

Minutes

Faculty Senate, University of Montana Western, March 23, 2009

I. Call to Order—John Hajduk, Eric Dyreson, Jim Falvey, Brent McCabe, Megan Chilson, Bethany Blankenship, Delena-Norris Tull

II. Approval of Minutes—Jim moved to approve, Megan seconded

III. Unfinished Business

- A. BA/BS degrees, continuing conversation
 - 1. FS will ask Karl to commit to rules for the development of BA/BS degrees, especially with regard to prerequisites. See Appendix A for his response.
- B. IT response to FS resolution
 - 1. Report that faculty would prefer projectors in every classroom rather than full mediation in several classrooms. Senators will discuss with their individual departments what they would like to see, technology-wise, in their classrooms.
- C. Budget issues
 - 1. The HHP search has been suspended. There are grants available from the US Department of Education that UMW is positioned to apply for through Outreach.
 - 2. Senators will confer with their departments about potential department-level budget cuts.

IV. New Business

- A. Conversion from WebCT
 - 1. The WebCT license will run out in December. A committee has been formed with faculty and staff to discuss options to WebCT. The committee would like faculty to beta-test versions of Blackboard when it becomes available.

V. The Good and Welfare/Question and Answer

Jim moved to adjourn. Eric seconded. Everyone split.

Appendix A

I have been doing some research on some of these issues and had hoped to get some clarification from the Deputy Commissioner on this past Monday.

One thing that I started to do was to look at the practices on other campuses. While most I have examined fall within BOR policies for numbers of credits in each category, there are some examples (other than on our campus) of those that do not.

One such example is MSU-Billings. They list in a box at the top of each set of program requirements those program requirements that also satisfy general education requirements. They mostly do that in under 80 credits with close to 50 percent upper division credits but their biology B.S. with an option in environmental studies comes in at 86 credits, if you count the 11 credits that also satisfy the general education requirements in science and math. So, the only way that this meets BOR policy is if the general education credits are not counted towards the extended major credit limit.

MSU-Billings BA majors tend to be smaller than BS majors but have more credits in the sciences than in the humanities and social sciences, e.g 40 credit ENG major vs 62 credit BIO major.

I would like to see our BA majors be restricted in size to the 30 to 48 credits for a regular major specified by BOR policy 303.1. I would not like to see any extended majors in the BA since that works against the idea of providing the more liberal education that is typical of a BA. Since the application of the general education credits that can also satisfy the major requirements is somewhat fuzzy in the MUS, it may be okay for us not include that in the major credits. Students should be able to complete a double major, a major or a minor, or a major with electives in 120 credits.

It may be too much to push all of these degree changes through simultaneously although that might be the least riskiest to individual programs since the entire package of changes could be sold as a restructuring of our offerings to allow students greater choice and clarity of offerings while using existing coursework and faculty. I would like to see a great deal of this approved on campus by next fall so that we could potentially have it published in the 2010-11 catalog.

If programs are to have a structure similar to our current BA with options and related areas, these should be presented as B.S. majors and options so that, unlike current related areas, all programs would be recognized by the BOR and occur in our official program inventory. Extended majors (including option and capstone credits) should be capped at 80 credits but could include mandated general education credits. There needs to be some true electives in every degree program although departments may recommend electives for students pursuing particular degree objectives or to meet particular graduate/professional school expectations. I hope that clarifies things a bit.---Karl