

MONTANA TECH FACULTY SENATE

Friday, November 16, 2007

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Members present: Jerry Downey, Lance Edwards, Betsy Garlish, Rod James, John Nugent, Mark Sholes (Chair), Kirk Waren

Members absent: Gretchen Geller, Rich McNearny, Miriam Young

Attending without vote: None

Business

- We did not approve any minutes this meeting. Next meeting, perhaps the minutes of the October 19th, November 2nd, and this meeting can be discussed.

Old Business

1. **Montana Tech Standards for hiring, promotion, and tenure within each department**

- Mark Sholes again updated members present of the outcome of the Faculty Senate vote regarding tenure policy on October 19th, which was to recommend **for** an up or out policy. The recommendation, as approved, appears in the minutes of the October 19th meeting. There was some discussion of how this might affect union contract negotiations. No action was taken, as the Faculty Senate generally felt that the university has a right to set forth policies.

2. **Timing of registration of students vs. availability of term grades to determine eligibility.**

- We discussed numerous aspects of this problem. Some members felt that certain items might be handled as an automatic override, such as, if a student is currently enrolled in one course in a series, they might be automatically eligible to enroll in the next course in the series. So, the registration software would essentially extend the benefit of the doubt that the student will meet the minimum grade (or eligibility) needed to proceed to the next course, and allow the student to register for the next course. Then, later after grades come out they could be automatically dropped if the eligibility is not met. Virtually all members of the Faculty Senate felt there is a need to have an advisor override function, and that it would be good to have a name associated with the override, so that if problems arise, they can be discussed and avoided in the future.
- We need to know more about how the registration process works and the capabilities of the software or system. Therefore, the Faculty Senate would like to extend an invitation to the Registrar and Doug Abbott to come to the next Faculty Senate meeting they can present their perspective, educate us on the system's capabilities and limitations, and discuss what actions might be workable.

3. **Establishing a Sunshine Fund**

- After some discussion, Lance Edward's moved to create a Faculty Senate Sunshine Fund, for the purposes of offering condolences for faculty and staff having suffered any type of problem or loss that seems appropriate, through medium such as cards, flowers, etc. John Nugent seconded the motion. The motion passed by a majority vote with all members present except Mark Sholes, Chair, and Kirk Waren having voted against it. Lance Edwards will be working with the Montana Tech Foundation to set up an account to put money in.

4. **The faculty should be emailed to obtain a vote on Miriam Young's continued membership on the faculty senate.**

- This item was not discussed.

5. **The faculty senate representatives for other committees:**

- Bookstore Advisory Board – **Vacant**

6. **Climate Change Accord**

The Faculty Senate discussed this item and considered some of its implications. Numerous members felt that while the American College and University Presidents Climate Change Commitment may have some worthy goals, it also sets forth definite mandates that would require considerable time and effort from some portion of the faculty, and could result in rigid policies that could unduly restrict Montana Tech's actions, financial activities, and curriculum. We discussed the fact that Montana Tech can pursue such matters on its own accord, without signing an agreement and making commitments to an outside entity. We agree with Chancellor Frank Gilmore's concerns about our ability to meet such mandates within existing budgets. Faculty Senate Chair Mark Sholes moved to recommend that Montana Tech does not sign the accord, Rod James seconded, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

7. **Potential honorary doctorate degree**

This item was not discussed. Doug Abbott stated after reviewing the draft minutes that information was sent to Mark Sholes before the November 16th meeting, and provided me with a copy of the email message from November 2. This information has been emailed to the Faculty Senate, and will be brought to the next meeting.

New Business

None

The Senate adjourned at 12:55 PM.

NEXT MEETING: November 30, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

Kirk Waren
Secretary