

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: October 7, 2004

PRESENT: Alan Davis
Lorrie Steerey
Audrey ConnerRosberg
Keith Edgerton
Bruce Brumley
Connie Landis
Tasneem Khaleel (ex-officio)
Emily Valenzuela (ex-officio)

Mark Hardt
Sandie Rietz
Mary Susan Fishbaugh
Randall Gloege
Noreen Lee
Matt Redinger
Janie Park (ex-officio)
Kevin Majewski (ex-officio)

ABSENT: Paul Bauer – *excused*
Carl Hanson (ex-officio)
George White (ex-officio)
Randy Rhine (ex-officio)
Curt Kochner (ex-officio)

Joe Michels (ex-officio)
John Cech (ex-officio)
Terrie Iverson (ex-officio)

GUEST: Karen Everett

PRESIDING: Keith Edgerton, Chair

Keith Edgerton called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. in the Chancellor's Conference Room.

The minutes of September 30 were accepted as presented.

I. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Approved by the UCC 9/29/04

Item 9 Minor in Philosophy Religious Studies Option. Modification of an existing program.

Item 9.a Minor in Philosophy. Modification of an existing program.

⇒ Motion by Randall Gloege, seconded by Matt Redinger to **accept Items 9 and 9.a for information.**

⇒ Motion carried.

Item 10 MATH 301 Applied Linear Algebra. Change prerequisite and course description.

Item 10.a MATH 312 Multivariable Calculus. Change prerequisite and course description.

⇒ Motion by Lorrie Steerey, seconded by Bruce Brumley to **accept Items 10 and 10.a for information.**

⇒ Motion carried.

II. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Academic Foundations Deadline

It was cited that last week the Academic Foundations Committee proposed December 10 as the deadline to submit courses to the Academic Foundations program. It was suggested that the deadline be moved to early spring semester instead, so the proposals don't just sit over the winter break.

Mark Hardt, Chair of the Academic Foundations Committee, stated that the Committee needs enough time to get the package put together by the end of spring semester, so the departments will have all of the 2005-2006 academic year to modify their programs in response to the new Academic Foundations program.

It was noted that the proposals have to go through UCC before the Academic Foundations Committee, and time has to be allowed for that.

⇒ Motion by Randall Gloege, seconded by Lorrie Steerey to accept **January 28, 2005 as the deadline** to get course proposals to the Academic Foundations Committee for submission to the Academic Foundations package (i.e. through college curriculum committees and the UCC).

It was noted that the UCC should review the proposals for academic merit, while the Academic Foundations Committee will be reviewing the eligibility of each course for the new Academic Foundations package.

⇒ Motion carried with one opposed.

B. Faculty Searches on Hold

Janie Park, Provost, stated that our enrollment for this fall is down and the summer session had disappointing enrollment. As a result, several faculty searches we have running are on hold. If the enrollment does not come up, we will not receive the funding for the open faculty positions next year. We also don't know what the Governor's budget will be (it will not be out until November). Other campuses like Bozeman and Missoula are also down in enrollment, so it could be that tuition has finally risen too high for Montanans to pay. U of M – Western's enrollment is up quite a bit, probably because they have started their X1 program, which is a block schedule where students take one course at a time. Here at MSU-Billings, we have more students than last year but they are taking fewer credits, resulting in a higher headcount but lower FTE.

Dr. Park also noted that the Chancellor has asked her to hold the faculty and dean searches for one month until we see the Governor's budget and the state pay plan. The Chancellor wants an increase for faculty since we have not had one for two years. It is possible that the State will remove the restriction on increases, but they may not fund them so we would have to dig them out of our own budget.

Dr. Park indicated that we did not do much campaigning this year, but we will step up efforts to raise enrollment for intersession (during which students can take a free class if they are taking 12 credits in spring) as well as spring semester.

It was noted that Yellowstone County only grows about 1 to 1.5 % per year, while our expected growth rate is 4 to 6 %. That seems rather unreasonable. We need to set more realistic goals so we don't always feel like we have failed.

It was cited that the Chancellor could release the enrollment reserve to continue the hiring process for these open faculty lines. Dr. Park noted that she has already dipped into the enrollment reserve because our enrollments for summer and fall were disappointing. She did that so she would not have to cut departmental budgets. She also noted we hired a number of faculty last year, so we have the capacity for more students. It was further cited that faculty salaries cannot be paid from a non-permanent source of funding like the enrollment reserve.

It was stated that the Board of Regents is making an effort to get just a bit more funding from the legislature, because funding the University System can stimulate the economy, among other good things.

It was observed that a study could be conducted to see if we are priced out of the market for most Montanans. Perhaps then we could get funding from the state if we can demonstrate that without more state funding, Montanans will not have higher education.

Karen Everett commented that we interview students each semester if they drop out, and the number one reason students leave is because of finances. The Senate stated they would like to see the report summarizing these student interviews.

Dr. Park stated another way to help retain students is to get our class schedules out early enough so students can plan ahead and to keep those schedules accurate. We have to stick with them once we put them out.

It was commented that all our open faculty positions are currently advertised as “contingent on funding.” Why not just continue with that, and if we don’t have the funding for a position, we don’t hire. Dr. Park noted that once you start interviewing for a position, it’s very hard to cut off that process, and it’s unfair to the interviewees.

C. Karen Everett: Report on Change of Audit Fee

Ms. Everett stated that the Audit fee is a Board of Regents fee, and if the faculty want to change it, they can carry it forward. Changes in fees can only be proposed to the Board of Regents in the spring, and they vote on them in July.

⇒ Motion by Noreen Lee, seconded by Matt Redinger that the **Academic Senate propose the audit fee be raised to \$25 per credit.**

Ms. Everett also noted that according to the new policy which the Academic Senate approved, the decision to allow an audit student into a course is up to the faculty.

⇒ Motion carried.

D. Resolution: Curricular Changes

Keith Edgerton distributed the resolution and commented that it lets the faculty know there is a place to appeal their curricular changes, or any other issues.

⇒ The resolution was **tabled** by Lorrie Steerey until the next Senate meeting so it can be reviewed by the Senate and revised as needed.

E. Ombudspersons Group

It was noted that the group met once and decided to disband.

F. AS/AA Degree Acceptance Policy

It was cited that the original policy, created and approved by the Senate December 5, 1996, stated that MSU-Billings would accept transfer students with a completed AA or AS degree as having fulfilled their general education requirements.

It was observed that this policy allows students who may have had little or no general education to skip the entire general education program at MSU-Billings.

⇒ Motion by Lorrie Steerey, seconded by Sandie Rietz **to add the line** “if the general education package is comparable in total credits and content” **to the policy.**

⇒ Motion carried

The policy now reads:

By action of the Academic Senate of MSU-Billings, MSU-Billings will accept transfer students with completed AA or AS degrees from other regionally accredited institutions as having fulfilled their MSU-Billings General Education requirements if the general education package is comparable in total credits and content.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

rjrm