

Montana Tech Faculty Senate Meeting

Thursday, September 27, 2012

7:00-8:00 a.m.

Location: Big Butte Room

MEETING MINUTES

Senators present:

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

Senators absent:

Tom Camm, Bill Good, John Nugent, Tom Moon, Miriam Young

Vacant senate seats:

Professional and Technical Communication

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

Guests:

Rae Farrell represented Nursing for Miriam Young

Doug Abbott (VCAAR) attended final 20 minutes

Call to Order: Jerry Downey, Chair

Roll Call: Celia Schahczenski, Secretary

Review and Approval of Minutes from the 30-Aug-12 Senate Meetings

Minutes approved unanimously

Discussion Topics

1. Tenure & promotion of faculty without a terminal degree – define the policy that the Senate wants to recommend to the Administration

In preparation for today's meeting, Jerry researched and distributed excerpts of minutes from previous Faculty Senate minutes pertaining to tenure and promotion. He mentioned that an "up and out" policy was approved by the Senate in 2007 but, to the best of his knowledge, that recommendation has not been implemented.

Discussion followed with several senators concurring that whether or not a terminal degree is required for promotion and/or tenure should be up to individual departments and reported in the Departmental Standards. Other senators supported the idea of a campus wide minimal standard for which Departmental Standards could raise but not lower.

Motion (as amended): The Senate recommends that tenure and promotion standards be defined entirely in the Departmental Standards and that it is up to the department to maintain standards that are consistent with their discipline.

Action item: Senators were requested to discuss this motion with their constituents and provide Jerry with feedback. Jerry will create a survey, administered via Survey Monkey, for the Senate to vote on this motion.

2. Academic calendar – subcommittee report

Subcommittee recommendations/guidelines:

Recommendations:

- Calendars are developed for three years.
- The Faculty Senate will have two months to consider a proposed calendar and must approve the proposed calendar before it is adopted.
- Once the calendar is approved the administration will report to all faculty the instructional hours per credit for MWF classes and the instructional hours for TTh classes.

Guidelines:

- When developing a calendar the target is to achieve 45 instructional hours (50 minutes) per semester for 3-credit classes. Finals are included in the 45 hours.
- At minimum there are two business days between when finals end and grades are due. (For example, if finals end on Friday, grades can't be due before the following Tuesday). Grades must be due before the day of Christmas Eve.
- The Senate anticipates custom calendars for shared courses in graduate programs.

The first time the committee met, they discussed the number of weeks in a semester but found instructional hours to be a better measure due to the number of holidays (for example the fall semester has 5 holidays). Some expected ABET to have guidelines about the number of instructional hours expected. Subsequent to the development of the above recommendations/guidelines the subcommittee discovered that ABET is silent on the number of instructional hours needed. The subcommittee's guideline of 45

instructional days per 3-credit classes supports Tech's current calendar of 17 weeks (16 weeks of instruction and a week of finals).

In response to the subcommittee recommendation, it was reported that both MSU and UM have 43 instructional hours (41 plus a 2-hour final) in the fall and 44 instructional hours (42 plus a 2-hour final) in the spring.

Comments/discussion:

- Tech should not aspire to be like UM and MSU, but rather compare themselves with more "peer" schools.
- It's difficult to cover the material that needs to be covered in fewer days.
- Tech is part of the Montana University system and our calendar should reflect that.
- Recollection that the Board of Regents dictated a common calendar for the entire Montana University System.
- Tech faculty members are working longer for less money. If Tech keeps being asked to do more and more there can be push back.
- Importance of a longer winter break to do research.
- Importance of making the calendar fit into our contract dates.
- A longer semester makes it difficult for nursing students to complete exams and paperwork in time for the spring semester.
- Having a longer or a shorter semester is a "double edged sword".

Action item: Senators were asked to discuss the subcommittee recommendations and guidelines with their constituents. In addition to the recommendations/guidelines as a whole, senators were asked to discuss the number of instructional days that should be aimed for in developing a calendar. This topic will be further discussed at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

3. TECHXPO – May 1, 2012 is the date that the Administration has proposed for the next TECHXPO; does the Senate endorse the selection of the date and should the TECHXPO date be designated as a "non-instructional day?"

Comments/discussion:

- If TECHXPO is held on a non-instructional day some students are less likely to attend.
- If TECHXPO is on an instructional day students may not attend because they don't want to miss class.
- Some nursing classes are having clinicals then and don't want to lose a day to TECHXPO, while other clinicals can be held even if the day is non-instructional.
- There are fewer MWF classes than TR classes, so it would be better to hold this on a Tuesday or Thursday.

- Wednesday was chosen to make it less likely that students will take a long weekend (assuming that TECHXPO will be a non-instructional day).
- Please decide this before the semester starts so that we can set our syllabi accordingly.

Action item: Senators were requested to poll their constituents:

1. Should TECHXPO be held on an instructional or a non-instructional day?
2. Should TECHXPO be moved from May 1st, Wednesday, to a Tuesday or Thursday?

Senators were asked to return their findings to the Senate Chair, who will include this topic on the survey Monkey ballot.

4. Montana Tech web page – Amanda Badovinac has agreed to attend and address Senate questions

Amanda reported that Tech is in the process of replacing the web master who left August 15th. The job will continue to be posted until filled.

She also reported that the Web Guidance Committee met a couple weeks ago and a policy is being developed on granting web access. It is expected that web access will be granted to a limited number of administrator associates and/or department representatives. Web access will be granted based on training and a person's desire to have access.

Those granted access with web access will be allowed to make changes directly on the site and send those changes to a queue. Amanda's office will then do the actual publishing. Senators emphasized the importance of being able to update and publish their sites themselves. Amanda stated that, if this is so, her office may be willing to allow direct access.

Amanda stated that the new web access policy will be developed in the "short term". It was decided that Amanda will attend the Faculty Senate meeting next month and hopefully present the policy proposed by her office and the Web Guidance Committee.

5. Proposed Policy for Compensation of Academic Faculty Engaged in Research – shall the Senate forward the existing list of comments and edits to the Administration?

It was moved and seconded that this be handled via a Monkey Survey.

Action item: Jerry will create a survey, administered via Monkey Survey, so senators can decide whether the edits on the Proposed Policy for Compensation of Academic Faculty

Engaged in Research, along with the attached file, are sent to the administration as recommendations from the Faculty Senate.

6. Honorary Distinguished Professor and Distinguished Scholar designations – shall the Senate make 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?

There is no pressing deadline on these designations. This topic will be included as a discussion item at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

New Business

1. Faculty concerns and issues – no new concerns or issues were voiced.
2. Other new business items – none.

In an attempt to facilitate open discussion among the senators on Agenda items 1 and 2, the Senate Officers decided to conduct the first half of the meeting as a closed meeting. Unfortunately, Provost Doug Abbott had not seen the paragraph in the Chair's e-mail that announced this intention. Provost Abbott honored the Senate's request under protest and requested that the minutes reflect his feeling that the decision is controversial. He feels that his attendance at the Faculty Senate meetings is important because simply reading the minutes doesn't reflect the flavor of the discussion. The closed meeting was held in accordance with the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate Article VI. Section 2, which states "A Special closed meeting of the Faculty Senate may be called at a designated time by the officers of the Faculty Senate or by a petition signed by one-third membership of the Faculty Senate, or by a petition of ten percent of the total membership of the faculty." We regret any misunderstandings that this caused.

Confirm the next Senate meeting will take place 7:00-8:00 am on Thursday, October 25, 2012.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:05 a.m.