

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FACULTY OPINION & SATISFACTION SURVEY

Conducted April 2014

This report contains results of a 10-question follow-up survey to the Faculty Opinion & Satisfaction Survey administered November 2013. A total of 168 surveys were issued with a 39% response rate (65 responses). This follow-up survey was distributed to the same participants as the earlier survey. In this survey, each question had two aspects: "Importance of this issue" and "Opinion on this issue". Similar to student course evaluations, a numerical value was calculated for the response to each statement according to the following scale:

- 5 – Strongly agree
- 4 – Agree
- 3 – Neutral or no opinion
- 2 – Disagree
- 1 – Strongly disagree

Faculty members were provided the opportunity to comment on questions. While most comments are included verbatim, some attempt was made to correct spelling and grammar, and to remove comments which were not instructive or constructive. The reports to Chancellor Blacketter and to President Engstrom will contain the complete set of unedited comments. Additionally, relevant unedited comments will be sent to the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance.

1. The administration has a commitment to transparency and shared governance.

Importance: 4.23 Satisfaction: 2.68 Gap between importance and satisfaction: 1.55

Comments:

Decisions are made without any faculty input. A very recent example is the elevation of a new department head in Petroleum. The faculty members in Petroleum were not asked their opinion and then were informed of the decision at the same time as the rest of the campus.
I believe that there is communication to some level, but it difficult for me to assess that considering that I sometimes miss meetings where administration is trying to convey transparency. I also neglect to read all attachments to emails that may contain this information
There have been instances where administration has made personnel decisions within their rights, but not made transparent.
I think there are too many hidden agendas and sometimes outright lies. I personally caught top administration lying.
The administration at all levels seems to treat faculty governance as a cosmetic issue--good for appearances, in reality it retreats into the top-down model governed by "management rights"
I do think things happen without faculty knowledge, but it may also be that I don't always pay attention to all the communication. so it's hard to tell.
This administration has illusions of Godwin. They have lied to faculty endlessly and changed documents without approval, let alone consent. It's their way or the highway. It needs to be them on the highway. Good riddance.
No, they do not. Faculty members are consulted on very few things and the administration hides behind "administrative rights." Their treatment of the chemistry department is indicative of their mentality.
The research office is committed to secrecy.

The Administration rules mostly helping you if you agree with them and by threat if you disagree with them. This is clearly reflected in the bimodal distribution of the Survey made in December 2013.
We have no idea what fundraising priorities of the foundation are, how staffing is decided, how space is decided. It's random or secret. Departments seem to have almost equal numbers of faculty regardless of teaching or advising loads.
Whether it's the choice of graduation speaker or the "plan" for engineers' merit awards, Admin does what it wants without involving faculty.
Decisions are made behind closed doors with no input from staff or faculty. "We decided" is the phrase used. Who are "we"?
I don't believe them.
The administration is a dictatorship when their opinions are not shared by the rest of the campus.
In light of A.D. debacle it is a stretch to suggest that the administration is committed to transparency.

2. I feel that my input on faculty committees is valued by the administration.

Importance: 4.04 Satisfaction: 2.89 Gap between importance and satisfaction: 1.15

Comments:

Decisions made in committees are either ignored or disputed. A recent example was the decision of the RAC about research salaries, prompting a response from administration that discounted that decision.
Let me clarify. I believe there is the appearance of conveying concern over faculty issues. However, whether or not things actually happen to value that is still debatable. Not swaying for or against this.
The administration seems to listen but there is no action or follow through.
For this question and the one above: it depends on the committee.
This administration listens to no input and simply plows ahead not caring about the wake it creates. They pretend to listen but having meetings with them is a waste of time. They value nothing but their own little world. The damage it is having on the campus has reached the community and that goes far beyond Butte and even the State.
Faculty are consulted but ignored, and then the ASMT is manipulated with hand-picked students to get a satisfactory administration outcome. The way that the Provost manipulated the ASMT over the academic calendar is a prime example.
Historically it was.
The Administration only uses the input that is aligned with their interest.
Input from faculty committees on issues is ignored, blown off, or worse, committee members are threatened. Recent examples are shop safety issues and lighting from the safety committee, and space issues.
The Montana Tech administration is opposed to shared faculty governance. They are autocrats.
Committees at Tech are a joke, they do not meet and when they do no one is present. And that is because administration does not value or listen to committees.

3. My input is sought and considered when policy discussions relating to issues important to me are being made.

Importance: 4.13 Satisfaction: 2.54 Gap between importance and satisfaction: 1.59

Comments:

Administration, indeed the faculty in general, consisting of an inner circle of graduates of this institution seems to be invited for their input.
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Same comment as above. Elaborating on this, we might need to check the hierarchy of information delivery and communication. Is this something that Administration takes to our department chairs and then they are responsible to convey to us?? Is this happening?
It is occasionally sought, but re: transparency--the feedback loop that communicates how input is considered and factored into decision-making is completely missing.
Over the years input is taken for things like length of semesters and academic calendar, but always seems to be ignored.
As noted, this administration pretends to go through the motions when, in truth, they have already made decisions. This campus does not need dictators, it needs facilitators. This campus might have a vision and mission but it is lost because this administration is incompetent at making it happen.
See previous comment about the calendar. The administration has also been tone deaf on differing research standards for academic departments.
It used to be but now the research office is in a secrecy mode that inhibits research and the office certainly does not want my opinion
The inputs are listened but rarely considered unless matches the Administration's interest. The Administration takes advantage of the lack of communication between Faculty, then the inputs are limited or directed by Department Heads, Deans and VC.
We can hire athletic positions in days while staffing vacant faculty positions in shorthanded departments takes a year or more and is subject to micromanagement and overruling of the departments on job descriptions and candidates. This results in no qualified applicants, no hire, failed search, overloaded faculty, and students deprived thereby. In particular Petroleum and General Engineering are grossly understaffed and have been for years.
Administration makes the decisions with no input from faculty or staff.

4. The Chancellor's expectation of increased research productivity for new faculty is reasonable.

Importance: 3.89 Satisfaction: 2.77 Gap between importance and satisfaction: 1.12

Comments:

Without reducing teaching loads, I don't see how it will be possible for young faculty to teach and do research (unless they can buy out of classes). We will drive off a number of new professors because this unachievable expectation.
Start-up support and other resources should be provided to in order to create an environment conducive to research productivity. Current resource allocations seem random. Faculty should not be responsible for finding their replacements for course buy-outs.
Resources to increase research productivity are not in alignment with expectations (such as grant writing help).
The chancellor expects to increased enrollment and increased research activity without decreasing teaching workload. Guess what, you already have faculty working 6 days a week sometimes 7 days a week and during the summer to keep up with what they already have, how much more can they do?
Without clearer and more consistent (and flexible) guidelines about these productivity expectations--especially in the context of standard faculty workloads--these expectations are going to create future conflict.
For some this is not problem, however teaching loads are too high for most to establish a research program and obtain grant funding.
The increased focus on research is very challenging when carrying a 3/3 or 4/4 load. In some cases it risks the quality of instruction.
It seems highly variable depending on department and faculty member.
It is so unreasonable that the administration expects research to be done in departments that are clearly instructional only with Nursing being a huge example. Conversely, the administration expects departments that have done a fantastic job building their research (such as electrical and metallurgical)

<p>but only to have to maintain the same HIGH teaching loads. Then, in the case of metallurgy, they have their efforts stolen from them, i.e., PhD and CAMP, with the understanding that they no longer follow Board of Regents policy. It's hard to imagine that a campus can move backwards but this administration succeeded.</p>
<p>More research is fine, but imposing a single standard on all disciplines is not. Also, lead by example and appoint a Provost with actual publishing experience.</p>
<p>The Chancellor needs to review the administrative process for research to ensure that faculty members have adequate support for research.</p>
<p>Increased research productivity can only happen with reasonable teaching and advising loads, and more administrative support.</p>
<p>This expectation of increased research productivity must be accompanied by decreased teaching loads. This has not happened.</p>
<p>The Chancellor's expectation of increased research productivity for new faculty is reasonable, but nothing is being done to make this be achieved. The teaching load is not compatible with his expectations.</p>
<p>There is no meaningful infrastructure for research here in most departments. Suitable lab space is non-existent. There aren't enough grad students. And there is no real time release. We teach more than 2x the classes as other institutions who have lower expectation of research productivity. There is no start up package here worthy of the name. And money that does come in gets taken (or attempted robbery occurs and is thwarted - the recent Army grant comes to mind) by the research office. There is apparently more administrative and fund raising commitment to athletics than education or research. The incoming faculty expectation borders on "get a Nobel prize while working in a remote cabin with a dirt floor that you have to build yourself after we take your axe and give it to one of your colleagues, or no tenure for you."</p>
<p>I think that the increased research expectation is necessary for our growth as a university. However, I don't feel that there is always a reasonable expectation of what constitutes research in various fields. I teach in a department without any graduate program. Yet, I am expected to work with graduate students. I also think that there is a disconnect between the expectation of research importance from the chancellor to the deans. While the faculty are trying to meet the Chancellor's expectations of increased research, the deans are not supporting those goals. Sabbatical replacements aren't authorized (putting an increased teaching load on the remaining faculty), sections of courses are cut (increasing the size of other sections), faculty members are pressured to teach summer courses, and extra sections of courses are added (forcing faculty to teach overloads). This makes it challenging for faculty to satisfy the expectations of the chancellor.</p>
<p>A double edged sword as the research dollars have to be located in addition to faculty time and finding interested post-grad students.</p>
<p>It's nice for the Chancellor to be a cheerleader on the issue. It's the faculty themselves and the departments that need to make this decision. If the Chancellor wants more research he needs to make release time, reduce teaching loads, and provide more seed money and other incentives. The Chancellor needs to get out and raise money.</p>
<p>As usual do more without compensation or support. Tech cannot retain new faculty as it is.</p>
<p>It is only reasonable if it involves a reduction in class load.</p>
<p>Research expectations from the Chancellor have not been communicated to MBMG personnel.</p>
<p>Increased productivity is VERY important, but it can't come at the cost of the STUDENTS that are paying tuition to the UNIVERSITY. Professors need to teach first, but the increased demand on research has not come with additional faculty to teach.</p>
<p>But there needs to be incentive. Lighter teaching loads and more GRA support from the Chancellor and or administration. It's a two-way street.</p>

5. The Departmental Standards of my department are reasonable.

Importance: 4.44 Satisfaction: 3.72 Gap between importance and satisfaction: 0.72

Comments:

Too much emphasis on student surveys. Unrealistic expectations with uneven distribution of resources/workloads. High expectations for new faculty and no expectations for senior faculty.
Time will tell on this one- I am curious to see how issues of fairness will be addressed.
So long as everyone is held to the same standards regardless of whether or not they are new faculty or tenured. Also, all performance standards on campus (university/union contract) should align. Hard to have standards that conflict. Finally, pay scale should align with department standards: Increase focus on teaching, research, on-campus presence should be reflected in the pay.
In most cases department members have not seen the revisions.
Each school should have the same standards and the standards should not be watered down.
My department rewrote many of Dr. Blacketter's requests to suit the discipline.
The Departmental Standards reflect the steps required for tenure and promotion. Where are the student expectations (instructor is prepared for class, timely response to email, timely homework and test grading, etc.)?
The Departmental Standards of my department fails to address major points and needs several improvements that were not even mentioned since these Standards were mostly written by the Department Head. Input was requested but only to change small aspects of the main text written previously in agreements with the Administration.
We wrote them ourselves and resisted pressure from above to make them unreasonable.
All faculty members had input to the final agreed-to Standards.
My department chair worked with faculty at every step to make sure the new standards were what we wanted and reasonable. Not all departments worked that way. In some departments the department head did it without telling or involving faculty. That's stupid, bad leadership, will just make more problems.
Tech is not a research institution, administration needs to understand this and stop asking faculty to increase their workloads without compensation or support.
Standards at MBMG are applied inconsistently based on the director's discretion.
I feel that my department is both transparent and productive from an administrative and research productivity standpoint.

6. The Administration is fair in assessing funded research as a higher priority/more important to the institution than unfunded research.

Importance: 3.79 Satisfaction: 2.75 Gap between importance and satisfaction: 1.04

Comments:

I believe administration is responsible for pushing for well-funded research, but I'm not convinced that there are fairness issues yet. Time will tell I feel that poorly-funded projects that comprise quality research with students and publications should be commended and recognized as important. So far it has been for me.
This replaces scholarship, which should be the primary business of the university, with "funding" as the marker for privileged treatment of faculty by the administration. Cynically, I'd say that this is an act of laziness--counting dollars brought into the institution is easier than assessing the significance of scholarship conducted.
Funded research does appear to receiving higher weighting.

As funding grows more competitive, non-funded research will become more important. If faculty can demonstrate quality research with little to no funding, this should be given an equal amount of administrative credit. Publications should be included in the assessment of quality research with or without funding.
Funded and unfunded research should share equal importance.
Research is research. Whatever it takes to keep one professionally active as long as they are doing it. Views might be different on this matter if this administration facilitated them but they don't know how,
In some fields, funded research is not as available compared to other fields.
Many disciplines do not have access to piles of corporate money or government grants, especially in an era of federal and state budget cuts. Demanding funded research from all departments and disciplines is unrealistic.
Some industries have more funds available to support college/university level research than others.
The Vice Chancellor of Research has created an extraordinary bureaucracy around her office, making difficult or delaying sometimes access to grants.
There are delays in freeing money causing projects to suffer or fail. The recent Army grant comes to mind. These projects have deadlines and we can't wait three months to order equipment that has long lead times while the research office dithers or tries to give the money to others who did not work to bring it in.
The simple fact is that it is much easier to get funding in some fields than in others. Some of Tech's most productive scholars never got a dime of funding.
I think research results are more important than dollars.
Unfunded research is still very important and may lead to funding opportunities at a later date and should be encouraged and supported.
If students are measurably benefiting from "non-funded" research then it is important. After all, we are a center of higher education first. If the administration is asserting that only "funded" research is important, then it might appear that money is a higher priority than education.

7. Faculty should be able to help set their own workload distribution, in consultation with Department Heads and Administrators, in terms of teaching, research/scholarship, and service.

Importance: 4.18 Satisfaction: 3.39 Gap between importance and satisfaction: 0.79

Comments:

Faculty will want to have their cake and eat it too, but somebody has to teach all of those classes.
So far, I feel that there are no decreased teaching loads for people doing high level of research or taking on high numbers of graduate students. I'm strongly in favor of this.
This is THE professional standard at all reputable institutions. Any part of this institution that fails to do this is creating a climate that drives off the best people and leaves in place only the people who can't move on.
So long as everyone agrees on the department curriculum and contributes in the share of the work load. This should not lead to faculty simply refusing to teach classes, nor should it result in an over burden of courses on one faculty over another.
There does not seem to be any quantifiable standards-it's whatever the department head or dean feels like doing.
The consultation with Administrators is where it fails. There is no consultation on this campus. It's a dictatorship.
The workloads need to be more evenly distributed across the campus, as some faculty members are

way more overloaded than others. The department heads for low workload departments will continue to allow that, which isn't right at all.
My department has been ok here, but other departments have had problems, especially with workload.
It's a good idea, but classes need to be taught and students need to be provided service. Taking time away from teaching just isn't feasible as the campus grows.
We do this now but most faculty are overloaded on teaching and advising because we are understaffed. It makes it nearly impossible to do research or service. It's just extra work you are not getting paid for or recognized for.
There isn't a lot of equity within or between departments concerning teaching load. (This is seen in the discrepancies in FTEs for certain individuals and certain departments.) The inequity causes unnecessary dissension. It also makes it hard for departments to respond to issues like maternity/paternity leaves and medical leaves. A more transparent and equitable process is needed. Also, the deans have a habit of overriding department/faculty decisions regarding workload. While some of these overrides may be intended to correct inequities, others create inequity. There are faculty members that have received preferential treatment by the deans in workload issues.
I believe faculty should have input but it is up to the Department Heads to set expectations and workload distribution. There is no reason this institution should not be run to improve efficiencies and productivities just like any business. And yes, we are a business.
That's how it should be and is at many places. What happened to the workload forms and the process the union brought to bargaining? The Tech administration shot it down because it was shared governance. This is maybe not the Chancellor's direct fault but it's his poor leadership and his inability to supervise his subordinates.
This would be abused. This campus is a ghost town on non-instructional service days.
It does seem that there should be some standard for all faculty but you can't ask people to simply do more without providing some sort of incentive to achieve.

8. The administration affords me an appropriate degree of autonomy with regard to my areas of responsibility.

Importance: 4.29 Satisfaction: 3.35 Gap between importance and satisfaction: 0.94

Comments:

What autonomy? I am assigned how many classes to teach and which classes to teach (whether I have a clue about the subject or not). Now research projects are being assigned ... autonomy? Maybe I don't understand the word.
There are some ways it does, and other ways the admin tries to micromanage and is very intrusive. Too often I'm treated as an hourly work-for-hire employee rather than a highly trained and educated professional
DICTATORS DO WHAT DICTATORS DO.
I've been largely left alone, but other departments (chemistry in particular) have not fared well due to pressure to inflate grades.
On teaching this is largely true. The administration seems indifferent except for debacles with scheduling class times and rooms. Registration and advising for students is a fiasco with many having too many advisees assigned and too many forms to fill out, both paper and this online digital signature. ABET has dinged us for this many times. Eventually they will come down on it since the administration won't address it and we can't fix it ourselves.
Too much micromanagement. The VCAF even meddles in class scheduling and how faculty members are assigned to labs. She doesn't have a graduate degree and she never taught a class so why is she the boss of faculty?
Certainly true of my department.

9. I would like to see a common meeting time, when no classes are held, be established.

Importance: 3.69 Satisfaction: 3.60 Gap between importance and satisfaction: 0.09

Comments:

I worry about being restricted from scheduling my classes whenever I want to.
Provides flexibly in scheduling meetings or other events
Although it's a complicated issue for scheduling, this can easily be done by the administration, and doing so has the potential to overcome a host of problems that now plague the campus.
Mid-week with all faculty participation.
it is essential for a functioning institution
The problem herein is there is there are faculty who instruct and do not do research or service. They would just have another excuse to go home. Another is those faculty who serve on more than one committee such that conflicts will arise.
The administration refuses to even consider it, which plays to their advantage since lack of a common time lowers faculty interest and participation.
The administration seems afraid of a larger communication between Faculty, and they seem to believe in divide and conquest as a strategy to gain or maintain power.
The reason few show up for all-staff meetings is that we are WORKING at those times. It also makes it difficult to schedule committee meetings.
How about we already have that--before 0800 or after 1700 hours. We are striving for increased enrollment with constrained facilities so we must utilize the space available to us completely during the day and sometimes, sorry, that spills into the evening hours. It is the job we signed up for so get on with the job or work someplace else.
The Senate has tried many times to get a common meeting time and the union has too. A common meeting time would promote shared governance so of course the Tech administration is against it.
Those already exist throughout the year. Call a meeting on one of them and see how much belly aching you get from the over worked faculty.

10. The Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance effectively handles budgeting, payroll, personnel, purchasing, accounts payable, supervision, program development, problem resolution, policy development and oversight.

Importance: 4.42 Satisfaction: 2.81 Gap between importance and satisfaction: 1.61

Comments:

Absolutely, positively no transparency on this issue. It makes one wonder if the something illegal or unethical is going on. I think Peter is being robbed often to pay Paul, and I'd like to know who Peter and Paul are, and how much is being taken from Peter.
The VCAF wears too many hats, assumes authority over areas in which she has zero competence, and interferes with issues that are properly the purview of academic leaders. She has failed as HR director to solve pervasive personnel problems, and in many cases has escalated low-level problems into major conflicts that cost time, attention, and money from the institution. The high number of EAP referrals for employment related counseling from Tech faculty and staff (which cost the entire MUS system money) is a mark of her failure as a problem-solver. Split these functions so full VC-level employee-centered

attention can be given to faculty governance issues.
Highly variable-treats different faculty members differently.
The VCAF should not be in charge of HR - she mishandles infractions and particularly causes them. For example, the recent firing of our AD was illegal and cost the school and state significant funds. She is invisible on this campus. She does not return messages of any kind, presumably in fear of lawsuits. The example given though is an example of more to come. Benefits continue to decline so she and her committee are not doing well negotiating, a process that is not transparent at all. Finally, she has never been qualified for the position and her personality is simply mean. She, like the rest of this administration, cares not for this place; rather, they love to be in control and dictate how things are. It's why we have a union and it's why the faculty senate is taking over. Hope the strong leadership from this group continues!
The VCAF is a bully who has no respect for faculty, no understanding of teaching and research, and should be replaced by someone with better qualifications.
The VCAF is smart and capable but has her own hidden agendas and manipulates situations to her own (or her favorites) advantage and sometimes to the disadvantage of those that deserve fair treatment.
The many bullies at Tech are ironically the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance and the Provost.
Contracts are LATE. Summer school contracts last year came in the day after the last day of summer classes, and the convoluted summer attendance-based scheme insisted upon by that office needs to go. If the class is undersubscribed, cancel it. Otherwise offer it and pay the instructor. Regular contracts are also late. We should have next year's contracts and summer contracts by May 1st. I will say that the budgets for departments are fairly well handled. And we are not MILLIONS IN DEBT like our neighbors. The recent payroll & benefits meetings that many of us could not make would benefit from this common meeting time. And the paychecks and such do arrive on time. What is being spent, what classes are offered, how much pay, etc. should be handled by Deans and Departments. The finance department's job is to cut the checks and remind them of what their budgets are and when they are in danger of going over or doing something wrong. There's a bit too much dictation of policy from this department's head.
I have had a hard time with payroll/purchasing on grant issues on several occasions. While everyone in the office is extremely pleasant, there are times where things I have needed to purchase or payroll issues for staff on a grant have been unnecessarily difficult to resolve. I feel that there should be greater communication between the grants office and the payroll/purchasing office. Disconnect between those offices causes unnecessary headaches for the PI on a grant.
Once a budget is submitted, it would be nice to have a response on the approved budget. Payroll and accounts payable do an exemplary job--not saying the others don't, I just haven't had the opportunity to experience their service levels.
BIG PROBLEM. The VCAF should do her job and quit meddling in faculty business. She is a bully and more powerful than the Chancellor or Provost. At a meeting it looks like the Chancellor and Provost kowtow and serve the VCAF.
The VC for Administration and Finance is a bully who does not support the faculty and staff and should be replaced with two individuals taking over the position. There are too many conflicts of interest in this position for one person. How can there be a VC with only a bachelor's degree?
Primary contributor to a culture of bullying on campus.
The responsibilities outlined above should be broken out into 2 categories. Personnel, supervision, problem resolution, etc. should be under a different individual.
Problem resolution is a matter of favoritism, not actual fact, and decisions seem to be based on mood and attitude rather than policy.