

Deans' Council

Minutes: Tuesday, January 15, 2013

3:30 – 5:00 pm

President's Conference Room

Martha Potvin
Kenning Arlitsch
Kregg Aytes
Matthew Cairnes
Nancy Cornwell

Brett Gunnink
Robert Hietala
Jeff Jacobsen Wendy Stock
Ron Larsen
Tom McCoy

Helen Melland
John Neumeier
Nicol Rae
Lynda Ransdell

I. Call to order

II. Approval of Minutes of December 11, 2012 Meeting

Minutes unanimously approved as distributed.

III. Information/Announcements

- A. Deans Annual and Sick Leave. Deans are responsible for faithfully reporting any hours or days away from MSU for personal leave, travel or sickness. Please let the Provost's Office know if the Dean is away from MSU for business or personal reasons for more than two days as well as who is responsible for the College during that time.
- B. ADVANCE Data Collection. Data is needed for the ADVANCE grant to report to the granting agency. The ADVANCE team is requesting a search summary for all faculty searches as well as a departmental self-study at the time of faculty annual reviews.
- C. February Retreat Plans. The retreat will be held Friday, February 15, 2013 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the American Simmental Association building. An agenda will be forthcoming. One item will be Colleges' and supporting units' visions and ideas to advance Academic Affairs and the Academic Strategic Plan.
- D. Partnership with the American College of Norway. The Provost proposes that MSU consider being one of four partners with the American College of Norway which would offer faculty and students an opportunity for semester academic exchange with an undergraduate program taught in English in a relatively safe environment about 30 miles south of Oslo. Deans are asked to gauge the interest of the faculty to participate in the exchange program especially in disciplines that offer general education at the 200 level.
- E. Student Classroom Conduct. Deans are asked to make department heads and faculty aware of possible inappropriate student conduct occurring in classes. Resources are available if faculty suspect inappropriate behavior.
- F. Draft Credit Hour Policy. Associate Provost Larsen has drafted a credit hour policy in response to a requirement by the Department of Education and evaluation by NWCCU for MSU's four campuses. MSU needs a policy that indicates compliance with the credit hour guidelines. Deans are asked to review the draft policy and share with department heads and faculty. This policy will be revisited at the next Deans' Council meeting before being forwarded to Faculty Senate.

- G. Jack Creek Preserve. The Jack Creek Preserve, 4350 acres east of Ennis, MT, has been offered to MSU to use for meetings, teaching activities and research efforts. Please consult with department heads and faculty as appropriate. The opportunity will be discussed again in an upcoming meeting.

IV. Topics for Discussion:

- A. ~~Central Faculty~~ Academic Position Control – Terry Leist, Megan Bergstedt

It has been proposed that all vacant faculty positions be centralized in the Provost's Office to allow for strategic distribution of tenure-track lines. VP Leist and Megan Bergstedt presented a preliminary proposal that would distribute vacancy savings to the Provost, Dean and Department while a decision about the line is being made and a search conducted. Deans are asked to discuss the funding proposal with department heads.

- B. Fee Requests – Terry Leist, Laura Humberger

Additions, changes, and deletions to student, program and course fees are requested every two years. A memo to Deans was sent December 18, 2012 with the process and deadlines. Fee requests will be presented at the May 2013 Board of Regents meeting. Any changes to fees should be discussed with affected student groups before the submission deadline.

- C. Research Computing – Dewitt Latimer

A visioning committee is being formed to look at research computing at MSU and consider creating a sustainable model for a centralized, coordinated IT support system for research. Please talk with any department heads, faculty or staff who may be interested in participating in this group and provide the names of any interested individuals to Dewitt Latimer by January 28.

- D. Sabbatical Process – Larry Carucci

A subcommittee of the Faculty Affairs Committee reviews the applications for sabbatical every year. The subcommittee thoroughly reviews all applications using a standard rubric to evaluate the applications. This rubric is available to candidates in advance. The committee also mentors and provides feedback to applicants. Mentoring is available during the application phase, but in cases where sabbaticals are not funded, the feedback is also used to encourage applicants to improve their proposals and resubmit.

The Faculty Affairs Committee is interested in the Deans' input as to reference for applicants (currently chosen by the applicant and letters submitted by the applicant). The proposed model would require that all references be sent to Department Heads who will submit the references along with their letters of support. Equally, the Committee would like to ascertain whether the Deans should provide substantive evaluations that rank the applicants from their Colleges. In the past, letters of support from Department Heads and Deans indicated that the potential absence of the faculty member would not present a problem (either financial or in terms of finding a teaching replacement) along with a general acknowledgement of support for the sabbatical project. Martha has voiced an interest in more substantive reviews of candidates by Deans. A shift to this model would require structural changes in the way that the sabbatical process is conducted. For this reason, the Sabbatical Review Committee would like input from the Deans in order to allow Faculty Affairs to submit a proposed model to Faculty Senate by the end of March 2013.

- E. Student Death Process

Student Affairs is looking at how MSU responds when a current student passes away. Currently the President calls the next of kin and the Dean of Students sends a letter to the family regarding business and logistical items. Student Affairs hopes to have suggested best practices for Academic Affairs (Provost and Deans) by the end of the semester.

Question was raised about whether there is any protocol or suggested best practices for a faculty or staff member death.

Next Meeting: