

Montana Tech Faculty Senate
Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2026 • HPER 138 • 9:00 a.m.

Attendees

Senators in attendance included Scott Risser, Janet Cornish, Scott Juskiewicz, Sudhakar Vadiraja, Foued Badrouchi, Charie Faught, Atish Mitra, Doug Galarus, Chris Gammons, David Gilkey, Matt Egloff, Andrew Traut, Glen Southergill, Sebastian Perduss, Alan English, Gary Wyss, Jason Herndon and Naim Rashid. Guests attending the meeting included Chancellor Johnny MacLean; Provost Tim Elgren; Glen Shaw, Geological Engineering; Katie Hailer, Vice Chancellor for Research/Dean of the Graduate School; Jack Skinner, Lance College of Mines and Engineering (LCME); Tammy Burke, Dean, Highlands College; Joe Cooper, Student Affairs; Jerry Downey, M&ME Department Head; Scott Rosenthal, Mining Engineering; Nathan Huft, Mechanical Engineering; Carissa Johnson, Trio; and John LaFave, MBMG.

- I. **Welcome and Minutes** – The meeting commenced at 9:00 a.m. and a quorum was established. Senator Southergill moved, and Senator Perduss seconded a motion to adopt the minutes of January 30th, 2026. The motion carried.
- II. **Curriculum Review Committee** – The CRC has presented the following programs to the Senate for its consideration.
 - a. LCME – DPA Certificate in Mineral Processing and related courses
 - b. HC – Construction Technology CAS and AAS
 - c. LCME – DPA Certificate in Production Geology (with amendment)
 - d. LCME – M.S. in Mechanical Engineering and related course
 - e. LCME – M.S. in Civil Engineering
 - f. Broadband Technology CAS and CTS credentialsItem a. was a carryover from the January 30th, 2026 Senate Faculty meeting, pending a review by the entire M&ME Department. The Department has reviewed the program and sent it back to the Senate for its approval. Senator Egloff moved, and Senator Southergill seconded a motion to approve the six programs put forth by the CRC. The motion carried.
- III. **Emeriti Nominations** – John LaFave of the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology presented a proposal to award Mike Stickney Emeritus status. Senator Mitra moved, and Senator Cornish seconded a motion to award Emeritus status to Mike Stickney. The motion carried. Scott Rosenthal of the Mining Engineering Department presented a proposal to award Courtney Young Emeritus status. Scott Rosenthal moved, and Senator Egloff seconded a motion to award Emeritus Status to Courtney Young. The motion carried.
- IV. **Member Nominations for Employee Relations Committee (ERC)** – The ERC, which represents faculty and staff at Montana Tech, is down one faculty member with the resignation of Melissa Holmes. Current faculty members include Senators Scott Juskiewicz, Courtney Young and Matt Egloff. An additional faculty member is needed. Senator Southergill moved, and Senator Egloff seconded a motion to move this item to our next meeting after senators have an opportunity to bring this item back to their departments. The motion carried.

- V. **National First-Generation College Student Day** – Carissa Johnson, Director of the TRIO Student Support Services program at Montana Tech announced the annual leadership conference for Trio programs across the country. The TRIO program assists STEM students who are first generation college students, face disabilities and/or are low income. The program serves approximately 120 students each year, and the staff meets with each student at least once a month. Among its various programs, the TRIO staff works directly with TRIO nursing students and assigns mentors to assist them. The TRIO program operates with grant funding and has the following grant-related goals:
- 96 percent of students in the program must remain in good standing.
 - 74 percent of students must persist from one year to the next.
 - Students must graduate in a timely manner.

The program nation-wide works with students beginning in sixth grade through doctoral programs. Faculty at Montana Tech can recommend students for the program. If students don't specifically qualify for the TRIO program, Clarissa will work to find resources to assist them. Chancellor Maclean urged senators to bring this information back to their departments so that students can get critical referrals.

- VI. **Professional Policy** – Senator Gilkey explained that the Labor Relations Committee (LRC), which includes Senators Faught, Perduss and Gilkey, as well as Stella Capoccia, is in the initial stages of drafting a policy. The draft put forth by the Employee Relations Committee (ERC) is just a suggested starting point and at this time, no particular policy has been officially drafted. The LRC plans to review professional policy documents from other institutions. There is a growing trend across the country to enact such policies. Senator Faught pointed out that currently we have no guidance for how to respond to violations of civil rights and Title IX regulations, even though we receive training on problems such as micro-aggressions. Senator Gilkey countered that it might be difficult to clearly discern when micro-aggressions occur. Senator Perduss suggested that the effort might be driven by the overall lack of a "code of conduct". Senator Faught noted that the Human Resources Department needs more guidance – what language are we missing?

Senator Southergill provided the following comments from the Montana Tech Writing Program, in response to the ERC draft:

- "The section on appearance and presentation is particularly concerning since it may preference homogenization over diversity and ultimately lead to discrimination.
- What will the professionalism statements will be used for, and who will decide what is acceptable versus unacceptable and by what metrics?
- Are actions taken into account as well as words when considering who is behaving professionally and equitably versus who is not? How is behavior documented, and will the professionalism statements lead to a surveillance campus culture?
- Is the whole campus going to be held to the same standard(s), or are the policies directed at staff and faculty?
- Some of the statement language seems to be AI generated. Does it truly reflect the needs of our campuses?
- As professionals--folks who hold certain skillsets and make a living by using them--we are obliged to uphold standards of behavior to remain in employ. The professionalism statements seem largely redundant in view of that definition.

- What role does Faculty Senate play in reviewing and adopting these policies? Will the policies also be distributed to everyone on both campuses for further review and consideration?”

Senator Perduss emphasized that this is just a starting point. We are having a conversation about how to proceed. Chancellor Maclean’s culture statement may be a good place to start. Provost Elgren echoed Senator Perduss and noted that the administration was looking for general guidance, rather than a specific policy. Senator Gilkey reiterated that the LRC will take the lead and will not use the draft put forth by the ERC.

VII. Course Evaluation Sub-Committee – Senator Risser explained that Senators Southergill, Badrouchi, and Young and Professor Lance Revenaugh are working on evaluating various course evaluation products and vendors. The criteria for selection includes ADA compliance and the ability to integrate with Canvas. Senator Egloff reminded the Senate that there had been an earlier effort to reduce the number of questions on the evaluations to increase response rates, while not sacrificing substance. He wondered what the status of that effort might be, given that we might want to refine the questions before seeking a vendor.

Senator Risser explained that we can work with the vendor to finalize the questions, but accessibility and on-line functionality were critically needed as soon as possible and that a decision had to be made by February 23, 2026. Senator Gilkey asked if we might have access to standardized questions. Senator Badrouchi corrected item c. on the list of vendors on the agenda. It should be Anthology, not CampusLab. Senator Badrouchi also pointed out that we can obtain great professional help from the vendors on formulating questions.

The working group is seeking faculty input. Senator Southergill sent the following email to campus to this end:

“Each vendor has provided a demonstration as well as additional information. After your review, *please complete this survey by February 23rd* to provide feedback:
https://montanatech.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6Mdl8zIL2vk1VGK

Anthology- Anthology Evaluate is a SaaS-based higher-ed evaluation platform with strong accessibility compliance, Canvas LTI integration, centralized and departmental administrative controls, flexible mid-semester and end-of-term evaluation workflows, and robust reporting with trend analysis. The system emphasizes automation of administrative tasks while maintaining institutional data ownership and security. Demo recording: [Evaluate Demo - Montana Tech-20260209_090143-Meeting Recording.mp4](#)

Qualtrics- Their survey product is presently used by faculty and staff at Tech. Their course evaluation product integrates completely into Canvas and can be part of a larger suite of products. You can review the demonstration here: [Qualtrics Course Evaluation Demo - Montana Tech.mp4](#) You will need to sign into the Onedrive. Nick’s email is: Nick Jensen nickjensen@qualtrics.com if you have questions. Alternative link: [Qualtrics Course Evaluation Demo - Montana Tech.mp4](#)

Watermark- This product integrates completely into Canvas and can be part of a larger suite of products. You can review the demonstration here: <https://watermarkinsights.teamaligned.com/room/6973e20bbdced2008f36c0bf/overview?src=sps§ion=6973e20bbdced2008f36c19e&avk=6fd56029c9a6> under the “Demonstration Recording & Slide Deck.” You will need to select “Watermark’s Course Evaluations & Surveys Demo” and the video will appear to the left. It may ask you for an e-mail upon entry; please use your @mtech.edu e-mail.

Lastly, here are a few resources about course evaluations (<https://www.watermarkinsights.com/learn/ebook/the-complete-guide-to-course-evaluations/>) and research (<https://www.ideaedu.org/research-resources/idea-research-digest/>).

VIII. **For the Good of the Order** - Senator Southergill noted that there was an excellent display on Montana Tech’s history at the Library. Senator Risser noted that at our next meeting we would discuss next year’s calendar for the Senate and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) Termination for Cause policy. Senator Herndon moved, and Senator Vadiraja seconded a motion to adjourn at 9:55 a.m.