

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: October 13, 2016

PRESENT: Jim Barron
Cindy Dell
Susan Gilbertz
Andrew Sullivan
Paul Pope
Greg Dicharry (student)
Barbara Wheeling (ex-officio)
Clifford Coppersmith (ex-officio)

A.J. Otjen
Francisco Saldivar
Heather Thompson
Kelly Shumway
Steve Coffman
Christine Shearer (ex-officio)
Mary Susan Fishbaugh (ex-officio)

ABSENT: Tom Dell*
Joy Honea*
Robert Hoar (ex-officio)*
Terrie Iverson (ex-officio)

Vern Gagnon*
Diane Duin (ex-officio)*
Matt Redinger (ex-officio)
Joe Oravec (ex-officio)

* *excused*

GUESTS: Mark Nook
David Craig
Patricia Vettel-Becker
Tami Haaland

Keith Edgerton
Mara Pierce
Carl Castles

PRESIDING: Susan Gilbertz, Chair

Susan Gilbertz called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. in the South Conference Room of the City College Health Science Building.

The minutes of September 22 were accepted as presented.

I. WELCOME NEW SENATOR

The Senate welcomed Heather Thompson, new at-large representative.

II. CHANCELLOR REPORT

Chancellor Nook noted that Provost Hoar is at a short-notice meeting in Missoula about program prioritization today.

Dr. Nook reviewed the enrollment report he presented to the campus on October 6. The ultimate result is, we are down 5.1% in FTE, but that is within the margin of error we built into the budget. The Governor's budget will be out November 15, and then we can begin meeting and planning for next year's budgeting.

It was noted that Bozeman's high enrollments are likely coming at the expense of other MUS institutions. Will that cause any concern among the Regents? Dr. Nook responded that next year Bozeman won't be up that much, so probably not. We are working on partnerships with Bozeman to alleviate their crunch of too many students and not enough resources. The entire Montana University System is flat on enrollments, as is much of the American west and Canada. The question was also raised as to whether the increases in enrollments at City College are coming at the expense of east campus programs. Dr. Nook noted that the increased headcount at City College is due almost entirely from the High School Connections program, which is free for students this year, courtesy of the Governor. He also noted that if students begin to shift to completing their AA or AS degrees at City College and then moving to a bachelor's program on the east campus, that will impact our budgets.

III. ITEM FOR INFORMATION

Item 9 Emeritus Nomination: Stanley Wiatr, Department of Biological and Physical Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences. For information.

⇒ Motion by Cindy Dell, seconded by Paul Pope to **accept Item 9 for information.**

⇒ Motion carried.

IV. ITEMS – CONSENT

Item 6 M 130 Mathematics for Elementary Teachers I. Change prerequisite.

Item 6.a STAT 141 Introduction to Statistical Concepts. Change prerequisite.

Item 6.b STAT 216 Introduction to Statistics. Change prerequisite.

⇒ Motion by Jim Barron, seconded by Francisco Saldivar to **accept the consent agenda.**

⇒ Motion carried.

V. ITEMS – FIRST READING

Item 1 HONR 311 Perspectives and Understanding. New course.

⇒ Motion by Cindy Dell, seconded by Jim Barron to **approve Item 1 on first reading.**

David Craig, Director of the Honors Program, noted that this course will create a way for juniors and seniors to enter the Honors Program.

⇒ Motion carried.

⇒ Motion by Paul Pope, seconded by Cindy Dell to **waive second reading of Item 1.**

⇒ Motion carried.

Item 7 BA Major in Art Teaching Licensure Option. Modification to an existing program: degree title change.

⇒ Motion by Cindy Dell, seconded by Jim Barron to **approve Item 7 on first reading.**

Mara Pierce, Art Department, noted that this is a title change recommended by their accrediting body.

⇒ Motion carried.

⇒ Motion by Paul Pope, seconded by Cindy Dell to **waive second reading of Item 7.**

⇒ Motion carried.

Item 8 BIOH 382 Fundamentals of Medical Histology. New course.

Item 8.a BIOH 383 Biology of Human Reproduction. New course.

⇒ Motion by Jim Barron, seconded by Cindy Dell to **approve Items 8 and 8.a on first reading.**

Carl Castles, Biological & Physical Sciences, stated that he has taught both of these courses as special topics several times, and they are quite popular, so it's time to codify them.

⇒ Motion carried.

⇒ Motion by Jim Barron, seconded by Paul Pope to **waive second reading of Items 8 and 8.a.**

⇒ Motion carried.

Item 10 Recommendation from the Gen Ed Committee Regarding Gen Ed Assessment.

⇒ Motion by Jim Barron, seconded by Paul Pope to **approve Item 10 on first reading.**

Jim Barron, Chair of the Gen Ed Committee, noted that the GEC wishes to assess the Gen Ed program by being serious about the Proficiency Profile exam by ETS. They recommend that all students desiring to graduate be required to take the test. There will be many procedures and issues to be worked out, but a general estimate of the cost is somewhere between \$12,000 and \$16,000, assuming we test about 800 students per year. Vice Provost Redinger has said that there is funding from the Assessment Fee for this project. The GEC would also like to have data which compares our seniors to freshmen, and ETS has national data on how incoming, brand-new freshmen do on this test. We could begin testing our own freshmen, but that's a later phase. For students who drop out, ETS has the capability to match up students who took the test as freshmen and again as seniors, so we can exclude students who did not finish from the comparison. Dr. Barron also noted that the GEC has been trying to do a voluntary sample of our students each year for the last three years, and it has not worked well, resulting in a uselessly small sample. Forcing a sample of students to take the test seems unfair. The best way is to require all students take the test. ETS does offer an online version of the test, but it will be an increased cost to MSUB. Students will not have to pay to take this test.

It was noted that we think we have a problem with Gen Ed, but we don't actually know what the problem is. Data will help us address problems and improve Gen Ed. It was cited that City College already has robust assessment for their programs, so the GEC requested this recommendation only apply to four-year programs. It was noted that the COE also tests their students, as required by the state, and this would add another test. However, while the COE students must pay for the state testing, the Proficiency Profile exam would not be another cost for students, and it would be great to compare the data from the two different tests.

Dr. Barron noted that he is excited about this project and the data that will follow. He is not being paid to set up the testing or analyze the data, but he wants to do it.

It was noted that we need to be able to link our Gen Ed outcomes directly to the Proficiency Profile exam or all of this will be ineffective. The outcomes should be made available to students, as well as practice tests. It was stated that about 2/3 of the current Gen Ed outcomes can be linked to the ETS metrics, but the remaining Gen Ed outcomes are very vague and can apply to anything.

The question was raised as to how the Proficiency Profile exam addresses retention issues such as our high DFWI courses. It was responded that the ETS test is not meant to do that at all, but the GEC are working toward a second phase to address those concerns.

It was cited that if the Senate approves this—as the elected body, whereas the GEC members are appointed—the Senate will “take the heat” for this project and any of its drawbacks.

It was noted that we cannot spring this requirement on current students. This year will be a soft start, with the requirement being added to the Fall 2017 catalog. It will be required of students thereafter. Students will, essentially, not be able to graduate until they have completed the Proficiency Profile.

The discussion of the GEC recommendation was suspended until the next meeting.

VI. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Procedure for Setting Course Enrollment Caps

Guests: Keith Edgerton, Chair, History; Tami Haaland, Chair, English, Philosophy & Modern Languages

The issues at hand are two-fold. Should course enrollment caps be considered a curricular issue? Should we re-introduce writing intensive courses as a student success initiative?

Ms. Haaland noted that a “culture of writing” is a new idea but it’s where we need to go. Right now our system is shame-based and we blame the high schools for our students not being able to write. Instead, we can adopt a supportive system of writing, with students making mistakes and learning over time. There are already some great programs out there, and we do not need to reinvent the wheel.

It was cited that the Senate should not set a precedent that every course cap should be reviewed by this body. But, the Senate is concerned with retention, and smaller classes mean better retention. The Senate can’t set a rule that would apply to every department, every college. The University needs to have more flexibility than that.

It was stated that (as described in the CBA) the Chair and Dean discuss a course cap but cannot agree, then there is no recourse for the faculty to resolve the situation. The Senate could be the place for wider discussion, even if the Senate cannot make decisions on the caps. This situation may never come up anyway, since the history course issue has been resolved since the last Senate meeting. At some point, faculty must trust the administration to get the course caps as low as they can with the budget we have.

The small class model is ideal, but unfortunately as a University we simply don’t have the budget to do that for every course.

Susan Gilbertz stated that she would respond to Dr. Edgerton and Dean Shearer to state that the Senate encourages this type of pedagogy and that writing intensive courses are a high impact practice that results in better retention of students.

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

rjrm

From: [Gilbertz, Susan](#)
To: [Hoar, Robert](#)
Cc: [Edgerton, Keith](#); [Haaland, Tami](#); [Nook, Mark](#); [RabeMeduna, Rita](#)
Subject: Pedagogical Excellence
Date: Saturday, October 15, 2016 1:09:07 PM

Dear Provost Hoar:

While Academic Senate has never concerned itself with pedagogical matters, it is clear that student success, retention and degree completion can be directly impacted by instructional choices on the part of our faculty. As well, numerous efforts are underway to encourage High Impact Practices (HIPs) across our curriculum, with special attention being given to the General Education and Gateway courses. It is, then, the opinion of the Academic Senate that due consideration should be given to all initiatives designed to improve student engagement in their studies and that, whenever possible, efforts should be made to support HIPs across the curricular spectrum.

In general, we urge you to work closely with every faculty group engaged in improving its delivery designs and practices. In particular, we are sensitive to the request from the History Department as national data from the National Survey of Student Engagement confirms that high expectations and rigorous assignments improve student success:

First-year and senior students who were highly challenged by their courses were more likely to engage in a variety of effective educational practices....Notably, some of the strongest relationships were between course challenge and Higher-Order Learning, Learning Strategies, and Effective Teaching Practices. Thus, the more students' coursework emphasized complex cognitive tasks, the more they said their courses challenged them to do their best work. And "doing their best work" in part requires success-oriented learning strategies like active reading, reviewing notes after class, and summarizing what was learned in courses. Greater clarity and organization of courses, including prompt and formative feedback, were also positively related to course challenge. Finally, we found that course challenge was positively associated with perceived gains in learning and

development as well as overall satisfaction with the educational experience....

Students' age and their learning environments made a difference in their perceptions of course challenge. Nontraditional-aged students were more likely than their younger peers to be highly challenged to do their best work....Mode of instruction also played a role. For example, about three-quarters of nontraditional-aged students taking **all** of their courses online were highly challenged by their courses, compared with about two-thirds with some or no online courses.....

Interestingly, the extent to which students' courses challenged them to do their best work was unrelated to admissions selectivity for first-year students, and had a modest inverse relationship for seniors.... [With] further evidence that admission selectivity is neither a prerequisite for nor a guarantee of a high-quality educational experience....

These findings highlight the importance of setting high expectations and creating the conditions for students to achieve. Although an appreciable share of students does not experience these conditions, **all** institutions are capable of delivering on the imperative to challenge students to do their best work. (see: http://nsse.indiana.edu/NSSE_2015_Results/pdf/NSSE_2015_Annual_Results.pdf#page=5)

We encourage budgetary innovation in finding ways to help our innovative programs succeed. As for how we can help, the Academic Senate is committed to curricular innovation.

Sincerely,
Susan Gilbertz, Chair
Academic Senate

Rita: Please copy to entire Senate, and attach as an addendum to the

minutes from our last meeting.