Staff Senate Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 19, 2014  
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.  
SUB 168

Staff, Joan Ford, was present.

I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order by chair, Shana Wold. Guests present were President Cruzado, Lisa Pino, and Nicole Morgan.

II. Approval of Minutes. Minutes of February 19, 2014 were approved with corrections.

III. Guest Speaker – President Cruzado thanked the classified staff for their incredible service and gave an overview of accomplishments made during her tenure here. She began by talking about the Strategic Plan as a plan to bring people together, to envision the present and future, and to have a road map in front of us. MSU is starting to see progress first by growth of the institution and second to move toward an institution of abundance and prosperity by encouraging more individuals to come to MSU and doing a better job at retaining the students we have and further that we graduated a larger percentage of those students. She asked for classified staff help since classified staff interacts with students daily to encourage and help students feel connected with their University.

Early on she also wanted to hear about job satisfaction and heard a number of themes such as departments being compartmentalized; not working together; one individual provided three to five crucial tasks for one department; there was no specialization and in general a low morale problem. The OpenMSU project asked what we can do that makes our jobs better, faster, more efficiently. The project identified some low hanging fruit to work on and we should start see some of those results. Also identified enhancing a culture of service excellence and brought in a consultant from Disney to help guide this change.

Finally, she noted that MSU has been very busy building. In the last few years MSU worked on the End Zone of the Stadium, renovated Langford, Hapner, and Miller, last November received permission for secure bonds to pay for addition and expansion of Food Services and a new Residence Hall which will house 400 freshman, built the new Gallatin Residence, the Jake Jabs College of Business and Entrepreneurship, and then the monumental gift of $50 million from Norm Asbjornson.

Following her overview, questions from the Senators included:

Norm Asbjornson building location? Norm’s dream for this building is that it would be in close proximity to the current College of Engineering. The building will include teaching labs, hands on experience which will happen in a collaborative, team way by removing compartmentalization and include cross-disciplinary ventures. This will allow for lab instructor use from any of the Colleges on campus. There are limited options for location of the building.

A Student Services Building or Center? It is need and a good idea and at the last Legislative session money was being requested to re-model Romney Gym to do so. The University will be pursuing renovation funding again at the next Legislative session. This time the approach will be simpler, stress instructional space, and the word “gym” will be replaced with the word “hall”. But it will allow us to wrap in student serves into the plan.

Vision for Vice President of Student Success? The new hire will be a partner who understands the student services area today and prepare for the future. The candidate should come to the table with a team mentality, providing both oversight and inspiration. She would like to see the perceived barriers between the student
services component and academic side of the house. The position deals with veterans, financial aid, registrar, compliance issues, etc.

Vision for new Chief Information Officer, Jerry Sheehan? The vision for the position has changed from someone who will “rock the boat” to someone who sees the need in IT and has skills to make changes. We needed someone with energy and enthusiasm, we have a plan in front of us and we know the investments in IT are huge.

Governor’s degree-in-four plan and how that meshes with the MSU’s community service and engagement projects? Community service and engagement are important to the overall student experience. It was one of the values identified in the Strategic Plan process that is why we are celebrating the Year of Engagement. When it came to graduating students we were falling behind. MSU noticed that more than 50% of our students were enrolling in 14 credits or less. In the past students we taking 16 to 18 credits and as a society we began telling students to take it easy, enjoy the college experience, it is okay to enroll in 12 credits.

MSU has a large number of PELL recipients which requires students to take a least 12 credit per semester to show academic progress. So students were enrolling in 12 credits which gave them no wiggle room. If the student ran into trouble they would lose their eligibility and need to get a student loan to pay for their education. The benefit of enrolling in more credits is that students tend to get better grades. Another aspect of encouraging students to take more credits focused on student athletes who put in over 40 hours per semester time with their teams and with community service and are enrolling in at least 15 credits. The University is graduating at a 51% rate while athletics are graduating at an 80% rate. Finding balance is going to the challenge for each student. To encourage this change, the University is making it more affordable to take more credits, if you take 12 credits you pay for 12, if you take 15 or 18 or 21 credits you pay for 12. In order to do this we need to look at ways to make better use of our summer and evening times. President Cruzado noted that if she had the money she would have a summer math academy because math is the one area that students struggle with and it compounds as the student progresses through their education.

Increased workloads and the volume of change? The student services side has been undergoing a lot of change like common course numbering, Degree Works, Ad Astra, training for staff and faculty, taking on additional job duties, and so on. Programs like Degree Works and Ad Astra are to improve productivity but there is a learning curve. Instructional space is at a premium with the growth of the University. It is hoped that by fall of 2016 with the opening of the Jabs building we will have access to a large amount of inventory by freeing up classroom spaces in Reid, followed by Romney, followed by Asbjornson. Of concern is workload balance, some areas have placed a huge responsibility on one individual which leaves the possibility for errors.

Participation in Dean’s review process? She has included staff in every search starting with the Provost approximately four years ago. She and Martha agree the inclusion of staff in the process makes sense. However, their first step is to examine the way the process is being handled currently by Faculty Senate before anything can change.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Association of Shared Governance Leaders — did not meet.

B. Budget Council – Dave Court – met 2/25 discussion included interdisciplinary teaching, guest from Facilities Services, and funding model creation.

C. Campus Sustainability Advisory Council – Jill Flores – did not meet. Introduced Nicole Morgan the new Montana Made Coordinator. Spearheading the use of locally grown foods in dining halls.

D. Facilities Services Advisory – Justin van Almelo – did not meet.

E. Fitness Center Oversight Committee & Recreation Sports Advisory Board – Eric Wold – no report.

F. MSU Benefits & IUBC – Ron Brekke, Julie Heard and Kerri Marx – IUBC met 3/4. FY 2015 plan changes include eliminating the Traditional Plan, adding the co-pay amounts into the deductible out of pocket maximums, and include vision exams under medical plan. MUS will increase contribution from $806 to $887. Wellness Program is offering a $250/$500 maximum incentive program to encourage using WellCheck.
G. Outreach & Engagement Council – Diane Dorgan – meets next week.
H. Parking & Transportation Advisory – Jacob Hahn – did not meet.
I. Planning Council – Shana Wold – met 3/18 topics covered were Council Elections, Joint Council Meeting, and BOR Mission Review Process, and Strategic Plan Discovery Metrics
J. President’s Commission on the Status of University Women – Ariel Donohue – met 3/31 sponsoring the Montana Equal Pay Summit on 4/1.
K. Space Management – Bill Van Horn – did not meet.
L. University Facilities Planning – Mandy Hansen – upgrading mobile service antennae, upgrading ventilation in Cheever #215, construction on Haines is for seismic improvement, and new COE will be somewhere in the parking lots south of SUB. New art installations in or around Gaines and Animal Bioscience buildings.
M. University Council – Staff Senate Chair – met on 3/5 topics included new items Posthumous Degree Policy and Revision of Administrative Fee Policy. Old Items voted on included Revision of Discrimination/Title IX Policy and Procedures for All MSU Campuses and Revision of Corresponding Sections of the MSU Student Conduct Code, Revision of Section 800.00 of the Personnel Policy and Procedures: Grievance Procedures, and Common Hour Exam. Informational Item was presentation on the Wheeler Center.
N. Other Committee reports
V. Old Business
   A. Years of Service Ceremony – Shana Wold, Dave Court, and Joan Ford – no update.
   B. Emergency Management Table Top Exercise report – Justin van Almelo – met on 2/21 to run test scenarios to see what would happen if there was a real emergency and make adjustments where necessary.
VI. Information Items
   A. HR Employee Recognition Awards, winners will be announced at a reception on Tuesday 4/8 at 8:30 a.m. in SUB Ballrooms.
   B. Getting to know your fellow Senators – Roy Pino, Facilities Services Custodian, came to American from Peru where he worked for the government then started his own construction and maintenance business. He has been at MSU for almost 5 years. He has a passion for recycling, encouraging Peruvian students to pursue their education at MSU, and women’s soccer.
   C. Due to time constraints – Ron Brekke & Eric Wold will talk at next Staff Senate meeting.
VII. Motion to Adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 16, 2014 at 9:00 a.m., SUB 168