



MONTANA
STATE UNIVERSITY
BILLINGS

Chancellor's Cabinet Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2023

In attendance: Chancellor Hicswa, Leslie Weldon, Paula Highlander, Krista Montague, Mike Bazemore, Sep Eskandari, Brandon Irby, Kathy Kotecki, Kim Hayworth, and Natalie Preston

Absent: Jen Lynn and Kathleen Thatcher

Meeting began at 2:01 p.m.

Empathy Sprints:

Chancellor Hicswa introduced the concept of “empathy sprints” which she and Kathleen Thatcher learned of during a presentation by the Innovation University Alliance at the recent Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities conference they both attended. Foundation CEO Krista Montague shared an example of a chance she had recently to really listen to a student’s concern. Dr. Hicswa encouraged everyone to seek opportunities for “empathy sprints.”

DEI Council Update:

Chancellor Hicswa announced that the DEI council, led by Dr. Jen Lynn and Dr. Ana Diaz, has drafted a Diversity Statement and Sunny Day Real Bird has written a Land Acknowledgement, both with collaborative input from other parties. These statements will be presented by DEI Council representatives to Jacket Leadership Team, and will be added to the MSUB website.

Night on the Van:

Chancellor Hicswa announced that she and the Vice Chancellors plan to serve meals on the “Night on the Van,” a community service opportunity administered by the Salvation Army. She expressed that she has participated in the past and found it a very rewarding experience. Everyone is encouraged to serve. The Center for Engagement facilitates signing up.

Gainful Employment:

Chancellor Hicswa shared that there are changes to Gainful Employment. Gainful Employment is a federal regulation meant to ensure that costly degree programs prepare graduates for available jobs in careers with earning potential. For-profit schools and programs are expected to be most impacted. Dr. Hicswa shared the regulations from the Federal Register from October.

Three-Year Degrees:

Higher education accrediting bodies are exploring allowing bachelor's degree granting programs that require 90 credits instead of 120, similar to those in other countries. There are currently two such programs being piloted.

Holiday Party December 14:

This year's party will be in the Glacier Room from 5:00 to 7:00, and all are encouraged to attend and bring a guest.

Alcohol Policy:

A draft of the Alcohol Policy with revisions to add clarification was presented. Discussion followed. The policy draft will be discussed by 'Jacket Leadership Team at their next meeting.

Donated Sick Leave Policy:

The policy for donating sick leave was presented. Discussion followed. The policy draft will be discussed by 'Jacket Leadership Team at their next meeting.

Department Reports:**Leslie Weldon:**

Many facilities projects are coming to fruition, some are insurance related, others were approved by the legislature and will have bids going out. Late spring and summer will be busy with campus improvements. Justin Rife was officially hired as Director of Facilities Services, and an announcement to campus is forthcoming. MSUB and other MSU affiliates hired Director of Environmental Health and Safety Ryan Morris, a position to be shared by the affiliate campuses of MSU. The campus store is in transition to Barnes & Noble College management.

Kim Hayworth:

V.C. Hayworth is restructuring TRIO to combine Upward Bound and the Educational Opportunity Center temporarily with the Office of Educational Access due to Sara Whittle's resignation. Laura Gittings-Carlson has agreed to serve as Interim Director. New student applications for spring semester are up about 30%. Julie Pettitt and Cheri Johannes met and will plan a December 20 fast pass registration event.

Disability Support Services relocated to the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences Building for the rest of semester due to water damage in the College of Education Building where they were formerly housed.

Kathy Kotecki:

Next Monday the Center for Engagement will host the annual cram jam event; it is a study event offering late night breakfast. All of the window treatments in Petro Hall were replaced, bringing

that residence hall project to completion. Kathy's department is working to support students through the end of the semester.

Paula Highlander:

OCHE's Healthy Minds Survey went to students on November 20. So far the response rate is approximately 20%. The survey will go to staff and faculty during spring semester; Paula is working with faculty leadership to coordinate another faculty survey. A February date is probable. Paula recently attended an event with CFE Director Dillon Deffinbaugh hosted by the Chamber of Commerce to be trained to be certified tourist ambassadors for Billings. The Human Resources office is seeing increased rates of retirements which matches national trends.

Mike Bazemore:

There are four home basketball games remaining. A special staff and faculty night game is planned for spring semester.

Brandon Irby:

The @theHive newsletter will be on winter break hiatus; the last one will come out December 11, then it will return to the normal Monday schedule on January 8. The carillon bells will play the Alma Mater at noon starting on January 1. An announcement will be made to campus before winter break. The Department of Communications and Marketing is working through the branding for MSUB and will engage Cabinet in the process in upcoming months. The Branding guide was issued with primary, secondary and tertiary colors, and the brand committee is working to ensure that the two primary colors are appropriately used in media and publications.

Krista Montague:

The Foundation and Alumni will host their annual holiday Open House December 6 and all are welcome. Krista welcomes feedback regarding the scholarship financial statements that were recently issued. She thanked everyone for their participation in Giving Tuesday; it yielded \$65,000 making it the most successful Giving Tuesday in years. Abby Moerkerke's last day is December 22. The Foundation is therefore searching for a new Alumni Director. Jon Egeland is retiring. Jeff Clarke will become CFO. The Foundation is posting for a part-time controller to assist Jeff.

Next Meeting January 16th, 2024- Cabinet meetings canceled for December 19 and January 2nd

Meeting ended at 4:00 p.m.