

Montana Tech Faculty Senate Meeting

Thursday, November 7, 2013

7:00-8:00 a.m.

Location: Pintler Room (Student Union Building)

MEETING MINUTES

Senators present:

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

Senators absent:

Sally Bardsley, Katie Hailer, Tim Kober, John Nugent, Chad Okrusch, James Rose

Vacant senate seats:

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

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 (7:00 a.m.): Jerry Downey, Chair

Roll Call: Celia Schahczenski, Secretary

I. Senate Business (7:05)

A. Review and approval of minutes from the 2-Oct-13 Senate meeting

Minutes were approved unanimously.

B. Implementation of a semi-annual or annual Faculty Satisfaction Survey
Current status and path forward

Downey, using the recommendations of the Survey Committee and surveys from other schools, drafted the faculty satisfaction survey distributed with the agenda for this meeting. Comment boxes will be added to the survey. Once the information is collected, Downey and the other Senate officers will summarize the results and present the summaries to the Senate and relevant administrators. The surveys themselves will then be deleted.

Motion (2nd and approved): Senators can send modifications on the wording of the survey to Schahczenski up until Wednesday, Nov. 13, and Schahczenski will incorporate those suggestions into the survey. The survey will be distributed to the Tech faculty on Monday, Nov. 18.

C. Discussion of election of faculty to fill openings to various committees

1. Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee (3 positions open; 2 tenured volunteers)
2. Committee on Service (1 position open; 1 tenured volunteer)
3. Grievance Committee (2 positions open; 2 volunteers)

One of the positions on the Grievance Committee has been filled. Three faculty members have volunteered for the remaining five positions.

Motion (2nd and approved): For each vacant position, Senators vote to elect the volunteer(s) for that position.

II. Topics for Senate Consideration (7:25)

A. Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) recommendations:

1. Curricular modifications
2. Creation of BS Degrees in Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering

Duplication of degrees across the campuses is a concern. Thus, there may be some resistance to this proposal because MSU already offers a degree in Mechanical Engineering. If so, it is anticipated that the argument that the focus of the proposed degree program will differ from the MSU program should prevail. Also, enrollment in Mechanical Engineering at MSU is increasing (they currently have 900 students) and they have indicated that they are not opposed to this proposal.

Creation of these degrees is being proposed to serve the students. Tech has a strong reputation and having Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering as stand-alone degrees, rather than options of the General Engineering degree, should benefit the students.

If these proposals pass changes to Tech's General Engineering Department and the General Engineering degree are likely. It is possible that ABET accreditation for the General Engineering degree will not be sought.

Paperwork for these degrees must be completed by Friday of next week, so it would be helpful if the Senate responds to this by Thursday of next week.

3. Involvement of the CRC in the approval process for graduate curriculum requests

Results of a CRC vote and a Graduate Council vote on this issue were distributed with the agenda for this meeting.

Comments:

- If it isn't broken, don't fix it
- Extra overview seems helpful
- This may not make a huge difference now, but as there are more graduate courses are offered at Tech, it may become more of an issue

- The Graduate Council was not able to meet to discuss this, but did vote on it

Motion (2nd and approved):

Senators vote on the curricular modifications.

Senators vote to endorse each of the degrees.

Senators vote between Items 2 and 3 which were on the CRC and Graduate Council surveys.

VCR Hartline, thanks Scott Risser for bringing this third item to the attention of the Senate.

B. Evaluation of part-time faculty (a proposed change to Faculty/Staff Handbook)

In 2010 North-West Accreditation visited and Tech was given three recommendations.

1. Shortage of housing for freshmen
Seniors used to get priority for Tech housing, and now freshmen do. This resolved this recommendation.
2. Tech have an institution-wide assessment plan
This is being addressed.
3. Review practices for evaluating part-time faculty to ensure consistency

The Faculty Staff Handbook states that part-time faculty members are required to prepare a portfolio stating their goals, getting outside recommendation letters, and other items. Typically, however, part-time faculty members are not asked to do this. The Deans Council would like to see the language in the Faculty Handbook changed to more accurately describe how part-time faculty members are evaluated (if they are evaluated).

It was pointed out that the new language is not appropriate for part-time faculty members that don't teach.

Motion (2nd and approved): Senators vote on that language changes to the Faculty Handbook suggested by the Graduate Council concerning evaluation of part-time faculty.

III. Summary of Academic Items for Vote (7:40).

No items are currently scheduled for vote.

IV. Other Business (7:45)

A. Academic Standards and Integrity

1. Status of Senate recommendations regarding Department Standards as they pertain to faculty promotion and tenure and the Professor of Practice classification

Downey asked Provost Abbott about the status of the Senate recommendations regarding Departmental Standards. Abbott replied that Chancellor Blacketter and he are in the process of visiting each department to discuss Departmental Standards.

2. Performance-Based Funding Steering Committee

This will be discussed next time. Downey thanks Mary North-Abbott for attending those meetings on short notice.

B. Discussion and appointment of Senate MUSFAR representative(s)

This is coming up and the Senate is looking for someone who can attend the next MUSFAR meeting.

V. Adjournment (7:55)

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:05 a.m.