Professional Council

June 13, 2012
415 Reid Hall
Montana State University

Present: Adam Edelman, Pat Lane, Betsey Pitts, Carolyn Plumb, Chancey Ringer, Nora Smith, Jeanne Wilkinson

Others present: Chris Fastnow, Donna Negaard

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am. Meeting minutes from 5/16/2012 were approved.

Professional Council Chair-elect Nominations - Wilkinson

- Wilkinson will email a call for nominations to council members next week with the intent of holding elections and having a chair-elect in place by the next PC meeting on July 18. Some obligations of the chair-elect include, but are not limited to, attending meetings in the chair’s stead due to non-availability; collaborating with the chair on PC issues and strategies; attending BoR meeting with the chair; and, representing PC on and off campus.

BoR - Wilkinson

- Wilkinson attended the BoR in Havre and met with MUSSA, whose top priority is overhauling the classified pay plan. While legislators may grant the requested pay raise/pay plan, funding availability remains key. Professional Council will continue to work closely with MUSSA and may attend a MUSSA retreat later in the summer.
- Smith announced that Regent Buchanan stepped down as Vice Chair of the BoR.

Chris Fastnow, Director of Planning & Analysis – Strategic Plan

- The Strategic Plan (SP) document incorporates MSU’s Northwestern accreditation core themes, philosophies that underlie all its goal areas: learning, discovery, engagement.
- Unique to this SP is the fourth goal, integration, which endeavors to assimilate the other goals of learning, discovery, and engagement.
- The SP document will be revised in June and submitted to the University Council for adoption in September.
- SP comments may be submitted by going to their web site: http://www.montana.edu/opa/coms/councils/pcouncil/spc/draftstratplan/index.php
- The SP should articulate goals that are achievable. Salary issues, however, are challenging.
- Each goal area begins with a statement and is followed by a set of goals, objectives and metrics (direct and measureable) under the objectives.
- Access and Stewardship (HR, physical resources, environmental/natural resources) are the underpinnings of the goals.
- The “Engagement” goal is being refined to speak to how the endeavors will become available to not only students, but all employees. The intent is for MSU to become a good partner and connect employees to the community. Questions about how employee engagement might be quantified were discussed - How would those activities be tracked? Would they be part of the annual performance review? Reporting form? Is this something that MSU wants to invest in, is it desirable, implementable? Students have a curricular
component for engagement and, as such, they are able to accomplish this goal. Employee implementation, on the other hand, might be more challenging. One might ask the question of employees, “What will you do as an engagement activity, now that it is required?” Edelman stated that his group thought about conducting a survey to ask, specifically, what employees are already doing in this area.

- Each unit (department) will be responsible for figuring out how to address and implement each component of the SP to their environment.
- The SP will be displayed on the website with a “splash” page introducing the document with the diagram, the three pillars of the land grant mission, prominently displayed. Paper versions for distribution will also be available. Fastnow is open to other ideas for disseminating the SP. PC members suggested an open forum, apprising employees that there are processes in the document that intimately involve them, conducting a passive program whereby a single metric from the SP would be presented in a specific place on campus, to spark interest and comment.

Announcements – Wilkinson

- Wilkinson reported that Swanson gave a presentation on the parent/family program.
- Wilkinson reported that University Council is coalescing with policy. Information items from the most recent meeting included results from the two OpenMSU (Nic Ward) surveys. A subcommittee will be formed to develop recommendations and then distributed to the MSU population for input. Joe Thiel is the student BoR rep for the second time.
- The new CIO for ITC has been hired and will begin June 25.
- Smith is on the Library Dean Search Committee and reported that interviews have commenced.
- Orientation shows that MSU might set another record with 2800 incoming freshmen. Out-of-state students are up 200; in-state are down 20, continuing to attest that Montana high school grads are diminishing.

As there was no other business, the meeting ended at 11:00 am.

Gale R. Gough
Administrative Associate
Professional Council