



ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: April 23, 2020

PRESENT: Suzette Nynas
Keith Edgerton
Scott Butterfield
Rachael Waller
Heather Thompson-Bahm
Sam Boerboom
Savannah Merritt (student)
Christine Shearer (ex-officio)
Melinda Arnold (ex-officio)
Jana Marcette (ex-officio)

Jim Barron
Jodi Lightner
Natalie Bohlmann
Kelly McCoy
Vern Gagnon
Austin Bennett
Kurt Toenjes (ex-officio)
Vicki Trier (ex-officio)
Darlene Hert (ex-officio)

ABSENT: Don Larsen*
Robert Nava (ex-officio)
Kim Hayworth (ex-officio)

Michael Campbell (ex-officio)
Susan Simmers (ex-officio)

* *excused*

GUESTS: Sarah Keller
Kathleen Thatcher

Victor White
Cheri Johannes

PRESIDING: Jim Barron, Chair

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

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS: WELCOME NEW SENATORS

The Senate welcomed re-elected Senators Suzette Nynas, Scott Butterfield, Rachael Waller, and Kelly McCoy. The Senate also welcomed new Senators Natalie Bohlmann and Don Larsen. The Senate thanked Sarah Keller and Cindy Dell for their service on the Senate. Student representative Savannah Merritt was also thanked for her service and congratulated on her upcoming graduation.

Dr. Barron noted that we will elect a Chair Elect at the first regular meeting in the Fall, and the Chair Elect will be chosen from the sitting Vice Chairs, which we elect today. The Chair Elect will take over as chair at the last meeting of the Spring 2021 semester.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of March 26 were accepted as presented.

III. Election of Officers for 2020-2021

VICE CHAIRS

Keith Edgerton nominated Jennifer Lynn (currently on sabbatical), who has agreed to serve.

Vern Gagnon nominated Heather Thompson-Bahm.

Vern Gagnon also nominated Sam Boerboom.

The nominations were closed and the officers were elected by acclamation.

SECRETARY

Vern Gagnon nominated Austin Bennett.

The nominations were closed and the officer was elected by acclamation.

IV. PROVOST REPORT

Dr. Arnold has been appointed to the state-wide task force created by the Commissioner, called the MUS Healthy Fall 2020 Task Force. The group will put together high-level guidance on a return to classes this fall. She has asked the Deans to discuss three options: (1) return to things as before the COVID-19 pandemic, (2) a modified campus presence, or (3) all online courses. They are also discussing on-site courses with more social distancing, as well as non-academic issues like residence halls and activities. The Provost asked that Senators let their constituents know this group will be meeting over the summer.

Dr. Arnold had a call this week with NWCCU, who are seeking permission from the U.S. Department of Ed for all-online teaching through 2021. This is meant as a backup plan, should we need it. MSUB does not plan to stick to only online courses in the coming year. On the call with NWCCU, they also discussed enrollment issues as a result of COVID-19 precautions and law suits filed by students.

The Provost also noted that the use of pass/no pass for Spring 2020 semester has been adopted by the College of Business and City College. Students had the option to choose P/NP and the deadline was April 20. Out of more than 1300 eligible students, 86 chose to use P/NP. Dr. Barron noted that he confirmed the P/NP grades can only be used on students' courses in those colleges, so Gen Ed courses outside those colleges cannot be P/NP.

V. OTHER REPORTS

No other reports.

VI. ITEM FOR APPROVAL

It was agreed to forgo seconds on motions again for this meeting.

Item 57 Certificate of AS in Ultrasound Technology. Modification to an existing program (admissions only).

⇒ Motion by Vern Gagnon to **approve Item 57**.

Victor White, Ultrasound program, noted that the certifying agency ultrasound students test with changed their requirements, so City College needs to change the admission requirements in response.

⇒ Motion carried.

VII. ITEM FOR INFORMATION

Item 58 Emeritus Nomination: Cindy Dell, Department of Educational Theory & Practice, College of Education. For information.

⇒ Motion by Vern Gagnon to **approve Item 58**.

⇒ Motion carried.

VIII. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. August General Faculty Meeting

We had hoped to hold a general faculty meeting in April, but those plans obviously went out the window. We will plan a general faculty meeting for the two weeks before the Fall semester starts, hopefully close to the first day of classes.

B. Senate Guidelines on Syllabi Elements

The Senate could put together a syllabus template that would *not be required*, but would include all the elements needed. Faculty will find it useful if they do not have a template to work from. It was noted that City College has a template, as does the COE. Both will be shared with the Senate.

It was noted that we still need a better way to collect all the various student services information that must go on a syllabus. Dr. Barron noted that the Provost has stated she will work to have that information collected and ready for faculty well before the start of the semester, when faculty are designing their syllabi. It was noted that a 20-page syllabus is not a good thing—the Senate still advocates for a link to a webpage where all that information is available. However, legally, some things must stay on the syllabus, but we ultimately have no way to guarantee students are reading the syllabus, especially in online courses.

Syllabus templates can be a discussion item for the Fall general faculty meeting.

C. Classroom Attendance Policy Discussion

MSUB does not have a policy that requires faculty to take attendance in their classes, and maybe we should. It's a helpful tool for early alert, but it's also helpful for faculty to have documentation of how often a student is present or absent.

It was noted that when faculty submit grades, we are required to list the last date attended for students who are failing. That is a federal requirement.

There will be financial aid ramifications if MSUB adopts required attendance. It was clarified that the Senate is not talking about an attendance policy for students, but rather a policy that faculty take attendance in their classes. The importance of students contacting their instructors when they have an emergency or other reason to miss class was emphasized. Further, some instructors have policies that if students are late for class, they do not get credit for being present.

It was agreed that we should know what faculty are doing to track attendance. The Senate could then put together recommendations to faculty about why they should take attendance and how best to do so. Taking attendance can increase retention!

D. Dual Credit Guidelines

Kelly McCoy and Austin Bennett have volunteered to work on this project. Another faculty member, Emily Arendt, was suggested as well. The group may be able to have a draft ready for Fall.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

We need to work harder to create a welcoming environment on campus for students who are struggling, be they from personal issues, COVID-19 fears, or mental health issues. Several students have come to the student government with concerns about how they are treated due to their mental illness. It was agreed that we could be better, especially with at-risk students.

Our NWCCU “visit” (conducted via web meeting) will be next week.

The meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

rjrm