endorsed by the faculty. However, this desirable ratio does have an effect on overall salaries on the campus.
2. Montana Tech will now be able to offer an **honorary doctorate**, as voted by the Board of Regents.
3. Chancellor Gilmore indicated he has developed a **plan for moving Tech from its present strong science/engineering status to a super-strong status**, an objective he sees as part of an essential national response to our nationally decreasing production of "dynamic" engineers (= innovative/abstract-thinking/problem-solving). He hopes to interest the BOR in this plan during a presentation at the up-coming BOR meeting, and will forward to Senate members a copy of his White Paper on the subject.
4. **Probationary appointments** were again discussed with Vice Chancellor Patton. The following points were made:
 - (a) A basic document should be prepared that clarifies what is required for tenure, and what each department individually requires for its faculty.
 - (b) The Instructor level remains the best way to bring on a person with outside expertise but lacking traditional academic credentials. Instructors can get tenure but cannot move through the several Professor levels.
 - (c) Northwest Accreditation has no firm policy regarding how many faculty members at a school or in a department could be non-tenured, but they would take note of the prevalence, and draw conclusions about the stability of Tech's faculty

- (d) Currently, non-tenure track positions are handled as visiting faculty on 3-year contracts.
- (e) Question: should Tech have an opt-off opportunity within the tenure track?
- (f) AAUP guidelines include an up-or-out policy for its tenure track position.
- (g) The Senate generally expressed, without vote, that Tech should have an additional employment track, but these individuals should be hired at dollars commensurate with the person's credentials. Presently Tech's Instructor level, even for highly qualified persons, is very low. One related problem, however, is possible friction within a department where two Instructors have different salaries.
- (h) The Senate generally agreed, without vote, to adopt the AAUP guidelines and also provide an option to apply for a non-tenure track position. Vice-Chancellor Patton will provide a draft document for the Senate to consider at a later meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Porter
Secretary