



Minot State UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate

MEETING MINUTES
October 11, 2007
3:30 p.m., Westlie Room

Agenda

1. Proxy approval
2. Approval of the minutes of the September 27, 2007 meeting
3. Review of the agenda
4. Announcements/comments from the Senate President
5. Using Faculty Survey results to determine Senate objectives
6. Faculty Senate, faculty governance, and communication with faculty
7. Other business as needed

Senators Present: Erik Anderson, Bethany Andreasen, Rebecca Anhorn, Larry Atwood, Mikhail Bobylev, Johnny Coomansingh, Alexandra Deufel, Debra DeWitz, Alan Ekblad, Patti Fedje, Steve Hayton, Paul Lepp, Draza Markovic, Linda Pettersen, Gary Rabe, Ron Royer, Ursula Schittko, John Webster, Shane Weinmann

Senators Absent: Kristi Berg, David Fuller, Eric Furuseth, Joseph Jastrzembski, Elaine Larson, Paula Lindekugel-Willis, Cheryl Nilsen, Linda Olson, Susan Podrygula, Tom Seymour, Sarah Rowe

Guests Present: Linda Llewellyn (Staff Senate), Kim Thompson, Conrad Davidson

1. Proxy approval

Kevin Neuharth for Linda Lindekugel-Willis, Margaret Sherve for Cheryl Nilsen, and Pat Lomire for Joseph Jastrzembski. Motion to approve proxies carried.

2. Approval of the minutes of the September 27, 2007 meeting

John Webster noted some corrections. Lisa Borden-King was added as guest present. In two places, "First Year Experience" was replaced with "Foundations of Excellence". A number of shorthand notations of "PA" were converted to "President Andreasen". No other corrections were noted. President Andreasen declared the minutes accepted as revised.

3. Review of the agenda

No new items were added to the agenda. President Andreasen noted that there were a couple of items that could be added if time permits.

4. Announcements/comments from the Senate President

Regarding changes to Pre-professional programs, Jennifer Sick reported to President Andreasen that no NDUS curricular approval is needed.

President Andreasen reported that the issue regarding the 12 credit in-residence requirement in the major was referred to the Curriculum Committee.

The following issues were referred to the Academic Policies Committee: (a) the 12 credit in-residence requirement in the major, (b) policy on dual degrees in same support area, and (c) the Student Complaint policy (for review).

President Andreasen reported that she received a report from the ad hoc committee working on the Lifetime Educator award.

President Andreasen reported that Alex Deufel is prepared to report on the bylaws language regarding the Faculty Rights Committee.

President Andreasen noted that there has not really been a consensus on how to handle the Faculty Survey results. She noted that one unfortunate result has been that bad motives are being attributed to both views. She also conveyed to the Senate that while she did ask for consideration of how to handle the results prior to distributing the results, she was not trying to railroad the process in any particular direction. [continued in next agenda item]

5. Using Faculty Survey results to determine Senate objectives

President Andreasen stated that she would like to adopt a compromise, to post the numerical results, but that anyone wanting to see the written comments could view them in her office. She asked for reaction from the Senate.

Steve Hayton made a motion to follow President Andreasen's compromise; seconded by Rebecca Anhorn. This action would set aside the vote from the last meeting on handling of the written comments. Ron Royer pointed out that our efforts are an attempt to further the original intent of the faculty survey, and asked whether we need to standardize the approach. Alex Deufel offered a possible amendment to the motion, that the comments be posted without names, taking necessary steps to block identities. The amendment was accepted by Hayton/Anhorn, who made one additional amendment to specify password protection for posted results. After some discussion of the motion on the table, the motion was withdrawn. Steve Hayton then offered a new motion to block or remove anything that would allow identities to be determined; Patti Fedje seconded. This motion would modify the action taken at the last meeting. The vote on the motion was carried out by written ballot. The motion carried with 17 Yes, 1 No, and 1 abstention.

Faculty Senate will form an ad hoc committee to look at the faculty survey form and process. The committee will be headed by Kristi Berg. Ron Royer made a motion that we should seek IRB approval for the survey; that the intent and process should be clear; seconded by Kevin Neuharth. There was some discussion about the fact that IRB did not seem to think they needed

to deal with this survey back when Alex Deufel administered the survey. Larry Atwood called the question. A voice vote on calling the question carried. The motion then carried by voice vote.

At this point the focus of the discussion shifted to issues that the Faculty Senate should address based on survey results.

Alex Deufel mentioned recruiting as one issue that could be addressed. It was suggested that we have John Girard give the Senate an update on recruitment, and ask how Senate could help.

Ursula Schittko raised the issue of the Load Policy Task Force, with a question about what is happening.

Ron Royer raised the issue of teaching load, and time for scholarly pursuits. Larry Atwood suggested that this issue relates to job satisfaction.

Governance was raised as another issue. In a different survey, 70% of the faculty members indicated agreement with the statement that “There are opportunities for getting involved in the campus-wide decision making” at MSU. However, the 2007 Senate survey reveals a slightly more negative response, with only about 55% of the responders agreeing with the statement “I have a feeling of ownership and control when it comes to the future direction of MSU.”

Related to faculty time, Patti Fedje reported that the dean of the College of Business is capping overload, an action not popular with all of their faculty members.

Alex Deufel raised the issues of grade inflation and academic rigor. There was some discussion of how the Great Plains Scholars project might help in terms of the academic climate by providing scholarships to good students.

Related to recruitment, Erik Anderson stated that everyone needs to get the word out. As faculty members, we need to make sure we are offering interesting courses and program. It was again suggested that John Girard could give a presentation to Senate. President Andreasen said she would work on arranging this.

Johnny Coomansingh raised the need for a compulsory writing seminar below a certain ACT cutoff. Apparently there was some state-wide effort along these lines, but after UND complained the whole state effort was put on hold. There was some more general discussion of student capabilities and possible roles for placement exams. John Webster suggested that these issues should be kept in mind when working on the Foundations of Excellence project. Ron Royer stated that the Senate should put support behind the Foundations of Excellence project. Erik Anderson said we need to work on attracting good students, and Alan Ekblad noted that it is obviously an important issue that Senate needs to consider. Shane Weinmann offered a student perspective on the issue of academic rigor, noting that many or most students just want to get by and get a diploma, that the grades they get are not that important. He stated that if certain courses were too rigorous, that students would simply migrate to other courses. He also suggested that placement exams, and possible remedial course work would be seen as a negative thing that might discourage recruitment.

President Andreasen then offered a summary of the issues that had been raised.

- Recruiting – we will invite John Girard to Senate
- Teaching loads and opportunities for scholarship – issues of time and resources. President Andreasen will check with Gary Rabe regarding the status of the Load Policy Task Force.

- Student quality – The Foundations of Excellence project could be a useful tool in this regard. Senate could discuss what kinds of things could be done (placement exams, etc.)
- Salaries - President Andreasen stated that she needs to nominate some people for the Compensation Task Force.

6. Faculty Senate, faculty governance, and communication with faculty

President Andreasen stated that Senate could do a better job of communicating with the faculty, although noting that some faculty members don't want to be engaged or informed. She encouraged Senate members to take information from the meetings back to other faculty members for input. President Andreasen mentioned that she has been posting the major issues for each Senate meeting on the campus on-line calendar. She asked for other ideas on how the work of the Senate could be done more effectively. There was some discussion about the extent of communication among Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government Association. There was some discussion about the possibility of a joint meeting; President Andreasen will contact the Student Government Association president about organizing a joint meeting.

7. Other business as needed

No additional items of business were considered.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05.

Respectfully submitted,

John Webster, Secretary

Next meeting will be held at 3:30 pm on October 25, 2007 in the Westlie Room.