

FACULTY SENATE  
SEPTEMBER 25, 2013  
346 LEON JOHNSON  
4:10 PM – 5:00 PM  
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY-BOZEMAN, MONTANA  
Minutes

**Members Present:** Babbitt (Physics), Bennett (English), Bolte (Music), Dougher (PSPP), Durham (COB), Franklin (Micro), Gannon (Chem & Bio Eng), Greenwood (Math), Herbeck (Ed), Herman (NAS), Hostetler (GC), Kaiser (ECE), Larson (M&IE), Lynch (Psych), McMahon (Ecology), Miller (CE), Moreaux (ARS), Newhouse (Art), O'Neill (Arch), Rossmann (Library), Swinford (Soc/Anthro), Seright for Schachman (Nursing), Waller (Hist & Phil), Zabinski (LRES)

**Others Present:** Mary Cloninger, Robert Mokwa, Ron Larsen, Martha Potvin, Robert Peterson, Chris Fastnow, Larry Carucci, Deborah Keil, Kenning Arlitsch

Chair Mokwa called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm, and a quorum was present. The minutes from September 11, 2031 were unanimously approved.

Announcements

- An online public forum is posted on the Faculty Senate website. The access button to enter is on the upper right side of the web site front page: <http://www2.montana.edu/facultysenate/> It will be used primarily for commentary on policies and other issues discussed in senate.
- Chair Mokwa reminded senators that new courses will be announced in senate and posted for review on the senate website under the heading “For Consideration.” Senators are asked to review those courses that might affect their teaching environment and bring comments to senate. Senators will vote for a “consent-package,” as the Curriculum & Programs Committee has carefully vetted each course.
- Senators are asked to consider, or share with their colleagues to consider, volunteering for the service committees recently emailed to them.
- Chair Mokwa asked senators to review the draft letter distributed, referring to the Faculty Handbook, and be ready to discuss at the next FS meeting on October 2, 2013.

Credit Hour Policy Part B – Larry Carucci

- The credit hour policy refers to how we, as an institution, award one credit overall. It is not course-specific. Last semester FS approved the Credit Hour Policy – Part A - a standard seat-time based approach which requires students to spend 15 hours in classroom/30 hours of work outside classroom to receive one (1) credit. At this meeting, senators discussed the alternative approach, Part B, which was drafted and reviewed by Faculty Affairs. This policy addresses the requirements and review processes of courses and their execution via new approaches such as, but not limited to, online classes. During their review, Faculty Affairs was not only interested in the outcomes, but the equivalences (as into those in seat time) in the amounts of work accomplished and learning achieved by the student. The following discussions ensued.
  - Faculty Affairs envisions comparing students’ performance from two populations, online and seat-time based classes, and how they these populations would fare in a subsequent controlled-environment course. Chair Mokwa stated that the two samples might be so different, comparisons may be problematic: The student make-up of an online students course versus those that in a seat-time based class is potentially very different.

- BoR policy 309.1 establishes that 45 hours of time equals one credit hour. Based on our accreditation reviews, MSU has been asked to provide more detail into non-traditional types of courses. Provost Potvin requested that some kind of uniform policy among the other campuses be established. Chair Mokwa has been consulting with the other MUS campuses and found some default more to the BoR policy and/or want to develop their own approaches. Additionally, other campuses are engaged in different teaching venues that are not applicable to this policy (welding, aviation, etc.).
- New non-standard courses would follow the standard application processes along with new criteria as noted under Proposal Requirements. These New courses could include online, blended, condensed and other experimental courses.
- The Review Process for these new courses is rigorous and after passing the two-year/five-year review process, a course would then undergo a regular 10-year review process.
- The Review Process would involve comparison with a seat-time based course and would, most likely, be done at the department level. Planning and Analysis would also assist in those reviews, most likely as a provider of useful data. A subcommittee of C&PC to conduct these reviews might be engaged to examine extreme cases.
- The provost noted that there are different ways of delivering courses that have the same student-learning outcomes and it should be the departmental responsibility to conduct reviews as they already have data on how students succeed in a subsequent course. Chair Carucci noted that new courses brought to the forefront that are 100% online, blended, condensed, given in three weeks or in an afternoon seminar (not equivalent to 45 hours of time), and unless there is significant pre-prep time, should be reviewed.
- Robert Peterson, a faculty-member from LRES, asked for clarification of Part A vs. Part B as he believes a traditional online course falls under Part A. The course he teaches is a semester long, attention-based (seat-based), students are not in class sitting but there are weekly activities that have required hours. Chair Carucci stated that online courses that are already established with a set curriculum and are already comparable to seat-time based courses most likely would not be scrutinized. He went on to say that new courses, however, must demonstrate to the review committee that metrics are in place to ensure that students are actually doing the work (in terms of outcomes, learning, mastery, and actual amounts of time students are dedicating to their tasks).
- Ron Larsen stated that the BoR policy establishes that 45 hours of time equals one credit. How one divvies up that time depends on the type of class. He noted that one of the objectives is not on time invested but on demonstrated learning and, therefore, questions Part B requiring that a student spend 45 hours per semester in a course when they may demonstrate/document learning outcomes equivalent to and sooner than the 45 hours per semester. Chair Carucci stated that the language is trying to articulate that the student may spend the equivalent per term/per credit (45 hours/one credit) in a condensed format if their learning experience is and time invested are still the same and they meet the requirements (AP, CLEP and Course Challenge) of this proposed policy.
- Larsen also noted that courses go through a thorough administrative/faculty review process. This policy does not appear to trust faculty to make it work, and are subjecting courses to another layer of 2/5 year reviews. Chair Carucci stated that historically, the rigorous review process works on traditional seat-

time based courses and should be used on the new alternative approaches, as data about their alternative-approaches courses' success rate is currently sparse.

- A senator who has been on campus for 30+ years stated that his department has never had any of their courses evaluated every ten (10) years. It was noted that senate must first write and implement a policy for that to take place.
- Some faculty are concerned about stifling course innovation if they must go under review.
- Some faculty visualize alternative courses as those not being online courses, but field classes that are experienced-based, outside labs, actual design/building exercises (Architecture), etc.
- A faculty member noted that if students are meeting the learning outcomes even in alternate teaching approaches (cohorts) and as part of assessment plans of the department, then whatever-type courses are being employed must be successful, regardless of their format. Student progression into another class, in some instances and in the case of Nursing, Chemistry, e.g., is not necessarily indicative of a student's success.
- A senator noted that any sort of test connected to learning outcomes only reveals a sample of what students know and that an instructor might even teach students how to take a specific test, but it does not guarantee other kinds of student learning nor quality of education. Chair Carucci acknowledged the dilemma and posed it as one of the challenges in writing this policy.
- The Review Process might include a teacher's performance, as in faculty engagement and presence in the online atmosphere.
- Chair Mokwa made a motion, it was seconded and unanimously approved to table the Part B discussions and gather input about the Review Process from colleagues/department to bring back to FS next week via the online forum on an email to [gough@montana.edu](mailto:gough@montana.edu)

*Signature,*  
*Robert Mokwa, Chair*

*Signature*  
*Michael Reidy, Chair-elect*

*Minutes were transcribed by Gale R. Gough, Administrative Associate, Faculty Senate.*