

ACADEMIC SENATE RETREAT MINUTES

DATE: August 25, 2005

PRESENT: Mark Hardt
Sandie Rietz
Audrey ConnerRosberg
Bruce Brumley
Craig McKenzie
George White (ex-officio)

Lorrie Steerey
Paul Bauer
Keith Edgerton
Noreen Lee
Matt Redinger

ABSENT: Randall Gloege – *excused*

PRESIDING: Keith Edgerton, Chair

Keith Edgerton called the meeting to order at 10:36 a.m. in the Missouri Room of the SUB.

I. Welcome – Keith Edgerton, Chair

Dr. Edgerton welcomed the Senators back to another year, and noted that two Senators have left: Alan Davis moved on to another university and Mary Susan Fishbaugh is now the Interim Dean of the College of Education. We will need to fill these positions as soon as possible.

II. Discussion with Interim Provost White

Dr. Edgerton invited Interim Provost George White to speak a bit on himself and how he hopes to manage the job of Provost.

Dr. White stated that he will have some terms that come up again and again, such as CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement). We are always doing CQI, but we need reliable, valid measures. The Board of Regents has mandated that all academic programs will have a cyclic review every seven years, beginning with this fall. Fall 2008 is our next North West accreditation visit, and we have not yet done what they recommended. There are also numerous programs and colleges with accreditations coming up or in progress. This is a storm of work headed our way.

Dr. White also noted that he finds it important to celebrate every milestone and also have fun at work. He does not want to suffer a “death by meetings.”

Several Senators stated that, with the previous Provost, many decisions were already made before the Senate was ever asked for input, if it was even asked. The Senate would like to re-establish an open dialog—collaboration rather than confrontation. The Senate also wants to be involved in the national search for Provost (which will begin this fall).

Sandie Rietz noted that as Dean of the College of Education, Dr. White’s style was to come to people and work out problems before a decision was made.

Dr. White also noted that he will not make promises he cannot keep. He is putting together a task force to begin the three years of work preparing for the North West visit. The task force is very like Lewis and Clark, not knowing what lay ahead, but seeing the ultimate goal. Senate involvement in this process will be essential.

It was also requested that the Senate begin a year-long dialog with Provost White about our business and marketing plans.

III. Other Discussion Items

A. ASMSU-B Survey: Advising Center

It was noted that this survey does not state how many students took the survey, and whether COT students were included. Lorrie Steerey stated that she would talk to the student senators involved and find out more information.

B. New Board of Regents Policies

Keith Edgerton stated that the BOR seems to be headed for uniformity across the University System. Those changes include minimum course grades, use of the plus/minus grading system by all units, a university system GPA in addition to a institution GPA, and evaluation of student transfer credits.

It was noted that our administration has said that MSU-Billings faculty do not have to use plus/minus grading. When students who have pluses and minuses on their transcript transfer in, those notations will be reflected on their MSU-Billings transcript. However, we do not have to use plus/minus for our courses if we don’t want to. It was noted that the Senate cannot dictate how faculty will grade. The question was raised as to whether use of plus/minus will be an individual, department, discipline, or college decision. It was observed that faculty need information on this, and Vice Chancellor Curt Kochner will most likely be supplying some at the Opening Meeting.

It was noted that we are already calculating both an institutional and university system GPA for all students.

It was stated that the evaluation of student transfer credits, which has taken years in some unfortunate instances, will be done in 10 days as mandated by the BOR.

The BOR also approved a modified general education policy, which states (among other things) that students who have completed less than 20 credits of gen ed when transferring must complete their current schools' gen ed requirements. Students transferring with 20 or more credits of gen ed completed will have a choice between completing their current school's requirements or the MUS Core, which is only 30 credits. The BOR is also starting a system-wide General Education Council, which only has four faculty representatives. Faculty must be nominated for this council.

C. Chair Elect

⇒ Matt Redinger **nominated Lorrie Steerey** for the position of Chair Elect, and Sandie Rietz seconded.

⇒ Mark Hardt **nominated Audrey ConnerRosberg** for the position of Chair Elect, and Noreen Lee seconded.

Votes were taken by ballot. Audrey ConnerRosberg won the vote. Her term begins immediately.

D. Update on Academic Foundations status

Mark Hardt, Chair of the Academic Foundations Committee stated that they are getting ready to implement. They will start meeting the second week of classes to begin reviewing the submissions. Also the Committee still needs one member from the College of Arts and Sciences, Natural Sciences.

E. Recruitment & Retention Survey

The survey is ready to go and will be distributed at the Opening Meeting next Thursday. Also the Task Force will need a replacement for Alan Davis. Keith Edgerton volunteered to join the task force.

F. Response from Chancellor Sexton: Budget & Communication Issues

Dr. Edgerton stated that the Chancellor did respond to our various issues last spring, but classes had ended. He responded on the number of lecturers and LOAs, but only for the main campus. The COT was not included in the numbers. He also responded about the fitness center and the baseball program.

It was noted that lecturers have to be reappointed every year—every spring they worry if they will have a job. Some of our lecturers have been here 8 to 10 years. After a certain

point, they should become permanent. It was further noted that losing faculty leads to poor program quality, so this is also an assessment issue.

It was cited that at the COT, there are many programs with 40 students in them and no full-time faculty to run the program. Several programs are run by part-time faculty, and the administration has no plans to hire full-time/permanent faculty. Many issues have arisen because the COT Faculty have a different contract, and the administration has taken advantage of that fact. It was suggested that the Senate get a report of the working conditions out at the COT, or at least get the numbers for the COT that the Chancellor has already supplied for the main campus.

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

rjrm