

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: March 26, 2020

PRESENT: Suzette Nynas
Scott Butterfield
Keith Edgerton
Sarah Keller
Sam Boerboom
Jodi Lightner
Savannah Merritt (student)
Robert Nava (ex-officio)
Melinda Arnold (ex-officio)
Jana Marcette (ex-officio)

Jim Barron
Cindy Dell
Heather Thompson-Bahm
Vern Gagnon
Austin Bennett
Rachael Waller
Christine Shearer (ex-officio)
Vicki Trier (ex-officio)
Darlene Hert (ex-officio)

ABSENT: Kelly McCoy
Susan Simmers (ex-officio)
** excused*

Kurt Toenjes (ex-officio)
Kim Hayworth (ex-officio)

GUESTS: Mark Jacobson
Sydney Donaldson
Tom Nurmi

Kathleen Thatcher
Cheri Johannes

PRESIDING: Jim Barron, Chair

Jim Barron called the meeting to order at 3:43 p.m. via web meeting.

I. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of March 12 were accepted as presented.

II. PROVOST REPORT

Nothing to report.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Item 51.r CSTN 260 Construction Concepts and Building Lab III. New course.

⇒ Motion by Cindy Dell, seconded by Vern Gagnon to **approve the consent agenda.**

⇒ Motion carried.

It was agreed for this web meeting seconds will not be necessary for motions.

IV. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

Item 40 LIT 317 Transatlantic Literature I. New course.

Item 40.a LIT 318 Transatlantic Literature II. New course.

Item 40.b LIT 499 Thesis/Capstone: Portfolio. Change rubric to WRIT and change course description.

Item 40.c BA Major in English. Modification to an existing program.

Item 40.d BA Major in English Teaching Licensure Option. Modification to an existing program.

⇒ Motion by Keith Edgerton to **approve Items 40 through 40.d.**

Tom Nurmi, English, Philosophy & Modern Languages, noted the department will have four retirements in the next three years, so they are making changes which include national best practices in their majors. The biggest component is reducing the five literature survey courses to two.

⇒ Motion carried.

Item 53.a CSCI 246 Discrete Structures. Change prerequisites.

Item 53.b M 273 Multivariable Calculus. Change prerequisites.

Item 53.c M 274 Intro Differential Equations. Change prerequisites.

Item 53.d M 305 Discrete Structures I. Change prerequisites.

Item 53.e BS Major in Mathematics. Modification to an existing program.

Item 53.f BS Major in Mathematics Teaching Licensure Option Single Subject Endorsement. Modification to an existing program.

Item 53.g Teaching Minor in Mathematics. Modification to an existing program.

⇒ Motion by Keith Edgerton to **approve Items 53.a through 53.g.**

Mark Jacobson, Math Department, noted that these changes will provide more flexibility for students in the math programs. Also, MSUB is the only institution in Montana that offers the math teaching minor online, so even though it's a high credit program, it's in demand.

⇒ Motion carried.

Item 55 AS Pre-Engineering Program of Study. Delete program.

Item 55.a Minor in Earth Science. Delete program.

⇒ Motion by Vern Gagnon to **approve Items 55 and 55.a.**

⇒ Motion carried.

V. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Discussion of Pass/Fail Grading for This Semester

Provost Arnold stated that the Commissioner's Office is moving forward on a policy for pass/fail options for this semester. There is no requirement or mandate to use pass/fail, just an option. If faculty do elect to use pass/fail for this semester, it must be cleared with OCHE. Dr. Arnold has sent the information to the deans, so faculty should contact their deans with feedback.

It was noted that the COE is opposed to pass/fail grading mainly due to licensure standards. Students going for teacher licensure must have a C or better, not a C-. Pass/fail grading means students with a C- are considered passing. The pass/fails may also affect students' GPA, which must be at a certain level to enter and stay in the teacher preparation program. It was noted that applied science degrees at City College also require a minimum of a C, not a C-, so they too would be affected.

We will likely have an increase of transfer students coming in with these pass/fail grades, and OCHE will require we accept them. It was suggested that this policy will have implications years from now as students who receive a P grade this semester will need to enter our programs in the future. Those students may not understand the implications of their choice now.

Dr. Arnold noted that this is a student choice as well. Students can elect to use the pass/fail grading for their courses this semester.

B. Dual Credit Guidelines

It was stated that the dual credit programs the state is pushing remain unfair to MSUB. We are losing funding. Provost Arnold noted that we are parsing out right now just how much this program is costing us. They plan to ask the Commissioner's Office for funding. Also, since Sydney Donaldson came on board as the full-time manager of the program, quality has improved. The real issue is, we need to convert more of those dual credit students to MSUB students. Ms. Donaldson noted they are recruiting these students as much as possible.

Any guidelines we create should include regular evaluation of the courses taught. Liaisons (MSUB faculty) have no authority over the course, and that needs to change.

Dr. Barron stated that he will ask via email for a couple Senators to volunteer to work on a draft policy.

A. SPA Discussion

The deadlines for the SPA reports were put in place before the social distancing of the campus. With all the new responsibilities of moving courses online, faculty don't have the time to do these reports as well. Faculty are overwhelmed with not only teaching online for the first time, but also many faculty with children now have the additional responsibility of caring for them at home. We need to recognize that life is not normal right now.

It was cited that many programs in the SPA list seem to be disaggregated wrong, resulting in enrollments looking abnormally low. It was argued that this is our exact problem; combining many majors/major codes into one program is misleading.

Concerns about inappropriate reporting on shared programs and disaggregation issues should be sent in writing to the administration as soon as possible.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

rjrm