

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES**DATE:** September 11, 2025

PRESENT: Suzette Nynas
Debra Schoenfeld
Rachael Waller
Paul Pope
Sue Balter-Reitz (virtually)
Melanie Reaves (ex-officio)
Lee Vartanian (ex-officio)
Kim Hayworth (ex-officio)
Eileen Wright (ex-officio)

Matt Queen
Mel Walker
John Pannell
Melissa Boehm
Tami Haaland (ex-officio)
Vern Gagnon (ex-officio)
Leslie Weldon (ex-officio)
Sam Boerboom (ex-officio)

ABSENT: Heather Thompson-Bahm*
Kurt Toenjes (ex-officio)
* *excused*

Vikash Kumar (student)
Susan Gilbertz (ex-officio)

GUESTS: Bre Griffin
Joann Stryker
Jana Marcette

Kathleen Thatcher
Cheri Johannes

PRESIDING: Suzette Nynas, Chair

Suzette Nynas called the meeting to order at 3:41 p.m. in the Chancellor's Conference Room.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The special elections for CLASS and City College are underway. Nominations are due September 22. Voting will be September 24-October 1, so the new Senators will be at the next meeting.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of April 24 and August 20 were accepted as presented.

III. PROVOST & VICE CHANCELLOR REPORTS

Provost Lee Vartanian

Dr. Vartanian noted that, as he starts his work at MSUB, an obviously hot topic is communication. There is a commitment at the Cabinet level and at Jacket Leadership Team to *over* communicate. Dr. Nynas presented on shared governance to JLT.

The Prison Education Program (PEP) is being led by a dean, but this is not a good fit, as PEP needs a director who is not also being a dean. Dean Haaland will be stepping out of this role and a faculty liaison will be chosen instead. A call for that position will be going out soon. There are many questions yet to be resolved with this program: Who is being served and how many? Are the academic programs utilized a good fit for PEP? What are the costs?

The BSLS and BAS are to be reviewed this year, per the APR schedule. However, as there is no one department or faculty member shepherding these programs, review has proven difficult. They have decided to move the APR for the BSLS and BAS to next year, in order to organize more guidance for the programs.

Dual Enrollment is a growing program at MSUB, with only one support staff member. Dr. Vartanian is looking into adding a position or two.

There will be a state-wide A.I. Convening next week, in which John Pannell, Austin Bennett, and Kari Dahle-Huff will be participating.

Vice Chancellor for Student Access & Success Kim Hayworth

Dr. Hayworth thanked the faculty for being involved with fall kick off, as it was a huge success. It may have been their largest crowd yet.

Tracy McLuskie is the new Director of Disability Support Services. She is an alum and came to us from the MSUB Foundation. She started September 2.

Please continue to send in early alerts in Navigate, especially for students who are no-shows at the beginning of the semester. There are also 325 students who still need to arrange payment, as of this week. Cheri Johannes, Registrar, noted that number has come down to 84 today.

The Native American Achievement Center's first Elder in Residence is wrapping up Friday with a final talk and lunch. The lunch is free, so please attend.

The Yellowjacket Emergency Pantry has been rebranded as the Buzz Stop. They have food, personal hygiene products, and school supplies. The Buzz Stop will be supported by Student Health Services, rather than the Center for Engagement.

Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance Leslie Weldon

Ms. Weldon noted that, over the summer, contracts for the food service and vending/pour rights were finalized. Sodexo was the only bidder for food, and Coke got the vending/pour rights contract again.

Intermountain Health staff have begun parking on campus. It was noted that many of these folks are not using the crosswalks, so Poly has become a bit dangerous. Ms. Weldon will pass this on to Intermountain Health.

The Long Range Building Process has begun for the next biennium. OCHE has a new staff person coordinating this process, which will help to have our requests to the legislature organized.

MyInfo is becoming MyMSUB, which goes live October 2. There is training available for timesheet entry.

The cybersecurity training required of all faculty and staff is at 50%.

IV. OTHER REPORTS**Cheri Johannes, Registrar: Updating credit hours/contact hours/clock hours definition**

Dr. Johannes noted that we should look at our definitions for these different hours and make sure they are matching what we are actually doing. She requested that a couple faculty members work with her on this. Dr. Nynas will find a couple of volunteers.

V. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**A. MUS BA & BS Degree Requirements**

Dr. Balter-Reitz noted that the BOR will hear next week a new philosophy and maximum credits for Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees. The BA will be allowed to have a max of 40% of the credits to the major, while the BS will allow 67% of the credits to the major. "Major requirements" will include anything that is not Gen Ed or electives, so majors will have to include language and other requirements. The new policy will likely be approved at the November BOR meeting, and will be effective for 2026-27, but we would have 7 years, in alignment with the APR process, to update programs.

VI. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

Title	Status	Received	Request Type
Programs on Moratorium Past 3-Year Mark	Added	9/4/2025	Resolution

⇒ Motion by Paul Pope, seconded by John Pannell to **approve the list of programs past the 3-year mark for deletion**.

It was noted that all of the programs on this list are past the 3-year time of moratorium, so in order to revive them, they would have to be proposed to OCHE/BOR as *new* programs. If the Senate approves, Rita Rabe Meduna will move forward with deleting all of them.

⇒ Motion carried.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

Title	Status	Received	Request Type
Academic Standards and Scholastic Standing Committee Report 2024-2025	Added	9/3/2025	Report
Library Committee Report 2024-2025	Added	9/3/2025	Report
UCC Report 2024-2025	Added	9/3/2025	Report
Commencement Committee Report 2024-2025	Added	9/3/2025	Report

⇒ Motion by Paul Pope, seconded by John Pannell to **accept all of the committee reports.**

⇒ Motion carried.

Programs on Moratorium which will reach 3-year mark this year	Added	9/4/2025	Resolution
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This list is the programs which will reach the 3-year mark this academic year, and thus will need to be deleted at the end of this academic year.

⇒ Motion by Paul Pope, seconded by Matt Queen to **accept this list.**

⇒ Motion carried.

VIII. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS continued

B. Canvas/Navigate Integration

Dr. Johannes noted there are many types of data that Navigate can pull from Canvas. Right now, we are only pulling the same data D2L offered: last login and last activity with a course. There are many, many options with Canvas, but importing course assignment information to Navigate (where perhaps unintended audiences can see it) may not work well for MSUB. The intent is to have more stuff available to faculty to make using Navigate easier. The Executive Committee will discuss this.

C. Bylaws Subcommittee

Items to review in the bylaws include only running for one Senator position at a time and special elections for vacancies. Suzette Nynas, Melissa Boehm, and Matt Queen will conduct this review.

D. Graduate Programs Enrollment & Recruitment

Sam Boerboom, Director of Graduate Studies, reported that they are up 10 students over last fall. Working with University Communications and Marketing, they ran a digital recruitment campaign on Facebook and Instagram, which garnered a lot of attention. We are unable to know if that attention translated to applications. MSUB is also a member of the Billings Chamber, and many Chamber members have tuition match programs for their employees. Grad Studies is working with the Chamber to assemble a list of all those employers who offer tuition match. UCAM is also working with Grad Studies on calculated use of printed materials at grad fairs and conferences.

Dr. Boerboom is also working with Christina Wulf, Associate Director of Admissions Evaluations & Processing, on the application pipeline to eliminate barriers. Together, they are meeting with each graduate program. Graduate Studies is also staffed by Lisa Daychild, Graduate Advisor. They handle inquiries, but graduate admissions is handled by the Admissions Office.

The Graduate Committee will meet Friday to begin work on transfer language in the catalog.

IX. OLD BUSINESS**Plan of Study Project**

Dr. Nynas reported that the plans have all been gathered. Bryan Grove, Advising Center, is double checking all of them, including all the education majors cross-checking with COE. The Plans of Study should all be posted to the website in October.

X. NEW BUSINESS

The course rotations are a Cabinet initiative for retention this year. It's best practice to have set rotations so students can plan ahead. We need to find out what we're doing now and any pinch points.

Please remember to do the strategic plan survey.

The meeting adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

rjrm