

MSU Faculty Senate

September 2008 Minutes

The MSU Faculty Senate met at 3:00 p.m. on September 11, 2008, in the Kiowa Ex-Students Room in CSC. Senators present included Black, Alan; Brink, Jan; Bultena, Charles (Treasurer); Capps, Matthew; Carlston, David; Crump, Martha; Debois, Barbara; Dover, Ernie (Parliamentarian); Fields, Peter; Harlow, Kirk; Hiraide, Suguru; Knox, Michelle; Lewis, Gary; McClintock, Stuart (Secretary); Medford, Ann (Chair); Mills, Dana; Morrison, Gary; Owen, James (Vice-Chair); Redmon, Bob; Schmitter, Joel; Wyatt, Frank. Mike Deming and Francis Miller from the Staff Senate also attended the meeting.

The agenda was unanimously approved. The minutes of the August meeting had previously been approved by e-mail.

Current Business:

1. Provost Wiedemann discussed various issues with the Faculty Senate.

A. *Dual enrollment*: In general, the Provost discourages dual enrollment. An MSU degree should reflect that courses were taken at the university. Dual enrollment also means lost revenue for the university. However, there are special situations in which the Provost will allow a student to be dually enrolled. For example, there are occasions in which a particular course a student needs to graduate on schedule may not be offered within that time period at MSU but is offered elsewhere.

B. *State funding*: Dr. Wiedemann stated that we are in a base year. Under the current law, the number of students in class on the twelfth day determines formula funding. The legislature is likely to make a law that moves the date to the last day of classes, and they will apply this criterion to this year if it passes. The Provost asked the faculty to make every effort possible to help students so that they remain in class. She suggested that professors make use of the Academic Support Center to help students who are having academic trouble.

C. *Changing drop date*: Dr. Wiedemann discussed the drop date with the Senate. At present, it is after the tenth week of classes, and there is discussion about making it earlier. Many Senators thought the drop date could be moved to around the eighth week, which would occur right after midterms. Senator Morrison said that he was reluctant to advise a student to drop if that student had not completed at least fifty percent of the class. If the drop date were moved closer to midterm, students on financial aid will be affected. If they drop before completing sixty percent of the course, they must repay their loan. Several Senators said that moving up the date would be an incentive for financial aid students to stay in class.

D. *Graduation with 120 hours*: The legislature is targeting 120 hours for graduation. The university must show that it is seriously considering this target. If a program requires more hours, the Coordinating Board has the right to question it. The Provost stated that the 120 hour figure is not set in stone at MSU, but she asked that there be a good rationale for programs with more than 120 hours.

E. *Compensation for directing theses*: As of this year, it is university policy that professors who have directed seven completed theses will be paid \$2,500. The Graduate Dean and the professor's chair will keep track of the number of theses each professor has directed.

F. *Independent studies*: Professors who direct an independent study will receive fifty dollars each credit hour. Dr. Wiedemann would like to discourage independent studies unless necessary because we need students to enroll in classes that are offered. Senator Wyatt stated that Kinesiology masters' students must do an independent research project as part of the requirement of their degree.

G. *Core curriculum*: The Provost stated that the core curriculum will be examined this year in light of the university's and COPLAC's missions. She has suggested finding a common theme to tie the curriculum together such as The American Democracy Project, sustainability, internationalization, or a combination of the three.

H. *Electronic Course Evaluations*: The present system of electronic course evaluations will continue this semester.

The problems discussed at the Senate's last meeting were reiterated. Low turnout by students makes any data unreliable, and such data cannot, therefore, be used for tenure and promotion purposes. Senators feel that offering incentives to students to do evaluations is unprofessional and a conflict of interest. It is also against the law to require students to complete them.

Senator Redmon said that data generated by anonymous questionnaires with a very low return rate are inherently unreliable and should not be used to make serious decisions like tenure and promotion. Unless controls are put into place to insure high response rates, data from student course evaluation questionnaires are flawed and essentially useless.

Secondly, Senator Harlow said that the evaluation tool itself does not measure professors' performance in on-line courses.

Dr. Wiedemann would like the Senate to recommend the evaluation system the faculty would like to use.

2. *Athletic Council Report*: Representative Paul Guthrie highlighted elements from the Athletic Council Report. He explained that one use of revenue from the student athletic fee will be to address gender equality issues in the athletic department with the addition of a female sport and the hiring of more coaches for the female athletic teams. Guthrie also reported that graduation rates for student-athletes are higher than they are for all students at Midwestern. He also listed GPA by sport and the several academic awards that student-athletes have received.

3. *Banner*: At its last meeting, the Faculty Senate recommended that the university address the weakness in Banner that allows access to personal information. Dr. Rogers shared the Senate's concern and wants loophole in the system fixed.

Juan Sandoval, Mike Dye, and Valerie Maxwell met with the Executive Committee at its September 4th meeting to find a solution to the problem. As a result, the generic password and user screen no longer exists. Now anyone who accesses personal information is accountable.

Committee and Other Reports:

1. Administrative Council (Medford): (no report)
2. Board of Regents (Medford): (no report)
3. Academic Council (Owen): (no report)

4. Enrollment Management (Mills): (see end of minutes)
5. Intercollegiate Athletics Council (Black): (no report)
6. Student Affairs (Medford): (no report)
7. Other active committees: none
8. Financial report (Bultena): The Faculty Senate has \$ 1,065.

Closing Items:

Old Business:

1. Senators Debois and Crump said that 147 of 235 ballots for the Faculty Award have been received. The second round of voting will begin in a week or so.
2. Chair Medford asked the Senate about forming an ad hoc committee to study the evaluation system. Senators felt that polling their constituents during the month might elicit new perspective.

Enrollment Management Council

- I. Concurrent Enrollment: (Dr. Wiedemann)
 - A. The inclination is to find a way to limit concurrent enrollment in another institution if the courses being taken are available at Northwestern.
 - B. If the student is taking the course for convenience or because "it is easier" at another institution; the request would be denied
 - C. If there is a good reason (such as a course needed to avoid a delay in graduation); the request would be approved.
 - D. Courses taken to transfer in will be thoroughly reviewed for equivalency to MSU courses.
 - E. Core courses and courses that MSU is required to accept on transfer will be accepted.
- II. Drop Date: (Dr. Wiedemann): This is a Base Year (to be used for budget data). It appears that the budget could be based on the number of students enrolled on the last day of class (previously it has been based on 12th day roles).
 - A. This situation creates a disincentive to drop students or to encourage students who are performing poorly to drop.
 - B. Instructors still have the authority to drop students.
 - C. Instructors may be asked to state the last day of attendance for students that receive an F.
 - D. Currently the drop date is late in the term, providing a long window of opportunity for students to drop. Consider moving the drop date earlier in the term with the expectation that fewer students will drop.
 - E. No new date was suggested...the matter will be discussed in academic council. If a new date (for spring) is adopted, the change will be widely published so that everyone will know.

- III. (Barb Merkle) Background checks on students are not a viable option will not be pursued; asking a student about a criminal record is considered inappropriate under current interpretations of constitutional rights. Sex offenders are required to report.
- IV. (Barb Merkle) Mustang Rally: November 15, 2008 and February 14, 2009
- V. (Darla English) Enrollment update: 6007 enrolled after voiding on the 12th day of class; 152 have not paid (last year at this time 107 had not paid; however, voids had occurred on the 4th day.
- VI. Registration problems: Four focus groups have been set up to focus on the rough spots in fall registration.
- VII. (Darla English) To facilitate record keeping, a three digit section number for classes will be used, the first digit will signify the term (1=Fall; 2=Spring; 3=Summer one; 4=Summer two).

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Mills

Adjournment: The Faculty Senate meeting adjourned at 4:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart McClintock
Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Ann Medford
Chair of the Faculty Senate

Executive Committee: Thursday, October 2, 2008, at 3:00 in the Apache Room, CSC

Faculty Senate: Thursday, October 9, 2008, at 3:00 in Kiowa Meeting Room, CSC