

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: January 23, 2025

PRESENT: Suzette Nynas
Josh Hill
Heather Thompson-Bahm
Kari Dahle-Huff
Paul Pope
Sarah Keller
Kurt Toenjes (ex-officio)
Susan Gilbertz (ex-officio)
Richard Beer (ex-officio)
Kim Hayworth (ex-officio)
Eileen Wright (ex-officio)

Matt Queen
Jennifer Scroggins
Susan Gregory
John Pannell
Melissa Boehm
Lamiya Husen (student)
Tami Haaland (ex-officio)
Vern Gagnon (ex-officio)
Leslie Weldon (ex-officio)
Sam Boerboom (ex-officio)

ABSENT: Debra Schoenfeld*
Vikash Kumar (student)
** excused*

Austin Bennett*
Melanie Reaves (ex-officio)

GUESTS: Kathleen Thatcher
Melinda Tilton
Jana Marcette

Ana Diaz
Leigh Ann Ruggiero

PRESIDING: Suzette Nynas, Chair

Suzette Nynas called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. in the Chancellor's Conference Room.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Matt Queen will be performing next Friday at Thirsty Street.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of December 12 were accepted as presented.

III. PROVOST & VICE CHANCELLOR REPORTS

Interim Provost Richard Beer

Dr. Beer noted that there was a very large wait-list for courses this Spring semester. About two weeks before the semester started, there were 369 students who were wait-listed for various courses. This has a big impact on retention. The Deans made a big effort and he provided some funding to open additional sections and add students beyond the cap for many courses. Dr. Beer is very grateful to those instructors who allowed additional students into their courses! The wait-list is now down below 150, and many of those 150 students have holds on their accounts. He noted that students with holds on their accounts should not be allowed on the wait-list, so that data will be gathered in the future. This also tells us we need to improve our course rotation schedules and our forecasting.

Provost Beer also noted the increasing number of Dual Enrollment students at MSUB; they now comprise one fourth of our total head count. These students pay little for their courses, so they bring in few tuition dollars. Dual Enrollment will only continue to grow. We also need to track these students within our student body, and whether they enroll at MSUB after completing high school. It was noted that the students referenced here are “University Connections” students: high school students who come to the MSUB campus or take courses online. “Dual Enrollment” students take courses in their high school from high school teachers and receive credit at MSUB.

Dr. Beer has been working with the Budget Office to balance this year’s budget, given we have a deficit. The Budget Advisory Committee will meet for the first time in February, after some scheduling difficulties.

Vice Chancellor for Student Access & Success Kim Hayworth

Dr. Hayworth noted SSS/TRiO submitted their outcomes report and they attained all their objectives to re-up their grants.

She reported the Center for Engagement is emphasizing the “Pick One” initiative to encourage students to get involved in at least one club or organization. The CFE held an Involvement Fair this week to highlight all the academic, service, and social clubs.

Vice Chancellor Hayworth is monitoring our enrollment, and we are about 5% ahead of last spring’s enrollment, mostly due to Dual Enrollment. In 2022-23, we matriculated 24% of Dual Enrollment students into MSUB. Retention from Fall to Spring is about even with last year. Students who have not yet arranged payment for Spring are currently being contacted.

Dr. Hayworth stated that the scholarship platform is now open for students, and two workshops on how to apply were offered, with another coming soon. Faculty scholarship committee emails should go out soon, and they have improved the directions for faculty to use the scholarship software platform.

Dr. Hayworth also reported that Incident Command held a tabletop exercise and University Police are working on an emergency response training for all faculty, staff, and students. A communication was sent to all students who list California as their residence, asking if they need any assistance. The MUS does not see any immediate impacts as a result of President Trump’s executive order on DEI, but Financial Aid and all federal grants will need to be aware of any DEI language used.

Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance Leslie Weldon

Ms. Weldon noted the legislature is now in session and OCHE has asked and will continue to ask us for information as part of that. The March BOR meeting will include our proposed tuition and fee schedules.

Vice Chancellor Weldon noted that last year we used some funding for safety initiatives to purchase security cameras, and the electricians are now installing those across both campuses.

The W2s have gone out.

IV. OTHER REPORTS

AI Subcommittee Report

They met today and are working on a draft policy. They will need a second reading before bringing it to Senate.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Title	Status	Received
Art Education Bachelor of Arts Degree (K-12)	Edited	12/11/2024

⇒ Motion by Paul Pope, seconded by Matt Queen to **approve the consent agenda.**

⇒ Motion carried.

VI. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

Title	Status	Received	Request Type
Emeritus Nomination of Michael Havens	Added	1/7/2025	Emeriti
Emeritus Nomination of Matthew McMullen	Added	1/7/2025	Emeriti

⇒ Motion by Paul Pope, seconded by John Pannell to **approve the two emeriti nominations.**

There was a brief discussion about whether those nominated should be present.

⇒ Motion carried with 1 abstention.

Item 1		
COLS 108: The College Experience	Added	12/12/2024

⇒ Motion by Jennifer Scroggins, seconded by John Pannell to **approve Item 1.**

Melinda Tilton, Chair, Gen Ed Committee, noted that this course is the result of about two years of work. It is faculty driven, all colleges involved, and will allow students to apply essential skills and gain awareness of campus services. The courses will have the same learning outcomes and description, with latitude for instructors' development in their own disciplines. All sections will ask students to do a reflection as an assessment tool.

It was noted that we have had a change in Provosts since this project started. Is there still commitment for funding these sections? The Deans do support this initiative. However, given our budget and wait-list situation, some of these courses may need to be taught in overload.

Ms. Tilton also noted that potential instructors will be asked to apply with the Center for Teaching and Learning, and that application will open soon for the next academic year. Department Chairs will also be asked to acknowledge the applications.

⇒ Motion carried.

<i>Group 2 postponed from December 12</i>		
ENGL 529: Professional Writing	Added	11/21/2024
ENGL 537: Topics, Craft and Genre	Added	11/21/2024

⇒ Motion by Paul Pope, seconded by Matt Queen to **approve Group 2.**

There was a lot of confusion at the last meeting since none of these new graduate courses (including the art, music, and humanities) are directly associated with a program. The Senate will ask for a plan of study that lists all of the newly proposed courses.

Leigh Ann Ruggiero, English, Philosophy & Modern Languages, noted that the difference between the 400- and 500-level Professional Writing courses (WRIT 429 and ENGL 529) is the scope of assignments. For example, students in the 400-level course would be asked to construct a manual with reference material provided. The 500-level students would be asked to create a more in-depth manual and find their own references. When teaching a stacked course, they make sure not to teach the same course again.

Ana Diaz, Chair, English, Philosophy & Modern Languages, noted that these courses are mostly for Billings teachers who want to earn a masters and get augmented content in their discipline as well.

Dr. Beer noted that isolated courses not tied to a program can be problematic. Explicitly tying those courses to a program by listing them as electives in a program may be a solution.

It was noted that when all of these art, music, writing, and humanities grad courses were presented to the Senate, it was not made clear that they were for the Interdisciplinary Studies M.Ed. The courses were presented as continuing education courses for professionals in the community. A version of same was told to the Graduate Committee.

Further, we are trying to create a number of stacked courses while not having any guidelines on how to do so.

If what amounts to a new graduate program is being arranged, initiators should be asked to present things like how many students may be in the new program—the equivalent of a BOR Level II proposal.

The Senate needs to take a pause on these proposals to make sure we are doing the right thing going forward.

⇒ Motion failed with 3 abstentions.

The courses will be revisited after Senate has created a policy.

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

rjrm