

PROFESSIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Thursday, February 14, 2008
Reid Hall Room 415
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Members Present: Matt Rognlie, Julie Pester, Sheryl Dettmann, Betsey Pitts, Patty Inskeep, Sarah Miller for Doralyn Rossmann, Nancy Blake, Rita Rozier

Members Absent: Jeff Butler, Stacey Scott

Others present: Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Joe Fedock

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM by Chair Matt Rognlie. A quorum was present.

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION – Joe Fedock

- MSU will undergo a comprehensive evaluation for the renewal of our institutional accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). Over the next 18 months, MSU will be engaged in the development of a comprehensive self-study. This self-study is intended to be a thoughtful and analytical appraisal of MSU's strengths, weaknesses, and achievements relative to the nine (9) standards of accreditation and related policies.
- Regional accreditation of postsecondary institutions is a voluntary, non-governmental, self-regulatory process of quality assurance and institutional improvement. It recognizes higher education institutions for performance, integrity, and quality to merit the confidence of the educational community and the public. Accreditation by a postsecondary regional accrediting agency also qualifies institutions and enrolled students for access to federal funds to support teaching, research, and service as well as federal student financial aid.
- The self-study process and site visit are intended to be broad-based endeavors that encompass all constituencies of MSU. Many MSU employees will be asked to serve in leadership roles in services to the institution to prepare for this visit and/or provide information as part of the self-study.
- A steering committee has been formed to address the nine standards of the accreditation of study (educational programs, faculty, students, governance and administration, finance, fiscal resources, institutional integrity, etc.) by developing surveys, gathering data and analyzing it. The final report will be useful for strategic planning for the institution.
- The final outcome of the accreditation is the result of a decision from a governing board. Additional information may be requested, and it has been Vice Provost Fedock's experience that student outcomes are an area where more data is always needed. While many departments have their own accrediting bodies, those accreditation standards do not stand alone; rather, they are components of the whole accreditation process.
- Now that MSU is a Carnegie class university, we must demonstrate what measures we are implementing to move in that classification direction.
- Athletics is also included in the accreditation, and many of the NCAA certification criteria will be included in the final report. .
- There are six separate national accrediting bodies that are not controlled by the federal government. The feds do, however, recognize accreditation and predicate federal funding on whether we are accredited or not.
- Each MSU campus must go through their own accreditation.
- Some of the previous years' concerns were online access of courses to students, and bringing clarity to authority responsibility relationship amongst the campuses and its governing entity, the BOR.
- A union presence on campus does not change the standards by which the institution is judged.
- Chair Rognlie is participating in the shared governance subcommittee, representing Professional Council.

SHARED GOVERNANCE – Julie Pester

- Cards have been mailed to faculty by the union. Those interested in voting to have a union presence on MSU campus have been requested to return the card. Data shows that MSU faculty receives better pay raises without the union. There has been no move to unionize professional employees. Adjunct faculty .5 FTE or greater may be included in the fold of the union. Their voting rights may be negated, however, at the COHE level (as it was in 1989). Research faculty are not included. ASMSU was intrigued by the written contract policy on grievance presented by union members at Faculty Senate.

- Who May Become a PI? – While the policy does not exclude professionals, if a professional position requires that the employee is applying for grants, it is cumbersome that they must ask permission each and every time they apply.
- MSU TODAY is one of the only methods for advertising MSU policies.
- Access to the holdback pool will be predicated on getting professional employee reviews in by April 15, 2008.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Chair Rognlie

- Suzi Taylor from the BTC would like help from PC (one or two volunteers) on crafting and interpreting results of a survey that would be sent to the professional employees on what training/development they desire.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM, as there was no other business.

Signature

Matt Rognlie
Chair, Professional Council

Signature

Gale Gough
Secretary, Professional Council