

Montana Tech Faculty Senate Meeting

Thursday, October 25, 2012

7:00-8:00 a.m.

Location: Pintlar Room

MEETING MINUTES

Senators present:

Hugo Bertete Aguirre, Laurie Battle, Tom Camm, Jon Chesbro, Chris Danielson (V. Chair), Jerry Downey (Chair), Gretchen Gellar, Bill Good, Katie Hailer, Scott Juskiewicz, Tom Moon, Mary North Abbott, Vicki Petritz, James Rose, Bill Ryan, Celia Schahczenski (Sec.), Glenn Shaw, Jack Skinner, Rita Spear, Miriam Young

Senators absent: Merle Benedict, John Nugent, Raj Kasinath.

Vacant senate seats:

Professional and Technical Communication

Research Faculty, Center for Advanced Mineral and Metallurgical Processing (CAMP)

Guests:

Doug Abbott (Provost VCAAR)

Amanda Badovinic (Public Relations) - Presentation only.

Doug Coe (Dean LSPS)

Hannah Dysinger (ASMT)

Kyle Hogart (Pres. ASMT)

Courtney Young (Dept. Chair Metallurgy)

Call to Order: Jerry Downey, Chair

Roll Call: Celia Schahczenski, Secretary

Review and Approval of Minutes from the 27-Sep-12 Senate Meeting

Minutes approved unanimously

Discussion Topics

1. Presentation of results of Senate voting via Survey Monkey (Senate officers)

a. Senate Recommendation on minimum standards for Faculty Promotion & Tenure

Survey question:

1. The Montana Tech Administration asked the Faculty Senate to make a recommendation on the subject of minimum standards for Faculty promotion and tenure. The following statement was developed during the September 27, 2012 meeting:

"The Faculty Senate recommends that faculty promotion and tenure standards be defined entirely within the individual department standards; it is the responsibility of each department to develop and maintain standards that are consistent with their disciplines."

Shall the preceding statement be the Senate's recommendation to the Administration?

Results of the survey were 16-3 in favor of having the departments defining their standards for tenure and promotion. These results will be forwarded onto the administration.

- b. Senate Recommendation on the basis for the academic calendars for AY2013-2014 through AY2015-2016 (Kyle Hoggatt, ASMT President will be present to participate in the discussion)

Survey question:

2. The Faculty Senate plans to provide input into the development of future academic calendars (AY2013/2014 and beyond.) The current Montana Tech academic calendar is based on 15 weeks of instruction and 1 week of final examinations; many universities, including the other members of the Montana University System, have academic calendars that are based on 14 weeks of instruction and one week of final examinations.

What shall the Senate recommend as the basis of future academic calendars?

Results of the survey were 15-4 in favor of 14 + 1 week semesters (vs. 15 + 1).

Comments/discussion:

- The survey did not address all the recommendations of the subcommittee, but was an attempt to simplify the discussion and obtain input
- Can't talk weeks, must talk instruction hours. There are things such as recitations, etc.
- Some holidays really disrupt covering material (for example, it will be impossible to cover what was supposed to be covered in the Tuesday lab that is cancelled due to election day)
- Some departments want to address weeks because it is important that students can start their internships
- Faculty ought to be able to vary their lesson content to accommodate holidays, etc.

- Weeks need to be addressed because slicing off weeks takes time away from faculty doing research
- Holidays can be handled differently, for instance, clinical hours are mandatory and occur even during holidays. Quizzes can also be given during holidays.
- Kyle, president of ASMT, shared that being an engineer he prefers longer summers so that he can work. He also sees students from other campuses having shorter semesters. He tells himself that he is getting a better education, but still finds it frustrating. He looked into Colorado School of Mines and they started when we did, stopped earlier and had a dead week.
- When asked about splitting the finals week, for instance to start on a Wed. and end on a Tues, Kyle felt that students might appreciate that. On the other hand, students might want to finish and go home.
- When questioned as to whether all classes have finals, Kyle stated that all his classes have them, but some are optional.
- At least three departments have found it difficult to offer classes to MSU students due to differing schedules.
- Business has been offering courses to students at other campuses for years without difficulty.
- If we want to have shared programs, we'll need to sync our schedules.
- The Board of Regents, at the time of restructuring, requested that the campuses develop a common calendar.
- If the campuses are going to be a true consortium, we need to work together. This is a bigger issue than just the academic calendar.
- Given the benefits of students starting internships early, students having more time to work, faculty having time to do research, wanting shared programs, the error in our contracts and the overwhelming support (15 to 4) for 15 week semesters, would the administration consider restoring the start date of spring semester and moving the end date and finals forward one week?
- Response from Doug Abbott: Don doesn't have a problem with shortening the semester but, what is the campus going to get for a shorter semester? Don is of the opinion that faculty sign a contract, Aug15-May 15. He expects faculty to honor the contract. Tech attempts to have training sessions but faculty respond that they will not be able to attend because they will be on vacation.
- Response to Doug: What you can get with a 14+1 week semester is excellent teaching. We have historically been a teaching college, but now we are to do research but we need to have time. We need to look at the overall picture and the overall equation. We have a teaching load which is substantially higher than the other campuses. Also our service load is higher. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, but we just need to achieve a better balance. We have a reputation as a tough school but, as professionals, we should foster community with the students and not keep them from enjoying the break or limiting internships merely to prove a point.
- Anyone who teaches knows that classes require preparation. Is the idea that faculty who aren't on campus just walked into class on the first day unprepared?

- The administration is already getting professionalism from the majority of the faculty.
 - Increasing research is something the administration wants faculty to do but this doesn't do it.
- c. Senate Recommendations relative to the Spring 2013 TECHXPO
- i. Designate the TECHXPO date as a "non-instructional day"

Survey question:

3. The Administration plans to designate Wednesday, May 1 as a "non-instructional day" on which to conduct the Spring 2013 TECHXPO event.

Shall the Senate endorse the Administration's plan to designate the TECHXPO date as a "non-instructional day?"

Results of the survey were 10-9 in favor of not declaring TECHXPO to be a non-instructional day, which can be interpreted as ambivalence on the part of the faculty.

- ii. Schedule the 2013 TECHXPO scheduled for Thursday, May 2 instead of Wednesday, May 1

Survey question:

4. In the event that TECHXPO date is designated as a "non-instructional day," shall the Senate recommend that the TECHXPO be scheduled to take place on Thursday, May 2 instead of on Wednesday, May 1? (Montana Tech's current academic calendar includes an extra Thursday meeting.)

Results of the survey were 15-4 in favor of holding TECHXPO on Thursday instead of Wednesday if it is declared a non-instructional day, showing clear support for Thursday.

2. Senate comments on the Proposed Policy for Compensation of Academic Faculty Engaged in Research will be forwarded to the Administration (Jerry Downey)

Jerry got a few more comments which he will add to the document. Senators concurred to go ahead and forward all comments to the Administration.

3. Montana Tech web page access – update (Amanda Badovinac)

Amanda distributed a "Montana Tech Web Policy" which has been recommended by the Web Guidance Committee. She is looking for feedback from the Faculty Senate. The

policy has been presented to the Executive Committee, emailed out to the Staff Senate for comments/suggestions, and was presented to the Chancellor's Cabinet. The Web Guidance Committee consists of 14 members, including a student representative. The student position has not yet been filled.

Action item: Senators are requested to peruse the policy and provide feedback to Amanda Badovinac by Tuesday, Oct. 30th.

4. Honorary Distinguished Professor and Distinguished Scholar designations – shall the Senate vote on a recommendation to the Administration in favor of allowing these designations provided that the criteria are modified to appropriately reflect the scholarly activities of all departments at Montana Tech? (Courtney Young)

Courtney explained that the motivation for defining these designations was an email complaint about perceived inconsistencies in titles in his dept. After visiting with VCAAR Abbott, they agreed that Courtney would work with Jerry to develop a policy for the campus and for the Faculty Senate to vet. Courtney and Jerry looked at what other schools were doing, and drafted the recommendation. In the recommendation the designation "distinguished" can be considered like a promotion; however, the faculty wanting this designation must exceed dept standards in the three performance areas of service, teaching and scholarly activities. The recommendation states that the faculty must have tenure before receiving consideration. If a faculty has full professor status, he/she can be named Distinguished Professor. If a faculty has associate level status, he/she can be named Distinguished Scholar. This takes into account their terminal degrees. In both cases, the bar is set higher because each performance area must be met.

Courtney stated the distinguished scholar designation is not used on many campuses, however, "we want to grow this campus and grow research on this campus so we need to start doing things differently. This is one way."

It was decided that this would be placed onto the agenda for further discussion at our next meeting.

New Business

1. Faculty concerns and issues
2. Other new business items

Doug Coe asked the senate to weigh in on the strategic plan. There are a number of avenues to get input from faculty. (For instance, members of the committee are

meeting with each department over the next 2 weeks.) Doug wants to include the Faculty Senate as a source of input. He would like the majority of the Dec. 6th meeting to be devoted to discussion of the Strategic Plan. He hopes the senate will run this meeting.

Doug will pass information to Jerry to disseminate to the senate. In this way, hopefully, the Dec. 6th meeting can be very efficient.

The strategic Committee would like to include a representative from the Faculty Senate. Senators interested in serving can send email to Jerry.

Decide the time, date, and location of the November/December Senate meeting (suggest Thursday, December 6)

Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, it was decided to delay the November meeting until December 6th.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:20a.m.