

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES**DATE:** November 6, 2025

PRESENT: Suzette Nynas
Emily Arendt
Heather Thompson-Bahm
John Pannell
Melissa Boehm
Kurt Toenjes (ex-officio)
Susan Gilbertz (ex-officio)
Kim Hayworth (ex-officio)

Matt Queen
Jen Lynn
Mel Walker
Christine Whitlatch
Sue Balter-Reitz
Tami Haaland (ex-officio)
Vern Gagnon (ex-officio)
Eileen Wright (ex-officio)

ABSENT: Debra Schoenfeld*
Paul Pope*
Melanie Reaves (ex-officio)*
Leslie Weldon (ex-officio)*
* *excused*

Rachael Waller*
Vikash Kumar (student)
Lee Vartanian (ex-officio)*
Sam Boerboom (ex-officio)

GUESTS: Joann Stryker
Melinda Tilton
Kathleen Thatcher
Carl Castles

AJ Otjen
Mara Pierce
Cheri Johannes

PRESIDING: Suzette Nynas, Chair

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

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Nynas noted that Cindy Bell, Director of Grants & Sponsored Programs, has said they must cut CARE and PTSE grants by about half. Much of the funding for these grants is from grant indirect costs, and many of our grants have been cut.

The farewell for Brett Weisz is November 13.

The Campus Holiday Party is Thursday, December 11 at 5:00 p.m. in the Glacier Room.

Student Health Services is running a food drive, collecting through November 13.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of October 23 were accepted as presented.

III. PROVOST & VICE CHANCELLOR REPORTS

Provost Lee Vartanian

Dr. Vartanian is out sick, but a brief report is attached to these minutes.

Vice Chancellor for Student Access & Success Kim Hayworth

Dr. Hayworth noted that the Student Health Services food drive will take any non-perishable food. However, they do boxes for Thanksgiving and would like to stock those with specific donations. Students can sign up for the Thanksgiving food boxes with a QR code starting tomorrow.

Student Health Services also completed their accreditation visit and have received their report. They have been reaccredited.

The Military and Veterans Success Center has been monitoring any issues for our military-affiliated students and the government shutdown. At this time Shane Grantham, Director, is not aware of any student with impacted benefits. If students have any questions about their benefits, he is happy to research any concerns and has been sending updates to students. The Military and Veterans Success Center is also holding a free Chili Mac feed for all students on November 12.

Housing, Advising, and the Academic Support Center are holding a “Registration Rodeo” on November 20 to promote Spring 2026 registration.

The scholarship application opens December 1.

IV. OTHER REPORTS

None.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Title	Status	Received
CSCI 223: Software Development	Edited	10/23/2025
Computer Programming and Application Development Associate of Applied Science Degree	Edited	10/23/2025
Communication Bachelor of Arts Degree	Edited	10/23/2025
Radiologic Technology Associate of Applied Science	Edited	10/23/2025

Business Administration Accounting Option Bachelor of Science Degree	Edited	10/29/2025
Business Administration Finance Option Bachelor of Science Degree	Edited	10/29/2025
Business Administration General Business Option Bachelor of Science Degree	Edited	10/29/2025
Business Administration Management Option Bachelor of Science Degree	Edited	10/29/2025
Business Administration Marketing Option Bachelor of Science Degree	Edited	10/29/2025
College of Business Pre-Admission & Business Core	Edited	10/29/2025
Mathematics Bachelor of Science Degree	Edited	10/29/2025
Mathematics Teaching Licensure Option Single Subject Endorsement Bachelor of Science Degree	Edited	10/29/2025
EDU 330: Emergent Literacy	Deleted	10/29/2025
Early Childhood Studies Minor	Edited	10/29/2025
Reading (K-12) Teaching Minor	Edited	10/29/2025
Chemistry Bachelor of Science Degree	Edited	10/29/2025

⇒ Motion by Sue Balter-Reitz, seconded by Matt Queen to **approve the consent agenda.**

⇒ Motion carried.

VI. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

Group 1		
ARTZ 124: Introduction to Art Education	Added	10/23/2025
ARTZ 402: Teaching Art I--K-12	Edited	10/23/2025
Art Education Bachelor of Arts Degree (K-12)	Edited	10/23/2025

⇒ Motion by Sue Balter-Reitz, seconded by Matt Queen to **approve Group 1.**

Mara Pierce, Art, noted that these changes add the intro course so she sees the students earlier in the program.

⇒ Motion carried.

Group 2		
EDCI 573: Pedagogical Instructional Dsgn	Deleted	10/24/2025
EDCI 574: Adaptations for Diverse Lrnrs	Deleted	10/24/2025
EDCI 575: Asmnt of Online Lrng Outcms I	Deleted	10/24/2025
EDCI 576: Instructional Materials Design	Deleted	10/24/2025

EDCI 577: Asmnt of Online Lrng Outcms II	Deleted	10/24/2025
EDCI 597: Contemporary Issues Tchr Educ	Deleted	10/24/2025

⇒ Motion by John Pannell, seconded by Matt Queen to **approve Group 2.**

These courses were in the Ed Tech master program, which no longer exists.

⇒ Motion carried.

Group 3		
BMKT 413: Sports Marketing	Added	10/29/2025
Marketing Minor	Edited	10/29/2025

⇒ Motion by Jen Lynn, seconded by Matt Queen to **approve Group 3.**

AJ Otjen, Chair of Business Administration, stated they are sprucing up the Marketing Minor by adding this new course and removing a required economics course. Non-business majors can complete the Marketing Minor.

⇒ Motion carried.

Item 4		
International Business Certificate	Added	10/29/2025

Dr. Otjen requested that the Certificate be pulled from the agenda.

Title	Status	Received	Request Type
Updated General Education Program Learning Outcomes	Added	10/30/2025	Policy

⇒ Motion by Sue Balter-Reitz, seconded by Matt Queen to **approve the updated General Education Program Learning Outcomes.**

Melinda Tilton, Chair of the General Education Committee, noted that they are now on their third cycle of assessment. The Committee uses a rubric which differentiates the student learning is emerging, progressing, or achieving the learning outcome. In the most recent round of assessment, only one course/assignment actually achieved learning outcome number five: Use quantitative and qualitative information to provide solutions to social and/or ethical problems. After a thorough discussion, the Committee voted to remove outcome five; it will not be rewritten. It was noted that the removed outcome could be achieved later in the student's career at MSUB. However, since we do not have a Gen Ed capstone, doing that kind of assessment is really beyond the Gen Ed Program.

⇒ Motion carried.

Biology BA Moratorium	Added	10/16/2025	Policy
Broadfield Science Teaching Licensure Option BS Moratorium	Added	10/16/2025	Policy
Broadfield Science BS Moratorium	Added	10/16/2025	Policy

⇒ Motion by John Pannell, seconded by Matt Queen to **approve the three moratoriums.**

Carl Castles, Chair, Biological & Physical Sciences, noted that the Biology BA has not been well enrolled for some time. It was a fall-back program for some of their other biology majors, but the need is not there. They will be revising the Biology BS to add some of the flexibility of the BA.

The Broadfield Science and Broadfield Science Teaching programs have recently fallen apart because the Department's geologist left. The teaching major requires that four sciences be covered, including geology, and they will not be rehiring that position. Further, the two Broadfield programs have had chronically low enrollment. There are currently five students across their four-year plans of study combined for both programs. The Department has worked out a deal with Rocky to have the geologist who left MSUB teach the courses current students need to finish, but this is not a long term solution. The Department needs to put a stop to any more students entering the program, so a moratorium is requested.

Dean Kurt Toenjes noted that the Department will hire an organismal biologist to replace the geologist position. With the RVU veterinary school firing up, we have the opportunity to create a pre-veterinary biology major that will feed directly to RVU.

It was noted that the College of Education does not support the moratorium of the Broadfield Science Teaching Option. There are currently 14 open positions in the State of Montana for science teachers. Removing this program means removing the opportunity to get teachers in those positions. Also, there are options in the OPI PEPP standards for the earth science education courses. Educational Theory & Practice is working on creative solutions for the missing geology. It was noted that MSUB is not the only institution in Montana that offers the Broadfield Science Teaching major.

It was cited that the current programs—which we are unable to offer—can be placed on moratorium. A moratorium can be removed and it will give the College of Education time to put together some creative options for the teaching major.

⇒ Motion carried with 2 opposed.

It was noted that there seems to be some conflict regarding notifying students of moratoriums. NWCCU requires that they approve the moratorium before students are notified. However, OCHE requires that students be notified as part of the moratorium process.

VII. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Proposed The College Experience Committee

It was agreed the committee should be a standing committee of the Senate, not a subcommittee of the Gen Ed Committee. This committee would take over what the working group has been doing. It was noted that staffing issues and arrangements were way more complex than the working group expected, so a standing committee for this is very important.

The TCE Committee would assess the course outcomes, but the Gen Ed Committee would still be assessing the Gen Ed program (perhaps using TCE assessment data).

The three-year terms of the initial members should be staggered so they are not all leaving at the same time. Some should have one- or two-year terms to start.

The TCE Committee should work to get the courses scheduled an academic year in advance.

Department Chairs should be included in the scheduling process. They were added to function #3 of the Committee bylaws.

The chair of the committee should also receive reassigned time. The Provost is aware this is currently an unfunded mandate to the Deans, and is working on the situation. However, we can't guarantee reassigned time for the chair. We can always add reassigned time for the chair to the bylaws later.

Cheri Johannes, Registrar, noted that it is important to have a point of contact for the course. It "lives" in Communication but that Department is entirely out of the loop on scheduling.

The new committee will be ready for approval at the next Senate meeting (December 4). As soon as possible after approval, faculty need to be appointed to the committee so it can begin meeting in Spring 2026.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Dean Susan Gilbertz noted that we need a liaison with OCHE who understands all the steps and forms. We can no longer ask Sue Balter-Reitz for this as she is not in that position anymore. Kathleen Thatcher, Director of Assessment & Accreditation, noted that no announcement has been made yet, but her offices will be taking over the OCHE liaison responsibilities.

A question was raised about co-convened courses whether the two can be in different modalities. It was responded both by the Senate and the Registrar that the two co-convened courses cannot be in different modalities.

Dr. Johannes thanked the faculty for making it through all the new technology thrown at them this Fall. Registration went surprisingly well, but please send her feedback on anything that might be missing from the new process. It was noted that the “How to Register” info sheets on the website need to be updated, including how to register on a phone.

The meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

rjrm

Provost Lee Vartanian Report

Paul Foster, Director of Office of International Studies, was asked to join a delegation led by Governor Gianforte to Japan and South Korea in October to present business and investment opportunities as well as highlight how our universities provide world class educational opportunities, exchange opportunities, and language and cultural studies

On October 21, the **Chancellor and OIS hosted a delegation from Turkmenistan**. The visitors, made up of administrators and faculty from different universities, discussed opportunities for academic and scholarly collaboration.

John Pannell is representing MSUB on a newly created MUS AI Taskforce. The official charge of the task force is to:

1. Promote appropriate use and adoption of AI tools by MUS stakeholders working in instructional, operational, and research areas;
2. Inform strategic use of AI tools through regular discussion and assessment of AI use cases across the system and state;
3. Recommend shared guidelines that assist in the ethical and productive use of AI;
4. Develop recommendations for system investment, procurement, policy, and/or guidance.

Further AI news: At the upcoming November BOR meeting, UM and MSU will propose two new centers that promote ethical, educational, and research applications of AI: “Center for Human-Centered AI”(UM) and “MSU Institute on AI.” Both universities promise to work collaboratively with higher education institutions across the state on matters related to teaching, productivity, and research.

Walter and Charlotte Pippenger Excellence in Innovation Award has been extended to Monday, November 10. The application can be found here:

https://msubillings.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_43gll1kqD6SWjno