

**Faculty Senate  
2009/2010  
University of Montana Western  
Minutes for 4/19/2010 meeting  
3:30PM-5PM**

1. Call to order—Anneliese Ripley, Delena Norris-Tull, Brent McCabe, Karl Ulrich, Mike Morrow, Eric Wright, Shauna Basile, Tyler Wines, Jason Karch, Nicole Hazelbaker, Bethany Blankenship, Sara Glasgow, John Xanthapolous
2. Reading and approval of minutes from 4/5/2010—postponed until the next meeting
3. Old business
  - UMW Mission Statement—Anneliese is still accepting revisions to the document
  - report on joint meeting with Academic Standards (double blocking, overloads, etc.) and Enrollment/Attendance (review student administrative enrollment changes and the effects on eligibility issues; no faculty, student representation),
  - discuss and vote on CP38—Delena moved to approve, Sara seconded, motion passed
  - discuss and vote on curriculum proposals 34, 49, 51, 52, 57—
    - 34—Delena moved to approve, Shauna seconded, motion carried
    - 49—Delena moved to approve, Sara seconded, motion carried
    - 51—John moved to approve, Delena seconded, motion carried
    - 52—John moved to approve, Mike seconded, motion carried
    - 57—John moved to approve, Delena seconded, motion carried
  - discussion about ways to deal with students missing a full week of class
4. New business
  - subcommittee report on academic integrity—meeting notes, Appendix A
  - strategic plan achievements—send updates to Mike
  - online catalog discussion from Student Senate—the semester schedule should not be printed but be available on-line
  - X-day discussion
  - Life Scribe pens will be coming to a classroom near you—the pens will both write and record for students with documented disabilities
4. Good of the order
5. Adjournment—Sara moved to adjourn, Delena seconded. Motion carried.

## Appendix A

### Academic Subcommittee Meeting Notes

#### **Penalties and withdrawals**

Per clarification on withdrawal policy from UM attorney: “Regardless of whether students withdraw from a class (should be allowed if within time frame authorized by the school), the academic misconduct [sic] charge should be pursued to see if another penalty is warranted” (Aronofsky). Given that in the same email, he makes clear that faculty “may not have final say” on an academic penalty, what seems to be clear is that the *institution* is capable of going back and assigning that penalty—even if the student is using withdrawal to circumvent charges of academic misconduct.

If that penalty is academic (as Aronofsky’s personal recommendation is course failure plus probation), it would seem to augur for an approach discussed at the earlier meeting: a withdrawal that could either be 1) noted at least for failure, if not academic dishonesty or 2) reassigned to a failing grade.

At this stage, policy clarifications need to be made that explicitly 1) stipulate the adjudication process in the event of a withdrawal under charges of academic dishonesty and 2) clearly establish rights and responsibilities in that regard of faculty, the student, and the appropriate administrative unit.

#### **Adjudication Process**

Another theme emerging from Aronofsky’s email is the notion that investigation and discipline of academic misconduct is treated entirely in its own context. As he states regarding Missoula’s policy, “We made a deliberate decision to keep Student Affairs away from academic misconduct complaints... We separate disciplinary from academic misconduct at Missoula.”

This model would seem to be a logical and appropriate one to adopt at the Western campus, with charges of academic misconduct investigated and sanctioned through Academic Affairs.

As part of a revised adjudication process there must also be a clear set of rules for appeal, both by students being accused of academic misconduct and also the accusing faculty member or department. This seems to be the appropriate role of the University Court. Without such procedural fairness, the only recourse for anyone to challenge any arbitrary discretionary ruling by one administrator is to appeal to the discretion of a higher administrator. This is not a sufficient bulwark against the potential inequities in the process by administrators nor against the inappropriate influence by third parties (i.e. coaches and parents). We are a *public* institution, and as such those clearly delineated appeal procedures by a composite body such as the University Court are a necessary element to protect not only student rights, but those of faculty, as well.

#### **Honor Code**

One of the ways many schools have gone to enforcing standards of academic integrity is through the adoption of an honor code. The essential character of such honor codes is that “the burden of policing academic dishonesty shifts from the teacher-as-watchdog to the student-as-moral-citizen. Traditional honor codes, such as at the University of Virginia or Cal Tech, put extensive responsibility and trust upon the student for maintaining academic integrity, and can, as at the military academies, be quite severe in the penalties they impose for violation of the code” (Addison).

Student feedback in courses where their peers have been caught in instances of willful and extensive plagiarism (as opposed to cases of negligence or carelessness) has been overwhelming in its expression of frustration and disgust. It might be worth consulting with Student Senate to explore more extensively student views on the potential adoption of an honor code, and pending potential support there and in other venues (such as Faculty Senate), to consider adopting one on this campus.

### **Investigation**

With regard to enhancing the ability of the faculty to investigate and confirm cases of academic dishonesty, the University has a responsibility to enhance the resources available to faculty to do that; one of the means we might do this is via an academic institution subscription to one or more of the major sites that can check submitted work against existing databases of existing material.

### **The Role of Education**

While all faculty recognize the important need to educate all students, especially those found guilty of academic dishonesty, to proper and correct academic practice, there was strong concern expressed by some faculty about one of the means that has been used to do that: the plagiarism workshops through the LACE.

Two specific concerns were mentioned: first, that if we are to encourage students to use the LACE as a resource to aid in their academic development, it is imperative from an educational psychology perspective that it NOT be associated as a place of punishment. That is not to say that workshops on plagiarism could not or should not happen; but for those found guilty of academic dishonesty, these workshops should not be offered via the LACE.

Second, several faculty have expressed concern that students typically lead the plagiarism workshops. Even the best, most mindful students still do not have the breadth and depth of experience that professional academics do in the proper conventions of academic writing and avoiding plagiarism. Moreover, given that in the past, there has been no standardized training course for the tutors that ensures that ALL of them receive the same preparation and training regarding identifying and avoiding plagiarism, there is nothing to ensure that the quality of those workshops will be consistent across presenters.

Thus, the recommendation is that any “reeducation measures” for guilty students should be devolved from the LACE and taught by qualified professional academics.

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