

FACULTY SENATE
October 8, 2008
REID HALL 101
4:10 PM – 5:00 PM
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY-BOZEMAN, MONTANA
Minutes

Members Present: Cherry, Eitle, Fischer, Fields, Gee, Jacobsen, Lansverk, Lei, Livingston, Lynch, Marshall for D. Weaver, Larson, C. McClure, Mokwa, Neumeier, Prawdzienski, Snider for Becker, Taylor, Versaevel, Wojtowicz, Zhu

Members Absent: Amin, Bangert, Bennett, Catoira, Fleck, Gerlach, HHD, Igo, Jackson, Jacobs, Maskiell, Political Science, Sowell, Varricchio, Watson, T. Weaver, Wisner

Others Present: Joseph Fedock, Aleks Rebane (Physics)

Chair Wes Lynch called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM. A quorum was present. The minutes of September 24, 2008 and October 1, 2008 were unanimously approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - Chair Lynch

- Faculty and Professional representatives are invited to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting where Tom McCoy will be discussing F&A redistribution, October 9, 2008, Reid Hall room 415, 11:00 AM-noon.
- Paul Bogumill will visit Faculty Senate to discuss the MUS Benefits Package, October 15, 2008: Specific questions for Mr. Bogumill should be send to Chair Lynch: wlynch@montana.edu
- To RSVP for the holiday party, please click on the link:
<http://www2/facultycouncil/2008-2009%20FACULTY%20HOLIDAY%20PARTY.pdf>
- The Retirement Assistance website is now available at:
<http://www.montana.edu/retired/RetirementAssistance&ExitInterviewProcess3.html>
- Geoff Gamble met with shared governance leaders (ASMSU, Professional, Faculty Senate and Staff Senate) on October 2, 2008 to discuss the formal recognition of the Association of Shared Governance Leaders (ASGL) document, which describes the entity. ASGL would like the document to exist in perpetuity and be permanently chronicled. ASGL is an organization that openly discusses issues and concerns and brings them forward to administration. It is not a decision-making body; rather, it is a vehicle of communication among constituents. The ASGL document would be referenced on the President's Shared Governance website with a link to all other constituent websites, where it would be placed in the respective bylaws. Faculty Affairs will discuss it before bringing the finalized document to Faculty Senate for approval.
- Projected \$1M budget shortfall for 2009 – One major reason for the projected shortfall in the \$130 million budget is that tuition fell \$437,000 short of projections. MSU-Bozeman has a record fall enrollment of 12,369 students, nearly 200 more than last year, yet many of those students attend part-time. When converted to the full-time equivalent, the number used to determine budgets, MSU's enrollment increased by only 40 students, from 10,292 to 10,332. Students are taking fewer courses, either because they have to work more to earn money to get through college, or they are taking on-line classes from other universities. Another reason for the budget shortfall is that MSU departments have committed to spending \$525,000 more than budgeted on employee benefits. Many departments, struggling to hire employees when salaries are low, have found ways to embellish jobs by offering benefits. Previously, employees had to be ¾ time to receive benefits; employees working at least half-time are now eligible for benefits. From now on, MSU will have to take a stricter approach and require that every time \$1 is added for salaries, there must be 30 cents added to the pool that pays benefits. Individual departments have been responsible for keeping their salaries within budget, but not benefits, which have been handled at the central offices and that may have to change. A change in allocation of graduate fee waivers, as Graduate Studies strives to compete with other universities for bright grad students, has also contributed to the budget shortfall.

P&T IMPLEMENTATION – Chair Taylor

- A P&T Implementation executive summary highlighting the most recent action, was distributed to FS members.
- History – In 2005, a task force was formed to address various aspects of MSU’s promotion and tenure policies, procedures, criteria and standards; Robert Rydell chaired the committee, and their overall findings were that our P&T process was in good standing. There were, however, three distinct areas identified by the Implementation Committee as being most important for further development and general recommendations were provided by the Implementation Committee in the areas of:
 - Re-defining the terms associated with the evaluative levels of faculty performance as presently stated in Faculty Handbook language. Those present levels of performance are entitled “*effectiveness*,” “*promise/potential for excellence*” and “*excellence*.”
 - Explication of the external review process, including number and type of external reviewers, solicitation letter to reviewers, and expectations for content of external reviews.
 - Clarity in the nature of documentation associated with the presently-used term “*In-Depth Assessment of Teaching*”, and identification of the respective roles of the candidate and reviewing entities in the assessment of teaching.
- Chair Lynch, a member of the external review group, discussed proposed changes in the external review process. It is proposed that P&T committees should solicit five (5) external review letters. Faculty believe the narrowness of some disciplines may make such a quantitative request difficult. A compromise was struck that if fewer than five letters were available, the committee would have to explain why or provide justification for less. The three (3) present levels of performance are entitled “*effectiveness*,” “*promise/potential for excellence*” and “*excellence*.” The term “*promise/potential for excellence*” was judged to be too ambiguous and subject to mis-interpretation and is proposed to be eliminated. The term “*accomplishment*” is the proposed newly defined level of faculty performance. Additionally, definitions for “*accomplishment*” and “*excellence*” for faculty performance in the categories of research/creative activity and teaching have been carefully worded to provide comparable language, where appropriate, for these two categories. In cases where the individual has chosen “*accomplishment*” or “*excellence*,” in teaching, at least three (3) of the external review letters should comment on individual’s effectiveness in research. If the faculty member comes up under teaching “*accomplishment*” or “*excellence*,” three (3) external letters need to address teaching and documentation (Chair Taylor and Chair-elect Lansverk are working on defining the type of documentation.) of teaching “*accomplishment*” or “*excellence*” will accompany solicitation letters. The procedures for selecting external peer reviewers, soliciting letters, and documenting the external review process should be objective and transparent to review committee members at subsequent levels of administrative review. The following steps, typically carried out by the chair of the primary review committee, are intended to assure transparency:
 - Solicit names of potential reviewers from the candidate;
 - Solicit the names of potential reviewers from members of the primary (Departmental or College) P&T review committee;
 - Select a list of names of potential reviewers with at least 50% of names coming from the primary review committee’s list;
 - Make initial contact (e.g., via e-mail) with potential reviewers in order to determine their willingness to provide a timely review letter (e.g., see sample solicitation email);
 - Send a formal letter of solicitation containing essential elements and enclosures (e.g., see sample solicitation letter);
 - Upon receipt of reviewer letters, complete the cover sheet for the external reviewer tab of candidates dossier (see cover sheet);
 - Once all letters are received, insert the completed cover sheet, copies of solicitation letters and e-mails, and all reviewer letters into the dossier.
- Suggested sample letters include:
 - Solicitation email (or other initial contact) to external evaluators requesting review of candidates for tenure and/or promotion to associate or full professor;
 - Sample solicitation letter to external evaluators requesting review of candidates for tenure and/or promotion to associate or full professor (Note: This letter assumes prior contact with the evaluator and his/her tentative agreement to participate in the review (see sample

solicitation email). Significant deviations from this sample letter must be approved by the Dean.)

- Committee members believe that the more uniform the process for obtaining solicitation letters, the more likely the process will be accepted at subsequent levels of review.
- The caveat to the confidentiality of letters from reviewers is that they would no longer be confidential, in the case of a grievance proceeding.
- The reviewer must give a statement about their relationship to the candidate and include a vitae.
- One of the guiding principles of this task force was a perception that the teaching track was not regularized and there was no systematic methodology to guarantee the same amount of rigor in the review process as with research. Therefore, the Implementation Committee is striving to make it clearer and substantive.
- Chair Lynch would like FS members to provide input about the Implementation Committee recommendations for discussion at the October 22, 2008 FS meeting. Further documentation will be posted soon on the FS website.

TRANSFER INITIATIVES – Chair Lynch

- The meeting at MSU with the FLOCs and Commissioner Stearns revealed many concerns by faculty.
- The deadlines remain the same. By the end of October all disciplines will submit student learning outcome statements for all courses that are equivalent across the MUS.

FACULTY AFFAIRS – Marvin Lansverk

- Who May Become a PI? and the Emeritus policy → motion for final approval → seconded → unanimously approved.
- Emeritus Policy → motion for approval → seconded → unanimously approved.
- The policies will be sent to President Gamble for final approval.

The Faculty Senate meeting ended at 5:00 PM, as there was no further business.

Signature

Wes Lynch, Chair

Signature

Gale R. Gough, Secretary