

**PROFESSIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
WEDNESDAY February 11, 2009
SUB ROOM 232
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM**

Members Present: All PC members except: Tricia Cook for Stacey Scott, John Usher of the Burns Technology Center was present for Julie Tatarka while she is on maternity leave.

Others Present: Dave Dooley, Pat Lane, Diane Eagleson, Toni Lee

Dave Dooley, Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs

- The provost's responsibilities include overseeing all academic units, with assistance from other vice provosts/directors, e.g., Doug Steele, Vice Provost and Director of Extension.
- Provost Dooley began his academic career in a small college in another state and became the interim provost at MSU at the behest of former President Michael Malone.
- Understanding faculty and the university culture, which values scholarship and teaching, encompasses all other facets of the provost's job. Private sector candidates have been brought in as administrators at other colleges and, because they lack the insight into university culture, have not fared well.
- Hiring a provost is done via a private board of trustees of the university who hold property title and the fiduciary responsibility of the institute. There were 15 members on Provost Dooley's search committee and, it was comprised of one person from each college/department, as well as from other elements of the university. The committee members met, periodically, with other campus groups (students, faculty, classified employees, professional) and those discussion results were reported back to the search committee. It was noted that the search committee did not rank the candidates; rather they presented strengths and weaknesses of each.
- Discussion ensued:
 - How does the COHE fit in?
 - The Commissioner of Higher Education is likened to the CAO for the BOR, and their role is predicated on the BOR's philosophy at the time.
 - Status of the United Arab Emirates
 - Because of the current economic crisis, the project has been placed on hold. The country is still interested in what MSU has to offer, however.
 - Elected vs. appointed advantages to the BOR
 - Because the BOR are appointed by the governor, they are more accountable to the people of Montana. Since the Montana Constitution was revised in the 70's, the governor appoints each BOR member for 7 years. Additionally, they are keen to represent the interests of those in the specific districts of which they are from.
 - If the BOR were elected they might run on particular platforms and make promises they might not be able to make.
 - The legislature is only allowed to give the BOR a lump sum budget amount to be dispersed to the MUS. They (legislature and governor) do not delegate to specific programs within the university system and cannot express disapproval of the funding of specific programs. The governor, however, may cut or veto the budget.
 - To what extent is the university self-reliant and how much do they rely on the budget from the state?
 - MSU spends approximately \$350-\$400M per year. Approximately \$40M comes from the state (or about 37%-39%) and the rest comes from tuition. We are a tuition driven institution. In the 1980's, the state provided 75%-80%. Therefore, we cannot reduce the number of classes but we can redistribute them. For example, if the Ag department has fewer students in a class and the College of Business has an overflow of students on a class, we add another section to the COB and remove a section from the College of Ag.
 - Recruiting and retaining students, therefore, become challenging because you cannot compromise the students' education. Instead, we must always think of how we can help students succeed.

- The structure of higher education needs to change, and we should be thinking about how it might be revamped in these economic times. Universities have been operating on a structure that was first enacted in the 16th century, and it might not be the best structure for the 21st century.
- How might professionals assist in student success?
 - Making the student experience a rewarding one, in whatever way we can, is the key. No matter what the interaction, making it positive will surely make an impact.

Signature

Sheryl Dettmann, Chair of Professional Council

Signature

Gale Gough, Secretary