Montana Tech Instructional Faculty Meeting

Thursday, April 4, 2013
2:00-3:00 p.m.
Location: Library Auditorium

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order: Jerry Downey, Chair

32 faculty members and 4 administrators attended the meeting.

Administrative announcements:
Doug Abbott, Provost

- The collaborative Materials Science PhD proposal will be discussed at the upcoming May 23-24 Board of Regents meeting.
- Montana Tech is due for a Northwest accreditation visit next year. In fact, this year would have been our 3-year visit (visits in years 1, 3, 5 and 7) but it was postponed to next year.
- A campus-wide email was recently sent from Commissioner Clay Christian about new money available for performance based funding. Doug recommends that faculty members read it.

Don Blackketter, Chancellor

- House Bill 2, which contains the college affordability plan, is being debated today (April 4).
- House Bill 14, the bonding program bill, contains 73 million dollars for buildings in the MUS system. This bill is still open to amendments, but the bonding has been moved to House Bill 5, Long-range building appropriations.
- Pay plan, which started at 5/5, 5% for the 2015 bi-annual, is now looking like 3 and 3. Several formulas are being proposed. Some involve graduated scales for wage increases, with larger percent increases going to employees in lower compensation positions and smaller percent increases going to those in higher compensation positions.
- Budget process – all units have made their reports. It appears that there will be significant one-time only funds ($500,000 to $600,000).
- Kudos: Montana Tech received another Goldwater Scholarship this year. The Chancellor recognized the members of the committee that made this scholarship happen.

Jerry Downey, Senate Chair

- Highland College announced that it is holding the first Student Research Day for Montana's 2-Year Colleges on Friday, April 19th. Poster and project presentations will be made from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. All are welcome to attend.

- Moodle 2 is going live soon. It is significantly different than Moodle 1. One-on-one training can be arranged by contacting the CTS help desk. Starting next week (the week of April 8-12), you may learn about Moodle 2 by accessing Faculty 101 in MyMTech.

Faculty Senate actions in AY 2012-2013: Jerry Downey, Chair, reviewed the Senate actions to date for AY 2012-2013.

February 2013 Faculty Senate vote:
- 11 to 7 to recommend Academic Calendar Alternative 2
- 18 to 2 to endorse the establishment of a Professor of Practice faculty classification at Montana Tech
- 17 to 1 to approve the Materials Science Ph.D. Proposal to the MUS Board of Regents

December 2012 Faculty Senate vote:
- Unanimous approval of the CRC recommendations as outlined in the minutes of the 27-Sep-12 and the 7-Nov-12 CRC meetings
- Unanimous approval of the List of December 2012 Graduates.

October 2012 Faculty Senate vote:
- 16-3 in favor of having the departments define their standards for tenure and promotion.
- 15-4 in favor of 14 + 1 week semesters (vs. 15 + 1)
- 10-9 against declaring TECHXPO to be a non-instructional day
- 15-4 in favor of holding TECHXPO on Thursday instead of Wednesday if it is declared a non-instructional day.

Reinstitute the faculty satisfaction survey: Jerry Downey, Chair

The purpose of the survey is to determine faculty satisfaction with the various administrators, offices and facilities. If there are questions you'd like to see on the survey, send them to your representative or to Jerry. Also, you are invited to serve on the committee. The draft survey will be reviewed by the Senates at the April 26th meeting. At the March 28 Senate meeting, it was suggested that the survey should not be restricted to questions with "strongly agree", "somewhat agree", "agree", etc. but also space for respondents to provide comments.

Professor of Practice (PoP): Jerry Downey, Chair

Jerry showed the two paragraphs that the Senate drafted. These paragraphs have not yet been voted on by the Senate.

Discussion:
- How does the PoP designation differ from the Instructor positions?
- It has the term "professor" in it so it might be more attractive. Also probably the pay range will be higher than instructor. Also, the idea of PoP is that the person has lots of experience, whereas an instructor may not have.
- If PoP becomes available, chances are that the instructors would like to transition to PoP. Doug Abbott anticipated that this would not be allowed.
- If instructors with extensive experience are not allowed to transition, a two-tier system would be created. Instructors, who are often female, would be paid much less than PoP.
- It is important to safe guard against creating inequities. Possibly this could be tightly defined initially and a trial be run hiring PoP in the Petroleum and General Engineering Departments only.
- Would the PoP positions be tenurable? Research of PoP on other campuses revealed that, while the positions vary significantly in other respects, one common characteristic is that the positions are not tenurable.
- This may be a dangerous precedence since PoP positions are being used to reduce tenure lines on other campuses.
- General Engineering has been trying to hire a faculty member for their Construction Engineering option. A PhD is required for tenure track positions in General Engineering. However, some feel that a faculty member with lots of experience may be preferable to a faculty member with a PhD but little experience. General Engineering would like to be able to hire someone with a lot of experience, not a PhD, and to pay them more than they would pay an instructor.
- Why doesn't General Engineering change their departmental standards so a PhD isn't needed for Construction Engineering faculty?
- Education is one of the places where you see PoP because a PhD isn't always as important as experience. A problem is that this could create some inversions with current instructors who have a lot of experience.
- If PoP is tenurable, then there is no difference between it and our current designations.
- Why not write department standards to get the people that (your department) needs? That is the purpose of the departmental standards.
- Is the only impediment to departments getting the people hey need the departmental standards? If so, change the departmental standards and don't create a new designation.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:10pm.