

FACULTY SENATE
November 16, 2016
Plant Sciences Building, Room 108
3:10 PM – 4:30 PM
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY-BOZEMAN, MONTANA
Minutes

Members Present: Adams (Art), C.Z. Anderson (Film & Photo), R. Anderson (ChBE), Austin (Poli Sci), Belasco (AgEconEcon), Berry (CE), Bolte (Music), Brown (JJCBE), Creel (Ecology), Ewing (LRES), Greenwood (Math), Herman (NAS), Larson (MIE), Lu (PSPP), Lux (Ed), Martin (Mod Lang), Perry (Ag Ed), Rebane (Physics), Reidy (Hist & Phil), Repasky (ECE), Running (Nursing), J. Smith (Psych), Sterman (Library), Thomas (English), Wathen (HHD), Wilmer (Chair-elect), Yamaguchi (Soc/Anthro), Young (Library)

Others Present: Larry Carucci, David Singel

Chair-elect Wilmer called the meeting to order at 3:12 pm, and a quorum was present.

Minutes from the November 2, 2016 meeting were approved.

New Courses and Programs – Chair-elect Wilmer

- Undergraduate courses unanimously approved in CPC and will be voting upon at the next Steering Committee meeting are:
 - EGEN 365: Introduction to Mechatronics
 - PSCI 201: Scope and Methods of Political Science
 - PSCI 250: Introduction to Political Theory
 - PSCI 390R: Research Methods
 - Course Changes –PSCI 338: Comparative Politics
- New Programs:
 - POLS-BA: Political Science Bachelor’s Degree
 - Pending APWG report.
- Undergraduate courses approved Steering on October 25, 2016:
 - ETEC 106: AC Circuit Analysis
 - ETEC 113: Circuit Lab
 - PLTT 101: Fundamentals of Light and Lasers
- Graduate course approved by Steering on October 25, 2016:
 - EDU 611: Advanced Qualitative Research

Policy Discussion – Chair of Faculty Affairs, Larry Carucci and Chair-elect Wilmer

- FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES (Second Reading), Larry Carucci
 - 3. TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES
 - Referring to letter h., discussions ensued:
 - Senator from Education stated that his department has dozens of classes designated as “TBD” in the published schedule, in which many students participate and are traveling across the state. In order to comply with the FH policy Education would need to get approval for 1000’s of students across the state. The Ed. dept head is in favor of the “emergency” section of the code. But could he say, just once, that he approves the entire 495 section instead of each time someone travels to participate?

- After discussions in JAGS, they concluded that “TBD” is not an issue to be concerned about, as “TBD” is a scheduled event. **Carucci will bring back stated concerns to JAGS.**
- Senator from NAS provided a scenario that he would like addressed that does not seem to be addressed in the policy as written: A class decides to meet off-campus to conduct its business over lunch. A student who is an infrequent attendee of the class and who doesn't regularly check email misses all notice of the change and hence misses the meeting. If the instructor fails to notify the department head of this meeting change, does this policy open a window for the wayward student to seek redress?
 - **Wilmer believes this is covered on the Student Travel Policy but will discuss with JAGS.**
- Senator from Music expressed the following concerns.
 - All ensembles have published schedules in the syllabus. Is that considered a published schedule?
 - Marching band has three areas of engagement:
 - Class time which is published and in the Registrar's schedule;
 - Set performance times, outside of our set meeting times and printed in our syllabus; and,
 - Ensembles. For some ensembles, Music has a service, co-curricular activity such as marching band, athletic bands and ad hoc events throughout the semester. How are those to be handled?
 - Music's situation is not the issue being addressed in the policy and as long as the department heads are aware, those kinds of activities are acceptable. Ad hoc performances by the marching band are one-time events and fall under the Student Travel Policy guidelines.
 - **Wilmer and Carucci will bring up at the next JAGS meeting with MSU counsel to get precise wording.**
 - The concern from faculty, and what this policy is trying to address, is that classes might be conducted in a location where the students feel uncomfortable, but do not want to say so.
- o. Should [non-discrimination policy](#) (hyperlinked) be the BoR, the MUS, or University's policy? **Wilmer and Carucci will check.**
- s. If a student questions their grade, the instructor has a responsibility to provide a reasonable opportunity to discuss the matter with the student. Discussions ensued:
 - Senator stated that his departmental response to students who want to know why they did well in a specific area of the exam are told that they passed and that feedback on passing grades is not provided; it is a pass/fail experience. Had they failed, the faculty would have provided feedback.
 - If there is an instance of “Pass” vs. “Passing with Distinction” or “High Pass” then those who get “Pass,” need their A+ and will wonder why they didn't get it; there might some minor feedback explaining why.
 - The dept chair/ chair of the grad student's committee or mentor might provide their feedback, and certainly in the case of denial where a reasonable explanation should be provided to the student.

- Grades, although summative, are not meant to weed people out but to help the student succeed. Students may also grieve if they do not like the feedback.
- Rebane stated that of the two kinds of exams in his department, one of which is the written exam, and there are no grades; it is a comparison of student peers and is not based on formative criterion.
- Singel stated that grades are given: Pass or fail. Faculty provide feedback to the students about the failed exam.
- t. “Graded examinations, papers, and other sources of evaluation will be made available to the student for inspection and discussion.”
 - This opens the door for students to grieve as they will question why one student passed and why they did not. Additionally, it is not only a numerical grade that is important. There are many other aspects of being a graduate student in [department] other than being able to pass that specific exam; there are many indicators used to evaluate a student.
 - Carucci stated that in this case, there is only one source, which is the paper, and they received an “F.”
 - The wording, “other sources made available” does not mean students have access to the content of faculty meetings where conversations about the results of these exams were discussed.
 - **Wilmer – This policy is saying you have to give the graded paper back to the student or place it in storage. Perhaps faculty should take it up with the grad dean.**
 - It is faculty’s responsibility to honestly evaluate abilities of the student and make a decision about whether they should spend another five years in grad school or not. Sometimes faculty may advise students not to proceed in graduate studies, the PhD program, and should pursue something more productive.
 - Singel remarked that that type of communication would be part of the student feedback. The comments about why a student may not have passed the exam have far less to do with it than their diligence and hard work and make it seem likely they may finish in 8 years rather than 5; it’s an organic process. The graduate dean is working with departments to form markers of student progress and have a paper trail to insulate us from the sense that the decisions are arbitrary.
 - Senator recapped the discussions by asking if it is possible that putting a pass/fail grade on the paper is really based on the written exam plus “other things,” and that those “other things” feel intangible and not exemplary of the rest of the students’ behavior? Therefore, faculty may be making these decisions outside of that. Perhaps there should be criteria that say “The [name of the department] student who goes on to a PhD program should meet these reasonable criteria.” Then you are able to say that if these students did not meet those criteria, they cannot move on.
 - With respect to the tangibles and liabilities that go with it, how faculty assesses the gray area on an individual basis tends to be hardest especially as enrollment starts to grow.
 - Senator stated that when their department identifies a graduate student who may not be suitable for a counseling profession, they immediately call a committee to make a remediation plan; the

student must still pass their comp exam, but they know where they are at that point.

- Singel stated that faculty are now doing qualitative assessments. All that has to be done are those criteria formerly articulated, and if faculty are doing it now, they are not making arbitrary decisions; you are making an assessment and having that conversation with the student.
 - **Carucci will take this section back to JAGS for further discussion. Dean Hoo will be invited to the meeting and consult with JAGS members.**
 - t. Senator referenced the sentence, “Grade records will be retained for at least five years.” Who will retain them and how?
 - Carucci – Was discussed in JAGS and there is going to be a follow-up for those who use the D2L bright space record. How long are they maintained, and can we make sure they are available for five years before they disappear? Otherwise, faculty may have to make their own copies.
 - **The Faculty Responsibilities policy will be brought back to the November 30, 2016 FS meeting.**
- RTP – FACULTY RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES (Second Reading 1-4; First Reading. Remaining Document) Chair-elect Wilmer:
 - Wilmer is focusing on changes in the document; not the entire document.
 - 2. REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP
 - Discussions on inclusiveness and diversity for state/federal law consist of 14 categories of protected classes. Therefore, in Section 2. REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP, a link to the BoR Non-Discrimination Policy has been embedded.
 - Continuing on in the document from Section 5 going forward, Carucci called senators’ attention to comments in the margins made by Faculty Affairs. The comments have not been accepted into the document pending review by JAGS on November 21, 2016. Additionally, any comments made during this senate meeting will also be brought to JAGS.
 - 5. CONFIDENTIALTY
 - “c. Meetings of all review committees are closed. The letters and identities of internal and external reviewers will remain confidential and not be revealed to candidates.”
 - **Senators would like a distinction made throughout the handbook between “committee members” and “reviewers” as each operate differently.**
 - 7. PRIMARY REVIEW UNIT
 - “a. Establishing a primary review committee comprised of at least four (4) tenured faculty members. The committee shall be elected or appointed by procedures detailed in the Role and Scope Document of the primary academic unit.”
 - HHD requested that committee number be changed from four (4) to three (3) tenured faculty on the Primary Review Committee to make it less onerous. **Wathen will check to see what their unit document states.**
 - Smith from Psychology stated that since their department is small, they only have three tenured faculty available to serve. Ditto for NAS.

- “b. Selecting external reviewers and soliciting review letters.....”
 - Wilmer/Carucci – Document does not specify whether a certain number comes from the candidate or the department. This is an easing from what we currently do which is half, or more than half, coming from the committee/department and less than half coming from elsewhere.
 - Senator asked if they all may be off of the candidate’s list as this document as written? Senator recalled that most had to be off of the candidate’s list so the candidate could not choose all those who would grant them tenure.
 - Wilmer – It does not say that it can’t be. You are putting it into the primary administrator’s court.
 - Senator stated that the opposite could also be true: None could come from the candidate’s list. There could be zero people from the candidate’s list. The candidate might keep the obvious people off the list so you wouldn’t pick the four people who believe you should not have tenure, etc., and there appears to be a lot of game-playing that is not necessary.
 - Singel – Somewhere in this document, currently, it says that PRC unit, whether the committee or administrator, discusses how the names are chosen.
 - Senator inquired if anyone had issues with the current version of the policy so that they want it changed to a majority?
 - Singel noted that this change began at the level of the work groups long ago and has gained momentum ever since year by year. The difficulty is the depts. tend to honor the requests of the candidate and it is uncertain what will actually come back. Candidates will make solicitations, and sometimes people write back and sometimes they do not; trying to get a majority, not 50%, always involves rushing things at the last minute. So, alleviating that technical problem at the end of balancing letters is helpful.
 - Senator wanted clarification on whether the committee may have all their letters from the person who is being reviewed, or none. That seems unfair, and perhaps FS should reference the AAUP guidelines to see how other universities do this. This wording was originally crafted to accommodate the numbers however; it should not be the guiding language for all as to where the letters come from. The majority of the letters should come from a list not created by the candidate; at least some of the letters, less than a majority, should come from the candidate. And although you might not get all letters you ask for, then you have an extended list and you continue to ask until you get what you need.
 - **Wilmer will bring back to JAGS for discussion.**
 - Senator noted that in small diverse depts. no one knows who has the expertise to review the candidate’s material other than the candidate. Having the hard and fast rule of the majority being chosen by someone other than the candidate, puts the candidate at a disadvantage because those reviewers may not know anything about the candidate’s chosen research area. Language should articulate that you are giving more discretion to the primary administrator/committee other than saying “majority” or “minority.”

- When you have that situation, when a reviewer might not be qualified, do you get reviewers from those people? Do they say they can't do it?
- Senator stated that he didn't know what the response has been in that instance. He has been asked to serve as a reviewer at other universities, and it depends on the nature of what he was being asked to review with respect to the candidate's materials.
- Singel - There was a suggestion for the present policy that dept committees will independently make a list from candidate and if there are names on both lists, those names are considered generated by the committee ordained; not the candidate. That helps the math problem. The candidate formally recommends; that does not preclude the candidate from saying "I attended a conference and you might canvas those attending that conference, as they are in the field"
- Puts more responsibility on the committee head or department head.
- Singel – We should empower committees to decide if it is a bad idea, or not.
- Wilmer – The word “normally” has often been used to resolve in other parts of the document. “Normally the majority of the letters will come from the committee, not the candidate.”
- Senator noted that it is difficult getting reviewers in their department. Current wording is problematic: The “majority” would allow 3. Wording might be modified and could say that “.....there is a requirement of 3 letters with a majority of those....” or say “50%” so the candidate could provide 2 and the committee provide 2. There might be professional organizations: Film and photography are very different and each might not know who the great people are that they should ask.
- Singel – Put weight on the idea that if there are independent constructions of lists and there is overlap between lists, do they count for the candidates, or not? I would like clarification.
- Senator believes that should count for the committees. You don't want the faculty member to not have the best names and not have them count.
- Wilmer - In the case of concurrent reviewers, the reviewer will be counted as an administrator. Needs to be brought to JAGS.
- 10. INTERMEDIATE REVIEW UNIT
 - Second paragraph, second sentence. “Diversity will be the aim in all instances as stated in 2c.” 2c is hyperlinked to the BoR policy.
 - Nursing has a reverse gender balance. For their case, then they should work for 25% the other way.
 - Senator recommended the following change in wording: “Each committee will follow BoR anti-discrimination policy in composition and conduct.” If there is a 25% rule and we meet that by having diversity on a committee, what happens when the diverse members aren't taken seriously and out-voted? Then we have a diverse committee that doesn't fulfill the diversity need.
 - Senator stated that the aim is to have a diverse group as there is ample evidence that diverse groups make better decisions and that concept should not be lost. It doesn't simply imply the law; it is the spirit of having a diverse group making decisions. We have bias

literacy training in another section of the policy and that should satisfy

- Two senators will collaborate on language modification.
- Senator noted that part of the discussion was also that the sentence misdirects the purpose of this policy; diversity on the committee might be changed to “committee diversity.”
- Primary unit does not have to follow this rule; only intermediate. Departments must have bias-literacy training.

Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 pm.

Michael Babcock, Chair

Franke Wilmer, Chair-elect