

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: February 16, 2023

PRESENT: Matt Queen
Jennifer Lynn
Susan Gregory
John Pannell
Paul Pope
Jim Barron (ex-officio)
Susan Gilbertz (ex-officio)
Sue Balter-Reitz (ex-officio)
Victoria Contreras (ex-officio)

Mara Pierce
Rakesh Sah
Rachael Waller
Austin Bennett
Melissa Boehm
Tami Haaland (ex-officio)
Sep Eskandari (ex-officio)
Kim Hayworth (ex-officio)

ABSENT: Suzette Nynas*
David Russell (student)
Vicki Trier (ex-officio)*
Jana Marcette (ex-officio)

Scott Butterfield*
Tom Manthey (ex-officio)
Leslie Weldon (ex-officio)

* *excused*

GUESTS: Kathleen Thatcher
Cheri Johannes

Joann Stryker

PRESIDING: Jennifer Lynn, Chair

Jennifer Lynn called the meeting to order at 3:39 p.m. in the Chancellor's Conference Room.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chancellor evaluation is done and the report is posted on the Senate intranet page. There will not be any evaluations next year, and then returning to Dean evaluations in 2024-25.

The Research and Creativity Symposium is happening April 21. Instead of a keynote speaker, we will have an alumni speak.

The Faculty Excellence celebration is a week from today. Special thanks to Cheri Johannes and the University Communications and Marketing staff for all their work on this event.

The updated Senate schedule has been sent out. The All Faculty Meeting will be March 2 and the New Programs Meeting will be March 30.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of February 2 were accepted as presented.

III. PROVOST REPORT

Dr. Eskandari stated they have received notification that the Sprint Degrees will receive funding—we don't yet know how much.

He encouraged all faculty to attend the Research and Creativity Symposium. Also, if anyone needs to RSVP late for Faculty Excellence, contact his office.

The Provost reported that the two Dean searches are progressing. The COE will have three finalists on campus in February and March. The COB search is currently running background checks on candidates in anticipation of scheduling campus visits after Spring Break. Dr. Eskandari urged all faculty to attend the open forums for these candidates.

Recently, he has begun conversations about McDonald Hall, which we lease. The building is not being utilized to its full capacity, so the College of Business could move out and the Foundation and MSUB could identify new tenants. This project is intended to be very transparent, and will need to identify space not only for classes and faculty, but also the Dean. A task force with faculty representatives from each college is being gathered. During this process we will also communicate with the McDonald family, who donated to secure the lease of the building. No specific timeline is set, but if a new tenant is found, a plan that could be executed quickly is the goal.

Sue Balter-Reitz, Associate Provost, reported that Bozeman has changed the timeline for when we submit academic items to them. Basically, proposals are due the first working day of the month, and it will be about two months to get those proposals to OCHE and approved. This change is due to Bozeman needing the extra time to coordinate review by both their Provost and the University Council (which consists of representatives from each of the MSU campuses). Dr. Eskandari noted that he makes sure to discuss any MSUB proposal with Provost Bob Mokwa long before any review meetings take place.

IV. OTHER REPORTS

Subcommittee on AI

John Pannell will be leading a workshop on AI through the Center for Teaching and Learning and the CTL has created a page of resources on their website.

V. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

Title	Status	Received	Request Type
Earth Science Minor Moratorium	Added	2/3/2023	Moratorium
Emeriti Policy - Revised	Added	2/9/2023	Policy

It was noted that there will be additional revision to the Emeriti Policy, so it is pulled from today's agenda.

⇒ Motion by Paul Pope, seconded by Mara Pierce to **approve the Earth Science Minor Moratorium.**

It was noted that this program was deleted by the Department after SPA 2, but one student was still in it. The deletion had to wait until that student finished, and in the meantime, the Department debated reviving the program. Paperwork to revive the program was brought to Senate in 2021, and then withdrawn. Three more students entered the program, since it was not moratorium. The Department has agreed they wish to get rid of the program, so it's being placed on moratorium now. There is one student still in the program.

⇒ Motion carried.

VI. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. New Process for Scholarships

Kim Hayworth, Vice Chancellor for Student Access & Success

Dr. Hayworth stated that MSU Billings has been out of compliance with federal rules for some time, and these changes are an effort to correct those issues. However, some processes, including faculty committees that award scholarships, will continue after feedback on those was received.

At issue, among other things, are donors who wish to participate in the selection process for their own scholarship, which can result in those scholarships going to students essentially already chosen by the donor. Also, scholarships that are gender-based are no longer allowed. Another issue has been confidential student information being shared in an insecure way with committees and other parties, so those are being cleaned up. MSUB students will no longer have to fill out the scholarship application in order to receive scholarship funds, although they will be encouraged to do so.

It was noted that the extremely short timeline with the deadline for scholarship committee recommendations falling during Spring Break is difficult for faculty. Many faculty have not yet gained access to their scholarship information. Dr. Hayworth noted that the scholarship committees still have access to their information in the same platform used in the past, AcademicWorks. Directions for this process were sent out, but that information may not have reached all those involved. Dr. Hayworth did confirm that the deadline can

be extended if necessary on a case-by-case basis, but delaying also means students will be delayed in receiving notification of awards.

It was noted that faculty and administration both want the same thing—to get funding to students—but not having faculty input at the beginning of this process has caused confusion, and the tight timeline further exacerbates the issues.

Dr. Hayworth also noted that the Foundation is working with donors to change, when possible, gender-based criteria for scholarships.

It was noted that many gender-based scholarships existed for equity. Taking those away gives the appearance of equality but ends up being unequal. It may cause some donors to walk away, and we may see a decrease in diversity among students. It was argued that, since students do not have to fill out the scholarship application or even the FAFSA to receive scholarship funds, we may see an increase in diversity. Dr. Hayworth emphasized that the most important advice to give students is to fill out the scholarship application, as some (but not all) scholarships can only be awarded through that mechanism. We will also use a matrix created by Ruffalo Noel Levitz to award funds. The matrix is not solely based on need or merit.

Dr. Hayworth's presentation is attached to these minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

rjrm

MSUB Financial Aid & Scholarship Changes

21-22

- Title IX & Outside Awarding Committees compliance addressed by Foundation

22-23

- Yellowjacket Excellence Awards (YEA) – larger awards and renewable
- Announced YEA earlier in enrollment cycle
- Scholarship App – encouraged but not required for awarding
- Awarding Changes
- Personalized Financial Aid Videos (PFAV) for First-time Freshman
 - FAFSA Filers and Non-Filers
 - Available in Spanish

23-24

- Review 22-23 strategy make changes
- FA award process earlier in enrollment cycle

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MSUB Scholarship Awarding Process

Objective: Optimize MSUB scholarship resources to better meet student need, recognize merit, award earlier, grow enrollment, and reduce burden on committees.

Collaboration between MSUB Foundation & Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships

Scholarship Coordinator now located in OFAS

Updating awarding methodology and process

Foundation reviewed scholarship criteria to identify unrestricted scholarships

Use technology to match eligible students to scholarships

Fewer scholarship committees and awards (less work!)

Aid awarded to neediest students – reduce barrier to enrollment

-Econometric modeling: Estimated Family Contribution/Need, GPA and 199 other factors

Scholarship Committee Timeline:

Review Applications Feb. 7-March 7

Select Nominees – Deadline March 7

FA evaluates recommendations for eligibility & awards recipients

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Why the changes?

- Compliance issues-Title IX, outside committees, confidential student data
- Between 11-18% fill out the scholarship application
- Every year thousands of dollars of scholarships go unawarded
- Not best practice
- Application-requiring application, references, essays & accepting awards vs. MSUB student type
- Number of committees had ballooned to over 80
- Restricted scholarships will continue to be reviewed by Scholarship Committees
- Unrestricted scholarships will be matched with eligible students



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