

Montana Tech Faculty Senate Meeting

Thursday, January 31, 2013

7:00-8:00 a.m.

Location: Pintlar Room

MEETING MINUTES

Senators present:

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

Senators absent:

Merle Benedict, Tom Moon, Chad Okrusch, Bill Ryan

Vacant senate seats:

Business and Information Technology

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

Guests:

Doug Abbott (Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, VCAA)

Bev Hartline (Vice Chancellor of Research and Dean of the Graduate School, VCR)

Call to Order: Jerry Downey, Chair

Roll Call: Celia Schahczenski, Secretary

Actions Items (vote required)

Review and approval of minutes from the 6-Dec-13 Senate meeting

Minutes were approved unanimously.

Discussion Topics

Some senators teach courses that begin at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday and, therefore, must either depart prior to senate meeting adjournment or arrive late to class. The possibility of rotating senate meeting times was raised and discussed. The difficulties associated with identifying a universally convenient meeting time were acknowledged. With only two more Senate meetings scheduled this semester (the March meeting is scheduled for a Thursday and the April meeting is scheduled for a Friday), no further action is planned this semester.

Academic Calendar for AY2013-2014

Two alternatives calendars were e-mailed to senators previous to the meeting.

Discussion:

- The Alternative 1 schedule splits the finals over a weekend in both the Fall and Spring semesters; some faculty members and students consider this to be a favorable characteristic.
- The Alternative 2 schedule concludes each semester two days earlier than Alternative 1 schedule and final exams are conducted Monday through Friday. Some faculty members consider this to be a favorable characteristic because it allows more grant writing and research time.

Motion (2nd and approved): Senators will decide (via Survey Monkey) which alternative to recommend; the Senate Chair will forward the results to the Administration.

Professor of Practice faculty positions

A memorandum that outlined a Senate subcommittee discussion and recommendations regarding the proposed Professor of Practice faculty classification was e-mailed to the senators in advance of the (January 31, 2013) meeting.

Discussion:

- Bringing in outside people to have an industrial perspective seems positive.
- Creating the new classification provides flexibility.
- Limiting the total number of Professor of Practice (POP) to 10-15% campus wide was suggested.
- POP advising and doing research was also discussed.
- Length of contracts was discussed

Motion (2nd and approved): the Senate will vote (via Survey Monkey) on an endorsement of the PoP classification as described in the memorandum, which the Senate Chair will revise to reflect the Senate discussion.

Materials Science Ph.D. proposal to the Board of Regents

The Materials Science doctoral program proposal has undergone extensive revision since it was approved by the Montana Tech and University of Montana campuses in Spring and Fall 2010, respectively. The current version, which was approved by the Montana Tech Graduate Council and the Curriculum Review Committee, was e-mailed to the Senators in advance of the (January 31, 2013) meeting.

VCR Hartline provided background on this proposal: The proposal was created four years ago. Significant issues recently addressed were: what area of materials science would this cover, increased detail on the curriculum, and how administration of the PhD would be handled. These issues are addressed in the current version of the proposal. The Provosts of the all three campuses (UM, MSU and Tech) started meeting in Oct. of this year and have been meeting regularly.

Motion (2nd and approved): the Faculty Senate will decide whether to endorse this proposal via a survey monkey vote. The Senate Chair will report the outcome to the Administration.

Academic Standards and Integrity

It was previously agreed that Academic Standards and Integrity should be a regular Senate Meeting agenda item. The recent Senate deliberations and recommendation relative to faculty tenure and promotion guidelines fall under this heading. Chancellor Blacketter and the Senate Chair are still discussing the Senate's earlier recommendations concerning tenure and promotion guidelines; some modifications to the recommendation may be necessary to gain Administration approval (example: delete the word "entirely" from the recommendation).

There is an impetus by the BOR to evaluate student "completion rates" as a criterion for making funding decisions. Senate Chair Downey suggests that the Senate take a stand on this issue. He suggests further discussion on what we want to stand for as an institution.

Discussion continued about the importance of academic standards. Two senators expressed concern that we not confuse "academic standards" with protecting poor instruction; a senator observed that high failure rates may indicate poor instruction when students who consistently earn A's and B's in all of their other courses fail a specific instructor's class.

New Business

The following agenda items were not discussed:

- Faculty concern about electronic signature process (for grade changes, etc.)
- Clarify and streamline CRC and Grad Council committee functions
- Select the date for the Spring Instructional Faculty Meeting
- Other new business items

Verify the times and date of the Spring Semester Senate meetings:

7:00-8:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 28 in the Pintler Room

7:00-8:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 28 in the Pintler Room

7:00-8:00 a.m. on Friday, April 26 in the Pintler Room

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 7:52 a.m., in time for senators to make it to their 8 a.m. classes 😊.