

Montana Tech Faculty Senate
Meeting Minutes

September 17th, 2025 • Mill 201 • 12:00 p.m.

Senators Present: Scott Risser, Scott Juskiewicz, Janet Cornish, Foued Badrouchi, Brahma Pramanik, Dave Gilkey, Andrew Traut, Chris Roos, Matt Egloff, Charie Faught, Courtney Young, Atish Mitra, Glen Southergill, and Bryce Hill

- I. Welcome and Approval of the Minutes – The meeting commenced at 12:00 p.m. and a quorum was established. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the September 3rd, 2025 meeting, with the following amendment: Scott Rosenthal will serve on the University Budget Committee. The motion carried.
- II. The Curriculum Review Committee will provide drafts of new (simplified) proposal applications. The General Education Review Committee (GERC) is exploring new classes and methods for measuring objectives and student outcomes. There was discussion among the Senators regarding whether this might be a duplication of the accreditation process; Senator Risser noted that the need for establishing objectives and outcomes was identified in the accreditation review process. The members of the GERC are also exploring the possibility of expanding their composition and of updating their charge.
- III. Part-Time/Adjunct/Emeritus Software Access – Requests for access to the Microsoft 365 suite by part-time, adjunct and Emeritus Faculty must be made to the Department Chairs/Directors, who in turn would forward requests to their respective deans. Discussion focused on the cumbersome nature of this process, but no formal action was taken.

In addition, concern was raised about the process of issuing faculty contracts. As of September 17, 2025, full-time faculty members have not received contracts and there has been no communication regarding the reasons (s) for the delay or when contracts would be issued. Senator Mitra pointed out that there were additional concerns related to contracts for faculty members who were non-US citizens.

- IV. Update on Dream Big Priorities and Process – A spreadsheet, which scored the answers to the request for “Big Dream” ideas, was presented to the Senate. Senators were asked to comment on the scoring, noting whether the scores were higher or lower than expected. The Senators had been asked to review this spreadsheet with their Departments. The Senators discussed whether there were some redundancies and/or contradictions with respect to recruitment; specifically, whether declining enrollment in some departments might be the result of the lack of adequate outreach in those fields of study. Other discussion regarding this issue included the following:

The “Big Dream” ideas will be considered by the Chancellor’s Cabinet. Senators noted that the academic concerns of Montana Tech were under-represented on the Cabinet, as only the Provost and the President of the Faculty Senate are members.

Senator Juskiewicz noted that there are no funds in the Library budget for the big ideas put forth. In fact, his budget has been \$100,000 in the red, which has required cancellation of various digital subscriptions to scientific and other academic journals. There is simply no funding for a “Learning Commons” or for the conversion of the second floor of the Library for a permanent home for the Writing Program.

Senator Faught noted that increasing the nursing cohort is not a decision that Montana Tech can make without approval of the Montana Board of Nursing. The Board has increased the cohort to 40, but Tech does not have the student lab and computer infrastructure to support any significant expansion. There are currently 27 nursing students in the Nursing Program and 36 are expected next term.

Senator Gilkey noted that the conversation about our wish list should include funding targets. Senator Hill added that the items listed were not necessarily “big dreams”.

Senator Young asserted that our purpose as Senators was to make it easier for the faculty to teach, research, and engage in service. Specifically, he identified the need to have endowed faculty research positions; currently research obligations leave little time for teaching.

Senator Egloff called for the support of basic infrastructure and fundamentals.

Senator Cornish noted that a discussion of “Big Dreams” requires an understanding of constraints including those of a financial, structural and regulatory nature, as well as opportunities.

- V. First read of policies for review on 10-1-25
 - a. Formulation and Issuance of University Policies
 - b. Naming of Buildings (forthcoming)
 - c. Hazing
 - d. Student Code of Conduct

The Faculty Senate is asked to respond to proposed policy changes in three ways – acceptance, revision and/or rejection. Responses will be conveyed to the Chancellor’s Cabinet.

- VI. (Formerly item X. Proposal for Recusal Policy – Motion to move this item was approved)
Senator Egloff presented a recusal policy and recommended that the policy be forwarded to the Employed Relations Committee for review. The Senate concurred.
- VII. Montana Tech Culture Statement – The Senate discussed department responses to the proposed Culture Statement as presented by the Chancellor. In summary, the Senators noted

that the Statement's purpose is unclear. Senator Young explained that he received little response to the Statement from the Metallurgical and Materials Engineering Department and those who offered a negative response did not make any suggestions for improvement. Senator Traut commented that it was vague and instead should be actionable, presented in the proper context.

Senator Gilkey explained that the intent is to convey assumptions and that the Statement is not intended to be goal driven. Senator Hill noted that his department (Electrical Engineering) had as its primary goal to care about the education of students and to be concerned for faculty wellbeing. Senator Roos noted that a culture statement is already a part of Tech's Strategic Plan.

Senator Faught commented that it was unclear where this Culture Statement fit in with other documents or with the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion. She said, "We should be brave about diversity." She also noted that it is important that the Culture Statement be actionable. Using phrases like "Build collaboration and interconnectivity", "Value everyone" and "Celebrate hard work and determination" would be stronger.

Senator Hill asked if this Statement was meant to be about current conditions or aspirational in nature and Senator Risser noted that it was to be aspirational per the Chancellor's request.

VIII. Course Evaluations – The Provost is requesting that the Course Evaluation Committee submit the names of three vendors and recommendations for the evaluation form to him by the end of October. The process for selecting a vendor will require a competitive bid as the cost is expected to exceed \$10,000. Senator Badrouchi requested that he be placed on the Course Evaluation Committee.

IX. Recording Faculty Senate Meetings – Senator Young moved, and Senator Southergill seconded a motion that the Senate not record meetings and that the Faculty Senate Secretary was covering the meeting proceedings well. Discussion focused on the fact that the meetings were already open to the public and that the recording process might stymie discussion. The motion carried. The Senators discussed the rules governing proxy votes. The Faculty Senate by-laws allow all faculty members to make motions, but only Senators can second motions and vote, as well as make motions.

The remaining items were postponed due to time constraints. A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 1:15 p.m.