

Montana Tech Faculty Senate Meeting
Monday May 9, 2016
Noon-2pm, Pintler Room (SUB)

Guests:

Leslie Dickerson

Senators Present:

Sue Schrader, Vicki Petritz, Rita Spear, Conor Cote, Michael Webb, Glen Southergill, Scott Risser, Bill Drury, Abhishek Chodhury, Larry Hunter, Miriam Young, Sally Bardsley

1. Welcome

2. Approval of Minutes. Motion to approve: Glen; Seconded: Conor. All in favor.

3. Presentation of the list of graduates – Leslie Dickerson

Leslie passed list out a list of graduates for the 2015-2016 academic year. There are around 550 graduates. A few names on this list are 6 or less credits away, but will complete those credits this Summer or Fall. Motion to approve list of graduates: Larry. Seconded: Glen.

4. Faculty Training Opportunities – David Bentz

David Bentz had asked to speak to the Senate about Faculty Training Opportunities, but he was unable to attend. Sue provided an overview. David sent an email to All Faculty on May 5th outlining upcoming faculty training opportunities. The Distance Learning Department obtained funding for:

- a. 2016 Summer Teaching Institute
- b. Moodle Mountainmoot
- c. Online Learning Consortium Workshops

David's email provides details on each of these opportunities and how to apply. More information can also be found at this link: <https://sites.google.com/site/mtechdltraining2016/>
Glen said everyone should reach out to David – he's great to work with.

5. Old Business – Aligning the Handbook and CBA on the percent of student evaluations collected

An item from last year was brought to Sue's attention. Last year, the Senate discussed fixing a misalignment between the Faculty Handbook and the CBA (see January 28, 2015 minutes).

Currently, the Handbook states under *Criteria for Evaluation of Instructional Performance*:

Generally supportive and positive student evaluations from the majority of students who have been instructed by the faculty member during the six semesters of instruction

prior to application. Evaluation information from less than 80% of the students instructed may be viewed as incomplete support for the application.

The CBA states:

The student evaluation for each course should include responses from a majority of the enrolled students.

The Senate's decision has not yet been reflected in the Faculty Handbook.

Glen motioned to align the language in the Faculty Handbook with the CBA. Abhishek seconded. The Senate voted in favor.

Glen mentioned that there still seems to be a larger issue here regarding student evaluations in general. Does the online evaluation process need to be improved if there is systematically lower turnout? Several senators expressed frustration with the current evaluation process, particularly online evaluations. Miriam described the Nursing departments efforts to achieve high evaluation rates. They are specifically designed to be formative rather than punitive. Sue wondered if the Nursing department's system could serve as a successful model. Given that this topic was also an area of concern in the Faculty Survey, Sue suggested that it be taken up again by next year's Senate.

6. CRC Business

The following changes have been approved by the CRC and were sent to the Faculty Senate for review:

Liberal Students: Several changes as a response to ETS results for Liberal Studies students. Making curriculum more rigorous with more required Mathematics, a Social Studies requirement, and more upper division Writing requirements. Motion to approve: Miriam. Seconded: Glen. All in favor.

Mathematics: New applied mathematics option under Mathematics BS. One of the goals is for this degree to appeal to Engineering Students seeking a second BS but looking for an applied math option. There is a question about whether this needs to go to BOR first. Motion to approve: Sally. Seconded: Abhishek.

Electric Engineering: 8 changes in EE. Mostly catalog changes related to two focus areas: Power Systems and Controls. Adding a programming requirement. Splitting one course into two in order to better cover all of the material. Motion to approve: Larry. Seconded: Miriam.

Sue brought up a suggestion for the Senate to consider next year. Specifically overlap in the functions of CRC and the Senate. Does the Senate need to approve CRC changes a second time? Instead, could a summary CRC changes be sent to the Senate each month?

7. FOSS report

Sue sent out the results report of the Faculty Survey to the Senate. Miriam suggested that the report be delivered to the Administration in person – Sue will set up a meeting. Glen suggested inviting next year's Faculty Senate chair to join the meeting. Miriam suggested that we identify the Top 5 things to improve based on this year's results and bring them to the Administration and next year's Senate.

One thing Sue noted was a desire for more communication from the Senate to the larger faculty. Possibly via a monthly newsletter.

8. Officer nominations

Sue called for officer nominations for the 2016-2017 Academic Year.

- Scott Risser was nominated for Chair.
- Conor Cote was nominated for Secretary.
- Glen Southergill was nominated for Vice Chair. Glen also nominated Stella Capoccia for Vice Chair.
- Sue will send out a final request for nominations and put the final ballot to electronic vote by email.

Sue noted that some departments appoint Senators for two year terms while most others are for 3 year terms. As outgoing chair, Sue suggested that the Senate consider standardizing terms for 3 years to provide more continuity year to year.

9. Adjourn

Suggestions for the Senate next year:

- Consider standardizing terms to three years
- Investigate redundancy between Senate and CRC responsibilities
- Revisit student evaluations
- Provide more updates from Faculty Senate to All Faculty
- Explore "Top 5" FOSS Survey issues

The Senate thanked Sue for her outstanding service as Chair this year.