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**Minutes**
**Draft Minutes**
**Faculty Senate Meeting**
**5:00 PM, November 8th, 2005**
**Mountain Con Room, SUB**

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*minutes submitted by secretary A. Stierle*

*Members present*: *Chair* Grant Mitman, John Brower, Bruce Madigan, Karen Porter, Mark Sholes, Susan Leland, and *Secretary* - Andrea Stierle

*Member absent:* Miriam Young, Paul Conrad, Rod James
*In attendance*:  Rick Donovan, Lou Glassy

1.  **approval of minutes-Oct 25th**

2.  **Lou Glassy-Instructional Improvement Committee**

3.  **Student Evaluation of Faculty Form**

4.  **Other**

## 1.      Minutes from October 25t^h meeting.

Minutes from the October 25th meeting were approved and have been posted to the Faculty Senate posting.  Grant Mitman will also append the minutes to the Faculty Senate website.

## 2.      Instructional Improvement Committee

The Faculty Senate would like to provide the Montana Tech faculty members more avenues for improving their teaching effectiveness than simply being told to "get their numbers up", or to attend "boot camp".  Faculty are a valuable resource and investment for a college.  Most faculty members were selected as the result of a nationwide search and should possess the necessary background and credentials for success.  If there is something Montana Tech can do to help them succeed, then in it is important to provide those means. To this end we have enlisted the Instructional Improvement Committee to partner with the Senate in an attempt to provide local options for instructional improvement.  Lou Glassy, IIC chair, discussed possible strategies with the Senate.  In the past, the IIC has sponsored teaching effectiveness workshops and guest  speakers.  Some Senate members have attended these workshops and found them helpful.  More recently the IIC has funded small grants for individual instructors to upgrade specific classes.  These have also been effective and have allowed instructors to provide state of

the art software programs and other instructional aids.  With so much emphasis on teaching evaluations, however, it is appropriate to provide resources for helping Montana Tech retain their faculty members.

Lou commented that the IIC would like to encourage faculty to use the Small Group Instructional Diagnosis process for both feedback and assistance in determining what is and what is not working for them.  As originally described (from an earlier IIC workshop) the SGID was a formative tool that faculty could use.  A faculty member, often from another department, would visit the class, and ask essentially three questions:

- What do you like best about the course/instruction?
- What do you like least about the course/instruction, and how could the instructor improve the course?
- What could you do to make the course better for you and the instructor?

The guest "diagnostician" would talk to the students, then meet with the instructor and relate the feedback provided by the students.  The findings were not reported to the Department Head, but the faculty member could choose to inform his/her Head that the SGID had occurred.  (See website: http://www.ntlf.com/html/pi/9705/sgid.htm ).

Mitman commented that some Department Heads mandate SGID's and conduct them for their faculty, then use them in a summative fashion.  Susan Patton supported this use of SGID's in the October 25th Faculty Senate meeting, (see minutes) but it is not in keeping with the original intent.  Lou would like to see the IIC and Faculty Senate support the original design and intention of the SGID as a useful tool for instructional improvement.

Other possibilities for II workshops were discussed and will be discussed at the IIC meeting and at further Faculty Senate meetings.

**3.      Student Evaluation of Teaching Form**

The Discussion Board forum concerning the student evaluation of teaching form ended in a tie – of the faculty members who responded 13 are satisfied with the form, 13 are not satisfied.  A few faculty posted comments along with their votes.  These concerns are generally focused on how the evaluations can be misused.  There is concern that the administration is moving towards a "no child left behind" policy – each and every student in the class must like the instructor and the instructor's approach to teaching.  This includes students who never attend class, and students who put little or no energy into a class and earn a D or F.  This is not reasonable.  Assessment is important, but if 80-80% of the students approve of an instructor and 10 % do not, is that truly ineffective teaching.  Many of the students who write negative evaluations may be reflecting their own frustration at not being prepared for the college experience, not having understood the prerequisites for a given class, or simply not wanting to work at a given subject.   Even good instructors fail to reach certain students.

Another concern voiced by faculty members is the disparate use of evaluations by the administration. Some faculty members believe that a few negative evaluations are used as grounds for denial of promotion/tenure even if their overall evaluation portfolio is strong.

## 4.      Promotion/Tenure Concern

There has been concern in recent years that promotion/tenure decisions are not always being made using uniform criterion. A faculty member brought forward a concern to the Senate regarding procedures for promotion/tenure. He thought that other faculty should be informed of the actual criterion by which they were being judged. He moved that

- all reference to "majority of students" be dropped from the first criteria for instructional performance and replaced with a percentage that is agreed upon by the administration

- the current criteria for evaluation of Research and Professional Development be dropped altogether and replaced with:
"*...patents, licenses and publications in peer reviewed journals of a stature to be determined by the chancellor of the university"*

Discussion focused on the second point. The discussion resulted in a formal resolution:

- The current criteria for evaluation of Research and Professional Development be dropped altogether and replaced with:
"*...patents, licenses and publications in peer reviewed journals of a stature to be determined by the chancellor of the university"*

The Senate voted on this resolution – it did not pass. The current Handbook lists many different criteria for assessing Research and Professional Development. All present agreed that the current Handbook is fair in its treatment of Research and Professional Development. If, however, a single faculty member actually received a letter from the administration stating that the only important determinant is peer-reviewed publication, then the faculty should be informed of that single milestone determinant. If other faculty members are promoted or tenured without a peer-reviewed publication, then there is also a problem with equity and consistency. If a single faculty member is denied promotion or tenure because of a few negative evaluations and other faculty members are promoted/tenured with equivalent evaluations, there is also a problem with equity and consistency. Hence, the resolution.

Although the Senate did not support the resolution, they strongly encouraged the faculty member to bring these concerns to the General Faculty meeting for discussion. If there is a perception that faculty are not being evaluated in a manner consistent with the Handbook or consistent with one another, then this is a concern worth addressing.

*The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 PM*