

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: February 6, 2002

PRESENT:	George Benedict	Sandie Rietz
	Audrey ConnerRosberg	Paul Bauer
	George Madden	Keith Edgerton
	Randall Gloege	Alan Davis
	Mark Hardt	Connie Landis
	Matt Redinger	Janie Park (ex-officio)

ABSENT:	Doug Brown – <i>excused</i>	Joe Michels (ex-officio)
	John Cech (ex-officio)	George White (ex-officio)
	Randy Rhine (ex-officio)	Terrie Iverson (ex-officio)
	Dan Zirker (ex-officio)	Curt Kochner (ex-officio)
	Nichole Alley (ex-officio)	

PRESIDING: Keith Edgerton, Chair

Keith Edgerton called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m. on February 6, 2003, in room B28 of the College of Technology.

The January 30, 2002, meeting minutes were approved with a correction.

I. ITEM – ANOTHER READING

Item 41 Resolution from the General Education Committee Concerning Courses.

It was noted that the Gen Ed Committee was unable to meet in the last week, so a vote on this item will be postponed.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. Charge to Academic Computing and Allied Technology Committee Concerning Online Courses & Class Size. Randall Gloege stated that he is on sabbatical this semester, and so Matt Redinger has volunteered to be the chair of the Academic Computing and Allied Technology Committee until Dr. Gloege's sabbatical ends. Alan Davis stated that he would like to be on the committee as well.

It was noted that the Committee should investigate students taking courses for other students, and what security measures are in place to prevent this problem. It was also questioned if online/distance students have access to student support services.

It was stated that the most important questions to ask relate to the quality and integrity of the courses and/or programs offered online.

It was cited that blanket policies concerning the online program will not work, as they will be blindly punitive. It was also noted that a course online and a course in the classroom are two different things, and the syllabi should reflect that difference.

It was noted that perhaps the Academic Computing and Allied Technology Committee could be an oversight committee with an ongoing role, rather than developing a policy that will be out of date very soon.

It was also noted that, if there is no faculty to teach a course, off-campus instructors are hired, and some have no idea what they are doing.

It was stated that some courses, especially upper-division courses, *should not* be offered online, as the courses do not lend themselves to the online format. Such courses would include Interpersonal Communications, which was noted by a student in the Retort as being offered online.

Matt Redinger stated that, acting as chair of the Academic Computing and Allied Technology Committee, he will take the charge to the committee and receive their comments. He will report back to the Senate in a couple of weeks with a final draft.

Keith Edgerton stated that he would like some information to pass on to the Regents at the March Board meeting (3/20-21/03), as he promised them a short report.

It was noted that the online program came about simply because we had the technology to do it. Now the program needs purpose and guidance.

B. Brief General Education Committee Status Report. It was noted that no responses have yet been received on the Gen Ed Matrix. The due date is February 14, 2003.

C. Conditions to Facilitate Campus Success – Keith Edgerton Dr. Edgerton stated that he received Chancellor Sexton's request for these "conditions" after the last Senate meeting in December, and his deadline was December 23, so Dr. Edgerton took it upon himself to write a letter in response. Dr. Edgerton noted that he has not yet heard back from Dr. Sexton about what was done with these responses, which were collected from across campus.

It was noted that the point made in the letter that education should not become more like a business was a good one. State education institutions are not allowed to compete with the private sector, so becoming too business-like only draws trouble.

It was noted that reducing book costs is a good idea. It was cited that if the instructor of a course shrink-wraps two books together for a course, a new ISBN number is created, and the student is not allowed (or gets very little money) to sell back the two books because the ISBN is no longer valid.

It was stated that students get a lot of “run-around” when it comes to paying their bills. The system is very confusing, and there is too much red tape. It was also noted that there are a great deal of unnecessary procedures on campus. Dr. Park, Provost, noted that she and the Senate could get together and go through such processes and perhaps eliminate some unneeded steps.

It was cited that the evaluation system used for faculty is not nearly as far-reaching as the administrative evaluation system, and neither one would be appropriate for the other, if one system were used for all.

It was noted that item number six in the letter (Develop and carry a new institutional culture in which the central question governing the administrative-faculty relationship is recast from the current administrative posture of “Prove to us that you are doing your job” to “What can we do to help you do your job more effectively?”) would be a good discussion item when Chancellor Sexton meets with the Senate.

D. Discussion of Faculty Lines and Hiring Plans & also Budget Update – Janie Park

Dr. Park stated that we will not know the full extent of the budget cuts until May, as they will leave the University System until the very end of the legislative session. She noted that our cuts for the MSU-Billings campus could be 1.7 million dollars to an unbelievable 3.2 million dollars (which is the worst-case-scenario). Some of the Regents are advocating no tuition increases, while others are advocating some kind of tuition increase.

That being said, Dr. Park explained what she has done with the openings the campus has had in the last year. She stated that she adds up all the available dollars to see how many lines she can offer. She then goes to the Deans and asks them to give her a prioritized list of what positions they most want to fill in their colleges. Of course, their lists are much longer than what is available. Then, using an average salary of \$48,000, she and the Deans debate and work the lists into one list for the entire campus, which is also prioritized. Dr. Park then advertises the positions—usually more than there are dollars available because not all searches will be successful. These positions are divided into two tiers: tier one is the most urgently needed positions, and tier two is the positions to fill if there are dollars left from tier one.

Currently, money is available for 13 lines. However, once these positions are filled, they cannot be cut. The more that are filled, the less flexibility we have with places to take cuts. The only other flexible dollars in Academic Affairs are in summer session, intersession, online, lecturers, and part-time faculty. These items may all have to be cut, assuming there is no tuition increase.

The question was then raised as to where we are going in the future.

Dr. Park stated that unless state funding increases, and there is no reason to think it will increase, we will become more and more privatized. Right now it is still worth it to be state-funded, as 50% of our budget comes from the state. Some out-of-state schools are down to 30% and are working toward becoming private.

We will have to become more and more creative to bring in dollars just to maintain our way of life. Even if the entire administration were cut, that would not be enough to balance the budget.

It was noted that a major problem with the state funding is that monies cannot roll over to the next year. If you don't spend it, you lose it, which becomes very wasteful.

Dr. Park noted that the budget decisions made by the legislature will be left until the very last minute, and by then, all our options for cuts will be gone.

It was noted that the faculty need to see this problem as a shared problem, not the administration's problem.

Sandie Rietz stated that the University Budget Committee (UBC) asked her to talk to the Senate before the Committee goes to the faculty about their ideas. The Senate will discuss what to report to the UBC at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

rjrm