

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: April 24, 2008

PRESENT: Jeff Sanders
Bruce Brumley
Lorrie Steerey
Mark Hardt
Steve Coffman
Tasneem Khaleel (ex-officio)

Sandie Rietz
Kay Streeter
Keith Edgerton
Craig McKenzie
Alicia Esteves (student)
Mary Susan Fishbaugh (ex-officio)

ABSENT: Rakesh Sah
David Garloff (ex-officio)*
Karen Heikel (ex-officio)*
George White (ex-officio)*
Stacy Klippenstein (ex-officio)*

Gershon Bulgatz
Gary Young (ex-officio)*
John Cech (ex-officio)*
Terrie Iverson (ex-officio)*

* *excused*

PRESIDING: Lorrie Steerey, Chair

Lorrie Steerey called the meeting to order at 3:44 p.m. in the Beartooth room.

The minutes of April 17 were accepted as presented.

I. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Item 44 Academic Senate Bylaws. New standing committee: Program Quality and Productivity Committee.

⇒ Motion by Craig McKenzie, seconded by Keith Edgerton to **table Item 44 until the fall retreat.**

⇒ Motion carried.

A. WR & TN Course Policy Enforcement: Mark Hardt, AFC Chair

Dr. Hardt noted that although we have a WR & TN course policy, it is not being enforced. All programs should have WR and TN courses as part of their degree requirements, perhaps even on the graduation form.

It was noted that the last time we reviewed the WR courses, many were “not accepted” for inclusion on the list. Who set up that criteria? It was noted that we need to make a distinction between courses that teach students to write or to use technology, and courses that require the student to do a lot of writing or use technology a great deal.

It was cited that the original intention of the policy was to require three writing courses. Two were in general education (College Composition and Research Writing or Business Writing). The third would be any WR course.

It was stated that we should review all courses for WR and TN designation. The question was raised as to which committee should do the reviewing. It was noted that first we should decide the criteria for a WR or TN course, and then request such courses from the departments and programs.

It was noted that the last review of WR and TN courses was in 1996. We should look back on what forms and materials were used in that review. Dr. Steerey stated that she would do some research and report back to the Senators later in the summer.

B. Provost White Ad hoc Committees: Online Course Conversion, Back-to-School, Quantitative Data Measures for Academic Programs

Dr. Steerey noted that Provost White is still in the Executive Budget meeting. The Online Course Conversion group will meet next Wednesday, April 30. They will discuss two ways to convert courses: faculty the conversions themselves or have a student do the conversions. December 31, 2008, eCollege will be going away. We will have no access to any files or materials still in eCollege, so it's important to save or print out your information. If you have a student with an incomplete, save or print your grade book. Dr. Steerey also noted that we will probably be going with Desire 2 Learn, but once we sign the contract we cannot convert any courses for 60 days. The plan is to pilot a few high-enrolled classes for Fall 2008 with the new software, and have all courses converted for Spring 2009.

C. Academic Senate Budget Committee

Dr. Steerey reported that at today's Executive Budget meeting, the Chancellor indicated that he will be taking cuts out of other areas instead of cutting open faculty lines. The Academic Senate Budget Committee did their best and if there are any complaints among the faculty, there are three open positions on the Academic Senate.

It was noted that with the rush to meet deadlines for cuts this year, there was not time to think about long-term strategic planning for budget purposes. It was cited that we are also floundering because we don't know what the vision or strategy is that we are working toward. In the coming semesters, the Academic Senate Budget Committee should take a more long-term, strategically planned look at not only budget cutting but also budget allocation. Where do we want to go?

It was noted that as faculty, we should not be in a position to say that our colleagues' programs should be cut. That is the job of the administrators.

It was noted that faculty do need an official mechanism to discuss these important topics. That is the purpose of the Program Quality and Productivity Committee. The faculty need to be involved in establishing criteria for programs.

D. Academic Senate Retreat

The Senate agreed to hold their Fall 2008 Retreat on Tuesday, August 26, 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. A bar-be-cue will follow. Meeting places proposed included MSUB Downtown and First Interstate Bank.

E. Provost Search

It was noted that after discussion with the Chancellor, he is now reducing the size of the search committee from 25 people, and faculty will have more representation. It was cited that it's very important faculty attend meetings of the search committee, since not everyone will be at every meeting. Meetings will take place through June and July, so faculty members have to be in Billings during those months.

Dr. Steerey noted that if there is a problem with the search committee, she will call an emergency meeting of the Senate with the Chancellor.

It was cited that faculty as a whole should have something to say about faculty members who serve on the search committee. We should vet our own list of recommended members. Dr. Steerey, Sandie Rietz, and Craig McKenzie will be on that list. Other faculty suggested include Matt Redinger, Joe Howell, Dan Gross, and Brian Dillon. It was noted that it is also very important that the members of the Provost Council be on the search committee since the Provost will be their direct supervisor.

F. Academic Foundations Assessment

Dr. Hardt noted that an email from Provost White was supposed to go out right away, notifying faculty that they could input their Fall 2007 assessment data starting today. However, it has still not gone out.

G. Other

Dr. Steerey noted that during the summer, she will be attending the Chancellor's Cabinet every week, the Provost Council at least every other week, and any Executive Budget Council meetings. She will also send out regular updates to the general faculty. It was noted that perhaps Dr. Hardt, Academic Senate Secretary, send out abstracts of the Senate minutes so the faculty can stay informed of our actions.

The meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

rjrm