PROFESSIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
WEDNESDAY March 11, 2009
SUB 230
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

Members Present: Betsey Pitts, Nancy Blake, Stacey Scott, Matt Rognlie, Patty Inskeep, Carolyn Plumb, Nancy Filbin, John Ford for Jeff Butler, John Usher for Julie Tatarka

Announcements

- HR is conducting seminars: a management series and a technical series.
- PC will send out an email reminding professionals of their annual evaluations.
- Patty Inskeep announced that ASMSU elections are taking place next week.
- Chair Dettmann will be attending the BOR meeting in Helena.

Committee Reports

- Shared Governance Meetings
  - ASMSU hired a recycling coordinator for a fixed term – Gretchen Hooker.
  - ASMSU is still working on approving the ASGL document.
  - Faculty are having another union discussion this afternoon in Faculty Senate.
  - During a Staff Senate meeting, President Gamble stated that there will be no parking increase.
- Kathy Tanner, the professional rep on the Benefits Committee, stated that retiree benefits are trying to hold steady. There will be a new pharmacy provider (the decision was made at the state level), there will be small increases to the premiums; Blue Cross managed care plan will have the smallest increase because the state is trying to steer employees to managed care. There is no change to the vision or dental plan. Those employees choosing primary care physician services will pay the most. If you are laid off between September 08 and September 09, there is a governmental plan that will reimburse you up to 65% for COBRA.

Meeting with President Gamble – Chair Dettmann, Chair-elect Pitts

- Currently, the budget projections point to a $5M deficit.
- Donors and donations – Much effort goes into cementing relationships that culminate in donations for the university.
- President Gamble suggested having Craig Roloff attend an ASGL meeting after the BOR meeting to talk about budgets.
- The governor wants to use stimulus money to cap tuition.
- $40M in stimulus money was allocated to Montana for higher education; however, it was then removed from our appropriations and the net gain was 0. President Gamble stated that this is a frequent phenomenon during budgeting and he was not surprised.
- The governor would like to watch research activities on the MSU campus more closely.

Professional Handbook

- It is still not clear what the vision for the handbook should be. Additionally, the interim director of human resources’ position is only temporary and until it is permanent, the handbook is on hold.
  - The permanent job posting will be after the legislative session has concluded.

Professional Council Terms

- One representative, each, from academic, administrative, and student affairs is needed to fill positions on the Professional Council. Gale will send out the “Call for Nominations” announcement at the end of March.
- Nancy Filbin queried whether the chair position should be extended to two years; Matt Rognlie suggested having a Chair and Co-chair.
- Chair Dettmann asked PC members to think about running for Chair-elect.
Professional Council Goals

- Departmental outreach sessions (targeted meetings) will be scheduled before the end of spring semester.
  - Begin by distributing the white paper Matt Rognlie composed for the Leadership meeting in September; discuss ASGL and meetings with President Gamble.
- Communications has improved via MSU TODAY and professional listserv although communicating effectively among professionals is still a conundrum for some PC members. PC members believe that most of what is disseminated to professionals is not “concrete.” Chair-elect Pitts stated that perhaps PC should find out what professionals would like to hear and how PC may be of service (or a resource) to them.
- Stacey Scott believes constituents will ignore email if PC sends too much, too frequently.
- John Usher stated that PC members do not have to be advocates all the time, but providing useful information, such as the professional annual review process, is helpful.

Signature
Sheryl Dettmann, Chair

Signature
Gale Gough, Secretary