**Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting**

January 8, 2015

Bump Conference Room

**I. Call to order**

Chair Rod Rice called the meeting to order at 11:01 AM.

**II. Roll call**

Senators present: Drs. William Cross (METE), Marius Ellingsen (ME), Patrick Gilcrease (CBE), Mengyu Qiao (MCS), Timothy Masterlark (GEOL/GEOE), Charles Tolle (ECE), Purushotham Tukkaraja (MEM), Zhengtao Zhu (CABS) and Frank Van Nuys (SS).

Others present: Dr. Dean Jensen (IE), Dr. Michael Gunn (Vice Provost), Debra Bienert, Dr. Christer Karlsson, Julie Dahl, Dr. Travis Kowalski, Dr. Kyle Riley, Roger Schrader, Dr. Don Teets (All MCS)

**III. Approval of agenda**

The agenda was approved.

**IV. Approval of minutes**

The minutes of the December 11, 2014 meeting of the Faculty Senate were approved by voice vote.

**V. Report from the Chair**

Dr. Rice stated that Dr. Bang’s emeritus request had been submitted to the President and that donations were still being collected from the Senate for the West River Foundation in memory of Regent Randy Morris. Dr. Rice emphasized the need for Senators to provide their fellow faculty and respective department heads timely updates concerning Senate activities--colleagues and supervisors need to be in the loop when faculty issues arise. Dr. Rice also reported that he had discussed common exam scheduling issues with Dr. Riley and student travel eligibility with Coach Schafer. Coach Schafer provided Dr. Rice some of the NCAA regulations for player eligibility, including initial requirements such as completion of 16 credit hours of high school Math, Science, Social Science, and English; enrollment in at least 12 credit hours per semester; fulfillment of normal progression requirements for a degree; and maintenance of a cumulative 2.0 GPA. Also, Coach Schafer emphasized participation regulations that require sports such as golf, track, and cross country to participate in a minimum number of competitions/events to maintain NCAA status.

**VI. Committee reports**

See new business.

**VII. Old business**

In addition to Dr. Bang’s Emeritus request and donations in memory of Regent Morris, old business items included the following:

1. Common exam scheduling conflicts (Academic Affairs)

Several faculty from MCS attended the meeting, provided their rationale for using common exams, and addressed concerns associated with administering them. For Math faculty, finding an exam administration time that does not conflict with other SDSMT classes and activities has been difficult. Currently, common exams are administered Monday and Tuesday evenings from 7-9:00 and Thursday 7-7:50 to avoid conflicts with athletic schedules. Unfortunately, this schedule overlaps with music classes and rehearsals, which creates a problem for some students who are enrolled in music and math courses. In addition, because of ADA restrictions, a two-hour exam block is necessary, which eliminates the possibility of an alternate early morning (7-8:00) exam slot. In justifying reasons for using common exams, representatives from the Math faculty stated that the exams help ensure uniform testing practices, prevent cheating, use classroom space more effectively, and streamline the workload by reducing the need for preparing and grading significant numbers of additional parallel exams and makeup tests.

The discussion focused primarily on how to locate a fully blocked time with no other activities scheduled and preventing scheduling courses during common exam times. Some suggested solutions included investigating whether 5-7:00 PM would work instead of two 7-9:00 blocks, or possibly using a Friday evening in addition to or in replacement of Monday and Tuesday times.

In light of these and other concerns, Dr. Cross requested removing the interim motion he proposed at the December meeting, “A Faculty member who has a common exam is obligated to find a different time for this exam for a student having a class conflict with the common exam time.” The removal request was seconded by Dr. Ellingsen and passed by Senate vote.

Action: According to the Policy Manual, scheduling undergraduate classes during common exam times is by exception and must be approved by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. As a result, the Senate is including common exam scheduling on the agenda at the January All-Faculty Meeting in order to gather additional input from Dr. Sinden, Dr. Feiszli, the Math Department, and other faculty.

B. Faculty enrollment in undergraduate courses (Academic Affairs)

The proposal to allow faculty to enroll in courses at a reduced tuition rate in order to further their professional development has been forwarded to the Provost and President.

C. Student travel eligibility policy (Student Affairs)

To address inconsistencies in the application of student travel eligibility policy, Dr. Gilcrease and the Student Affairs Committee proposed an addition to the Minimum Progression Standards section of the *SDSMT Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogue*: “While on academic probation, the student is not allowed to participate in university-sponsored travel (e. g. sponsored travel with sports or design teams or sponsored participation in professional conferences).”

A suggested modification to the parenthetical expression, “(including but not limited to sponsored travel with sports or design teams or sponsored participation in professional conferences),” was accepted by Dr. Gilcrease. A committee motion to “Recommend the proposed addition to the policy be moved forward as per last meeting’s proposed methodology” was approved by voice vote. The proposed methodology includes discussing the policy with the Student Senate and the Provost.

Additional discussion included evaluating the minimum 2.0 GPA progression standard in light of grade inflation. In some programs at SDSMT, most students have GPAs exceeding 3.5.

Action: The proposed travel eligibility policy addition to the SDSMT Catalogue will be discussed at the January All-Faculty Meeting.

**VIII. New business**

1. Admissions advertising (Dr. Gunn)

Vice Provost Gunn discussed the admissions process and distributed a handout comparing SDSM&T’s minimum admission requirements and the SDBoR minimum requirements. SDSM&T requested exceptions three and eight years ago to allow significantly higher minimum standards than the SDBoR minimums. Three types of students have been identified: first-time freshman, transfer students (24+ hours beyond high school), and non-traditional students. Each type has different minimum requirements, although all admitted students must be College Algebra ready. Dr. Gunn stated that Trigonometry ready would be preferred but would lead to an approximate 10% drop in enrollment (and would have an even greater effect on veterans and athletes). Some 25% of incoming students start in College Algebra. Of those, 60% make it to Calculus I, and about 30% graduate. By comparison, of the students who start in Trigonometry, about 60% eventually graduate.

According to Dr. Gunn, SDSM&T misses out on many of the prime, top-level student applicants (ACT-C=35; ACT-M=36, HS GPA=4.0) because of scholarship limitations and other constraints. Of every eight students who fall within the top category, one to three may attend. At the next level, approximately eight of every 35-40 applicants may enroll. And at the lower extreme, only 12 first-time freshman students have been accepted in the last three years with ACT scores below 20. Dr. Gunn emphasized that all students below the automatic qualifying levels and minimum entrance requirements are examined by the Admissions Committee.

Vice Provost Gunn indicated that the automatic requirements would be included on future recruiting materials and advertisements.

B. January All-Faculty Meeting (29 January, 4:00, CB 203)

Agenda items will include Common Exam Policy, Student Travel Policy, and an update on the General Education Review.

**IX. Other**

Members of the Senate noted that the new SDSMT withdrawal policy was formulated and adopted with no input from the Faculty Senate.

**X. Adjournment**

The Senate adjourned at 12:26 PM.