



## ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

**DATE:** March 4, 2021

**PRESENT:** Suzette Nynas  
Scott Butterfield  
Natalie Bohlmann  
John Pannell  
Vern Gagnon  
Austin Bennett  
Vicki Trier (ex-officio)  
Darlene Hert (ex-officio)

Jim Barron  
Rakesh Sah  
Rachael Waller  
Heather Thompson-Bahm  
Sam Boerboom  
Christine Shearer (ex-officio)  
Sue Balter-Reitz (ex-officio)

**ABSENT:** Keith Edgerton\*  
Kurt Toenjes (ex-officio)  
Robert Nava (ex-officio)  
Kim Hayworth (ex-officio)  
\* *excused*

Jennifer Lynn\*  
Richard Beer (ex-officio)  
Susan Simmers (ex-officio)  
Jana Marcette (ex-officio)

**GUESTS:** David Kendrick  
Stefani Hicswa  
Kathleen Thatcher

Joy Honea  
Steve Eliason  
Cheri Johannes

**PRESIDING:** Jim Barron, Chair

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Jim Barron called the meeting to order at 3:42 p.m. via Webex.

### I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

### II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of February 4 were accepted as presented.

### III. PROVOST & CHANCELLOR REPORTS

Chancellor Hicswa made a presentation this afternoon via webex on the budget. We will not have any additional money coming in (unless the federal government makes another round of allocations) but we will not have big budget cuts this fiscal year. There are currently 11 faculty searches under way, 6 of which are tenure-track.

A question was raised as to whether the finalized FY22 budget would be published for all campus members to see, as it has been in the past. Dr. Hicswa responded that yes, they can and will do that, perhaps with names not listed directly with salaries. It's all public budget information.

Provost Balter-Reitz stated that program reviews will be coming up at the end of March. She is also working on separating the student academic appeal process from the student conduct code, which is handled by Student Affairs. Former Vice Provost Christine Shearer did a lot of great work on this project. The appeal process will now rest with the Provost's Office.

A question was raised about Commencement guests. Cheri Johannes, Registrar, responded that an email will go out today that students will be allowed an unlimited number of guests to attend in person for the in person Commencement at the Metra. Families will be grouped into pods that will be distanced. Tickets can be obtained from the Metra offices starting this Saturday and are free.

A question was raised about the course rotations and programs requested by the former Provost. Dr. Balter-Reitz stated that she does still want that information, as it will be very useful for Advising and Assessment. Deans will be able to prioritize hires based on course rotations.

### IV. OTHER REPORTS

#### **Faculty Evaluation of Administrators Update**

Dr. Barron reported that Dean Kurt Toenjes has volunteered to be our first evaluated administrator this semester. The evaluation instrument was sent to all administrators who will be evaluated. The Senate Executive Committee plus one administrator will analyze the data, and we don't yet know how long that will take. Those being evaluated will receive the raw data and raw comments. A summary will be published for campus members and forwarded to President Cruzado. Ms. Rabe Meduna will be learning how to use Qualtrics next week.

#### **University-Wide Faculty Committee Clearinghouse (Provost & Senate Chair)**

Dr. Barron and Dr. Balter-Reitz have not yet collated their lists, but most all committees across campus have been included. If a response is missing, follow up will be sent!

V. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

Title	Status	Received
Nonprofit Administration and Leadership Certificate	Edited (deleted)	2/23/2021

⇒ Motion by Austin Bennett, seconded by Vern Gagnon to **approve the above item.**

Steve Eliason, Chair of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies, noted that this certificate was created to go with the Master of Public Administration, which has since been placed on moratorium and deleted. They were not able to recruit a single student into this program.

⇒ Motion carried.

VI. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

**A. Online Course Guidelines**

Guest: David Kendrick, Director of eLearning and Faculty Development

Dr. Kendrick noted that faculty across the country were affected by the rapid pivot to online teaching last spring. What we ended up with was remote learning, because it was not planned. Online teaching is planned. The eLearning office will be looking into adopting some form of Quality Matters at some point in the future (guidelines attached to these minutes). Dr. Kendrick reminded all present that eLearning only recommends, and they respect faculty choices. They are also starting a search to hire another Instructional Designer to assist faculty in developing online options for students.

**B. Course Delivery Modes Descriptions**

Guest: Joy Honea, Social Sciences & Cultural Studies

Dr. Honea noted that she worked with a group of eLearning Fellows as well as other faculty involved with our more experimental courses to develop a draft list of possible delivery modes (attached to these minutes). We can't change what the MUS has created, but we can make our descriptions more specific. She noted that hyflex, especially, is crucial for our students because students can choose to attend in person or online and change throughout the semester. Importantly, the mode of delivery needs to be at students' fingertips when they are registering so they know which types of courses require them to be present on campus or be online at a certain time. It was noted that communicating with students on the first day of classes what is expected of them is an important tool in heading off possible claims that the students didn't know.

It was cited that some program accreditation agencies have definitions of their own about online and in person courses. However, adhering to all agencies' definitions will be challenging. It was noted that faculty do have the option to limit how many courses in a program students are allowed to take online (or blended or hyflex).

The intention of this list is not meant to limit creativity, but rather accurately describe what we are offering students.

#### VII. NEW BUSINESS

A question was raised about where catalogs prior to CourseLeaf are found. A link will be added to the CourseLeaf catalog sending students to the archive of catalogs on the MSUB website.

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

rjrm



# Specific Review Standards from the QM Higher Education Rubric, Sixth Edition

General Standards	Specific Review Standards	Points
<b>Course Overview and Introduction</b>	1.1 Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.	3
	1.2 Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course.	3
	1.3 Communication expectations for online discussions, email, and other forms of interaction are clearly stated.	2
	1.4 Course and institutional policies with which the learner is expected to comply are clearly stated within the course, or a link to current policies is provided.	2
	1.5 Minimum technology requirements for the course are clearly stated, and information on how to obtain the technologies is provided.	2
	1.6 Computer skills and digital information literacy skills expected of the learner are clearly stated.	1
	1.7 Expectations for prerequisite knowledge in the discipline and/or any required competencies are clearly stated.	1
	1.8 The self-introduction by the instructor is professional and is available online.	1
	1.9 Learners are asked to introduce themselves to the class.	1
<b>Learning Objectives (Competencies)</b>	2.1 The course learning objectives, or course/program competencies, describe outcomes that are measurable.	3
	2.2 The module/unit-level learning objectives or competencies describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives or competencies.	3
	2.3 Learning objectives or competencies are stated clearly, are written from the learner's perspective, and are prominently located in the course.	3
	2.4 The relationship between learning objectives or competencies and learning activities is clearly stated.	3
	2.5 The learning objectives or competencies are suited to the level of the course.	3
<b>Assessment and Measurement</b>	3.1 The assessments measure the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies.	3
	3.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly at the beginning of the course.	3
	3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work, and their connection to the course grading policy is clearly explained.	3
	3.4 The assessments used are sequenced, varied, and suited to the level of the course.	2
	3.5 The course provides learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress with timely feedback.	2
<b>Instructional Materials</b>	4.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies.	3
	4.2 The relationship between the use of instructional materials in the course and completing learning activities is clearly explained.	3
	4.3 The course models the academic integrity expected of learners by providing both source references and permissions for use of instructional materials.	2
	4.4 The instructional materials represent up-to-date theory and practice in the discipline.	2
	4.5 A variety of instructional materials is used in the course.	2
<b>Learning Activities and Learner Interaction</b>	5.1 The learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies.	3
	5.2 Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning.	3
	5.3 The instructor's plan for interacting with learners during the course is clearly stated.	3
	5.4 The requirements for learner interaction are clearly stated.	2
<b>Course Technology</b>	6.1 The tools used in the course support the learning objectives or competencies.	3
	6.2 Course tools promote learner engagement and active learning.	3
	6.3 A variety of technology is used in the course.	1
	6.4 The course provides learners with information on protecting their data and privacy.	1
<b>Learner Support</b>	7.1 The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to obtain it.	3
	7.2 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and services.	3
	7.3 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's academic support services and resources that can help learners succeed in the course.	3
	7.4 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's student services and resources that can help learners succeed.	1
<b>Accessibility* and Usability</b>	8.1 Course navigation facilitates ease of use.	3
	8.2 The course design facilitates readability.	3
	8.3 The course provides accessible text and images in files, documents, LMS pages, and web pages to meet the needs of diverse learners.	3
	8.4 The course provides alternative means of access to multimedia content in formats that meet the needs of diverse learners.	2
	8.5 Course multimedia facilitate ease of use.	2
	8.6 Vendor accessibility statements are provided for all technologies required in the course.	2

\* Meeting QM Specific Review Standards regarding accessibility does not guarantee or imply that the specific accessibility regulations of any country are met. Consult with an accessibility specialist to ensure that accessibility regulations are met.

## **Montana State University Billings: Descriptions of Available Course Delivery Modes**

### **Currently offered options:**

In-person: This class is delivered synchronously and face-to-face (F2F), with regular in-person attendance necessary. Students and faculty participate in person at assigned physical locations at specific times. (*Course registration codes begin with -00*)

Online: This class is delivered asynchronously and remotely, using MSUB's Learning Management System (LMS.) Students and faculty interact regularly but there is no synchronous requirement. These courses must comply with the MSUB Core Principles of Quality for Online Courses.\* (*Course registration codes begin with -80*)

Blended/Hybrid: This class is delivered partially online in an asynchronous format and partially through regular F2F interaction, typically in the classroom. There may also be some synchronous remote requirement. Both online and F2F interactions are required for the course. This delivery is characterized by the expectation of reduced F2F class meeting time when compared to the equivalent credit in-person course. (*Course registration codes begin with -60*)

HyFlex: This class allows fully flexible participation for students. Students may choose to participate fully online, fully in-person or a combination of both and may change their participation mode at any time. HyFlex courses must comply with the MSUB Core Principles of Quality for Online Courses.\* There is no synchronous requirement. (*Course registration codes begin with -70*)

### **Other possible options:**

Sync-flex: This class is delivered synchronously with both in-person attendance and remote video-conferencing options. Students may choose either option and may change their participation mode at any time. (*Course registration codes begin with -40*)

Low-residency: This class is primarily online and asynchronous but requires at least one in-person meeting. See course and program requirements for specific details. (*Course registration codes begin with -50*)

\*MSUB Core Principles of Quality or Online Courses:

<https://www.msubillings.edu/elearning/faculty/faculty.htm#tab3>