

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: September 21, 2006

PRESENT: Agnes Samples
Sandie Rietz
Audrey ConnerRosberg
Keith Edgerton
Craig McKenzie
Janii Pedersen (student)

Rakesh Sah
Bruce Brumley
Johanna Mitchell
Gershon Bulgatz
Matt Redinger

ABSENT: Noreen Lee – *excused*
Lorrie Steerey – *excused*
David Garloff (ex-officio)
Mary McNally (ex-officio)
Mary Susan Fishbaugh (ex-officio)
George White (ex-officio)
Stacy Klippenstein (ex-officio)

Mark Hardt – *excused*
Tasneem Khaleel (ex-officio)
John Cech (ex-officio)
Bob Carr (ex-officio)
Terrie Iverson (ex-officio)

GUESTS: Geoff Gamble
Mike Diede

Rolf Groseth

PRESIDING: Audrey ConnerRosberg, Chair

Audrey ConnerRosberg called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. in the Missouri room of the SUB.

The minutes of September 14 were accepted as presented.

I. Discussion with President Geoff Gamble

Dr. Gamble introduced himself and noted that this is his sixth year as president.

Funding Model Inequities

Do you see a solution to the funding model inequities?

What are you going to do about inequities between Bozeman and Billings faculty salaries?

Dr. Gamble noted that slow change is beginning in the system perspective on the funding model. The entire Montana University System is under funded—we are at about 2/3 of our comparable state systems in neighboring states. The MUS has hired a consultant, Dennis Jones, to review how our funding model works. The data revealed that, compared to like institutions in the region, the worst funded unit was Missoula. The second worst funded was Bozeman. The units of the MUS rely much more on tuition than our comparators because our state funding continues to drop (about 5% every year for the past several years). The state government doesn't have a large enough tax base to support all its offices and programs, so they have to cut corners like higher education. This is why CI-97 is so worrisome, because it could be disastrous for both state government and higher education in Montana.

The Regents have tried to shift some funding to the COTs, but the data indicates the COTs are only mildly under funded comparatively. The solution for some problems is private funding for faculty lines. These partnerships with private business and industry have to be worded carefully and are not appropriate for all academic programs. However, having private funding for one program can shift state funding to another program. The Regents and the Commissioner's Office are developing a new funding model with some elements of the old model.

Dr. Gamble noted that in regard to faculty salaries, they compare positions at Universities in surrounding states using the CUPA (College and University Personnel Association) categories of positions, not a comparison of Billings to Bozeman. Ninety-five percent of faculty at MSU-Billings have salaries comparable to other states' CUPA averages.

Bozeman/Billings Relationship

In light of the new Bozeman logo, what is our “shared identity?”

What is your five-year strategic plan for our relationship?

Dr. Gamble stated that each campus should have its own identity that is built of that unit's history and surroundings. Under the surface of that image, the MSU units need to work as efficiently and effectively together as possible. If this economizing frees up money, that money stays at your campus. In other words, the “front office” should have the feel of Billings and the “back office” should be efficiently working with Bozeman and the other units.

Budget Process

How are Bozeman faculty involved in the budget process?

Dr. Gamble noted that he has formed a shared governance group that makes all the decisions on the Bozeman budget. It is a group comprised of the vice presidents, the deans, faculty, professional employees, classified staff, students, and a community member. They all have equal voting rights. They are very dutiful and they get every detail of the budget information. Dr. Gamble stated that although he is ultimately responsible for the budget, he trusts his budget group to make the best decisions for the

campus. So far, it has worked. However, not every CEO can operate that way. Asking Chancellor Sexton to do so would be unfair. Ultimately, it comes down to trust—trust that the group will make good decisions and the group trusting that they have all the information. Perhaps Dr. ConnerRosberg and Dr. Sexton should attend one of Bozeman’s budget meetings to see how it works.

It was noted that at MSU-Billings, the budget committee and other groups like search committees may suffer from a lack of communication about the committee’s goals. The committee may think they are in a position of authority, but in fact they are not. If the goals were communicated to the committee, there would be less confusion and anger when a different result is reached than the committee intended.

Compensation for grants

Dr. Gamble cited that the 20% rule is not “unwritten.” It is law that state employees cannot have other jobs except through grants and consulting. In those areas, state employees are only allowed to go 20% of their salary over and above their current salary. It is important that everyone know that rule, even if it isn’t fair to some faculty.

Dr. ConnerRosberg thanked Dr. Gamble for visiting with the Senate.

The meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

rjrm