



**'Jacket Leadership Team Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2023**

Meeting began at 2:00 p.m.

Staffing Updates:

Chancellor Hicswa announced that Vern Gagnon has been appointed Interim Dean of City College. Tom Valles, Director of Financial Aid, will be leaving MSUB to move to another part of the country. Justin Beach will lead Financial Aid in the interim. Josh Hulgán, Associate Dean of Student Engagement, will also be leaving to move closer to family.

Holiday Break Scheduling:

Chancellor Hicswa urged everyone to enjoy the semester break. Since this may be a good time to use annual leave, she encouraged departments to coordinate coverage.

Alcohol Policy Draft (first reading):

The group reviewed the revised version of a previous campus policy on alcohol sales and service. Chancellor Hicswa commented that the changes are to provide needed clarity. She reminded the group that in all policies, Federal Law supersedes State Law, which supersedes Board of Regents policy, which supersedes Montana State University policy, which provides guidance for MSUB policy. The Board of Regents prohibits alcohol on campus, unless a variance is filed and expressly permitted by the Chancellor. After discussion, the Chancellor asked the group to have their employees read the policy and bring any feedback to a future meeting.

Donated Sick Leave Policy (first reading):

A new policy for donating sick leave was presented. Discussion followed. Questions were directed to Paula Highlander, Director of Human Resources, who will research other pertinent policies. After discussion, the Chancellor asked the group to have their employees read the policy and bring any feedback to a future meeting.

New FAFSA:

Tom Valles, Director of Financial Aid, gave a presentation detailing the recent changes made to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. While the new form is streamlined, some changes are likely to impact MSUB students. For example, the new Student Aid Index (SAI) replaces the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and farm/ranch properties will be considered assets. Tom expressed concern that students may be less willing to fill out the updated form. Discussion followed. There was consensus that it is important to encourage prospective and current students to complete the FAFSA.

Facilities Update:

Justin Rife, Director of Facilities Services, announced that many projects are underway on campus. He can be contacted if there are any questions.

Canvas Update:

Dr. Sue Balter-Rietz, Professor of Communication and Special Assistant to the Provost, and Dr. Andrea Aebersold, Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, provided an update on the transition from the D2L to the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS). The shift to Canvas is planned for summer of 2025, and the transition team will meet monthly during the spring semester. Dr. Balter-Rietz is leading this effort on behalf of the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education.

DEI Council Update:

Dr. Jennifer Lynn and Dr. Ana Diaz, Co-Chairs of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council presented the work the committee has done since their commissioning in Spring 2021. They shared the Diversity Statement, and Land Acknowledgement Statement that the committee developed in collaboration with others on campus. The statements will be posted to the website and can be used by faculty and staff. Dr. Hicswa thanked the committee for their work and agreed that the statements will be meaningful toward campus efforts to make all students, faculty, and staff feel welcome at MSUB.

Meeting concluded at 3:31 pm.

Minutes by Natalie Preston