

FACULTY SENATE
February 19, 2014
346 LEON JOHNSON
4:10 PM – 5:00 PM
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY – BOZEMAN, MONTANA
Minutes

Members Present: Arnold for Igo (Ag Ed), Babbitt (Physics), Bennett (Eng), Bolte (Music), Brester (Ag Econ), Burrows (Ext), Cantalupo (Ext), Greenwood (Math), DeWeese for Newhouse (Art), Durham (COB), Engel for Zabinski (LRES), Franklin (Micro), Gannon (Bio & Chem Eng), Herman (NAS), Kaiser (ECE), Kohler (Chem & Biochem), Larson (M&IE), Lynch (Psych), Lu (PSPP), Martin (Mod Lang), Miller (CE), McMahon (Ecology), Olson (ARS), O'Neill (Arch), Ricciardelli (Film & Photo), Swinford (Soc/Anthro), Waller (Hist & Phil), Wilmer (Pol Sci), Zhu (CS)

Others Present: Larry Carucci, Robert Mokwa, Dana Longcope, David Singel, Ron Larsen, Leila Sterman, Nicol Rae, Gail Schontzler, Frances Lefcort, Martha Potvin, Chris Fastnow, Terry Leist, Renee Reijo-Pera, Robin Gerlach, Robert Maher, Mary Cloud-Ammons, Tomas Gedeon, Elizabeth Kinion, David McKenzie, Kode Falls Down, Tricia Cook, Christina Z. Anderson, Tracy Ellig, Leslie Schmidt, Sandy Sward, Brett L. Walker, Ed Adams, Glenn Duff, Brian Rossmann, John Paxton, Kenning Arlitsch, Deborah Keil, Stephanie Ewing, Jayne Downey, Bill Schell, David Roberts, JM Callahan, Anna Graham Lindeen, Lisa Davis, Sandra Bailey, Lynda Ransdell, Jessi Smith, Christopher Lambert, Edward Dratz, Ilse-Mari Lee, Cristen Wathen, Pat Callis, Holly Hunts, Robert Swenson, Mike Neely, Aleks Rebane, Tami Eitle

Chair Mokwa called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm, and a quorum was present.

Senate Business and Announcements – Chair Mokwa

- The minutes from February 12, 2014 were unanimously approved.
- Mokwa announced two volunteers openings for the following committees:
 - Outreach and Engagement
 - Emergency Table Top Task ForceInterested faculty should contact Gale Gough gough@montana.edu
- Mokwa asked senators for a motion to approve the ESCN 461 course; so moved →
→seconded → all in favor → unanimously approved.
 - New C&PC grad courses are posted on the FS web site. Senate will vote on them at the February 27, 2014 FS meeting.

Posthumous Degree Policy (2nd Reading and Vote) – Faculty Affairs Chair Larry Carucci

- Provost Potvin had one wording modification for the first sentence in the Posthumous Degree, as presented: “In exceptional circumstances, the President may award degrees posthumously.” It is her understanding that the BoR is the only body who may grant such degrees, but that the President may *recommend* a degree to the BoR. FA will research to confirm the modification, and make the edits.
- Motion to approve with the potential minor change suggested by the Provost → seconded → all in favor → unanimously approved.

- Next week, senate will review the Common Hour Policy.

Research: Open Conversation with New VP of Research, Dr. Renee Reijo-Pera - The Future of Research and Creative Activities at MSU

- Mokwa introduced Dr. Reijo-Pera with the following preamble:
 - Last May, senate prioritized issues that were the most important to them on MSU's campus; the number one topic was research.
 - Last week, Dr. Camper updated the senate on the budgeting situation in the VPR's office for FY14-15.
 - Dr. Pera, today, will present her vision for the future of research at MSU.
- Dr. Pera's Discussion
 - Pera noted that MSU is one of 108 universities in the country that has high research activity, and her focus will be to maintain that status, as many things come with that designation.
 - She believes research in and of itself is important for four (4) main reasons:
 - Research creates knowledge. If a university is not conducting research, it is teaching what others have discovered, only.
 - Faculty who are well-supported in research are the most satisfied across the country.
 - Students need to do research to come to the end of textbook knowledge. It will help them face questions that do not necessarily have material written about them, or help them answer a question on an exam, or might allow them to fail in endeavors that have no apparent or easy answer and which they would want to further explore.
 - Research changes life with respect to what we eat; what we drink; the way we communicate; our healthcare. It improves the human condition, overall.
 - How do we begin to increase our research base to maintain our status? What is the role of higher education, and what is the role of research in higher education? Research is discovery. How to begin:
 - Pera noted that MSU does not have much funding but that she did bring a small amount of funds with her from Stanford that she is willing to share.
 - Pera would like to raise funds to promote best ideas within the university, and invest in the faculty and the research they are passionate about.
 - Investing in research is important as it will expand the research base.
 - Pera requested that faculty submit research proposals (RP), up to \$200,000, every year for the next two (2) years and frame them as \$1M ideas.
 - A committee will be formed to examine the RP and prioritize how to proceed. These RP would serve as a cache of what MSU has to offer, and what we need to fund. We would fund a small number, move through the cache and ferret out every funding source for the RP.
 - Pera would like to invest in recruiting two (2) or three (3) senior scientists in different fields who would compliment what MSU already has. When hiring them, MSU should consider if they are collaborative, have a large research scope, fit into the culture and bring other people along who

support their research. Endowments, recruitment and retention funds are being raised at the Foundation, and we can use those resources for these scientists. She believes MSU can do this strategically by deciding to excel in a particular “grant area,” and use our space at MSU to do so. Additionally, the Provost is examining how MSU may make an improvement in the research structure.

- Pera recommended that we develop a strategy that goes beyond MSU; a state strategy. State initiatives to fund research, as much as \$30M, are being discussed and faculty need to be cognizant of them through announcements via email and other forms of communications. The designated areas to this state include: energy, computation, agriculture, healthcare, materials & manufacturing.
 - Pera presented to the Research Council a “no-RFP left behind” philosophy. She would like to blanket all research proposals. Accomplishing this might be difficult, as there is no grant writing support, however Pera volunteered her expertise and entertained exploring how grants might be written with administrative assistance.
 - Pera would like to explore what serves the greater university best, and she envisions improvement in the research arena should take place within the next year, stabilizing within two (2) years. Federal funding should begin to improve during that time. Additionally, if we hone in on those areas, Pera envisions when F&A’s might return to colleges/centers/institutes at their full rate.
- Discussions Ensued
 - Waller restated, for her clarification, Pera’s idea of bringing in senior researchers with great research records who will help MSU generate funds. Their expertise would be utilized not just in the sciences but in disciplines like history and philosophy. Pera concurred. She believes funding should take into account the entire MSU community.
 - Ricciardelli asked about funding the arts. Pera stated that she is a scientist by training and to get funding up, research revenues must be increased. She believes the arts are what make universities places where one wants to spend their time. She suggested faculty write proposals on what priorities exist in the MSU community, how the arts are important to the community, what MSU might do with funding they receive. Ricciardelli noted that the School of Arts & Architecture recently collaborated with the Physics Department on a project, showcasing how the arts and sciences work together.
 - Smith asked what the committee to examine the RP would look like. Pera stated that it would be made up of 12-15 individuals, internally, and it would determine the direction of research by examining the way we use funds, space and faculty.
 - Gerlach asked how Pera would foster and intensify research interactions, cooperatively, between faculty and administration; he believes there should be more interactions between the two, to assist faculty in overcoming difficulties with creation of large and cumbersome proposals for funding ideas. Additionally, and in the past, F&A returns helped to fund small start-up projects and helped faculty to become immersed in pure science which carried over to other research

projects; that ability has now evaporated. He asked how Pera would produce smaller research grants (e.g., seed grants), an important component of research at MSU? Pera, addressing the F&A questions first, stated that F&A returns are 44% of federal grants at MSU and vary with the USDA; some foundations might be different, as well. Pera asked senate to step back and take a larger look at F&A's. She relayed her experiences on how they were administered in California and recalled three general strategies that universities have with F&A returns:

- Within the UC system, at Stanford, and like most large universities, no investigator ever saw an F&A return: Those funds went into a general fund for the state of CA, and it is unclear what happened after that, but the money did not go to the investigator. One model was that the F&A can support the university infrastructure like admins, grant writing, etc., but the principle investigator never saw any of it.
- At Stanford, they embarked on a mixed system where ½ or 75% of the F&A stay central and the 25% are returned. “Stays central” means that investment in larger ideas can happen rather than dispersing those funds, \$1,000 at a time, to everyone. There must be a mechanism to keep some F&A returns and invest them in the next big project.
- At MSU, all F&A's were returned to the departments, and there seemed to be no system of investment strategy.

Pera would like faculty to think about and determine how they would like to use their F&A's. Having them all returned to the departments signals, to her, that research is in decline. She envisions using money for research investments. She clarified that the investments would not exclude smaller research endeavors: Perhaps pooling many smaller accounts to bring about a greater purpose for \$10,000 would be affective. She believes in supporting, as much as possible, the different disciplines that enrich our lives (humanities) but may not bring in large grants. She likes seed grants, rather than sending out F&A returns, and the ideas that they generate.

- Brester noted that there are very limited or no operating funds which allow faculty to attend seminars, conferences, etc., run their offices, pull research into the classroom, and while pooling the smaller F&A's together for a large cause is good, it would leave many faculty unable to continue to operate academically. Pera cares deeply about graduate and undergraduate education and has, in the past, raised funds for education. However, she iterated that she is the VPR and will focus on MSU's research enterprise. It might be difficult to segregate into academic/research, however Pera is the source of funding for research; funding for education comes from the provost's office. She encouraged faculty to visit her and talk about their specific situation.
- Maher talked about undergraduate/graduate classroom education and research and how his faculty are already working overtime; to devote more time on research, they need to find time. How do we free up time for that research experience, working with students, getting grants written, etc.? Pera noted that she understands the time constraints and would like to have a more in-depth conversation with faculty about it. She shared her some of her strategies with time constraints and how she manages it:

- Refusing a lesser amount of funding to ensure all grant words are funded with a larger grant.
 - It has never taken her more than three (3) weeks to write a grant within the last ten (10) years and she submits the least amount of written pages that specific funding entities will accept.
- A faculty member asked if faculty are already satisfied with their funding pool, what different activities would they become engaged in other than writing another grant? She is not familiar with that scenario and would like to hear more about it. Pera suggested that those faculty might review the pool of applications coming in.
- Gedeon commented that the ratio of faculty/grant is pretty good. Mathematics is a smaller department and MSU is a smaller university than our peers, and we do well. Additionally, MSU does not have faculty with large empires who insulate themselves and do not communicate with anyone; our research faculty are willing to speak to everyone. So, when we hire these two or three research scientists, Gedeon does not think we should forget our culture.
- Lambert would like Pera's comments on the recognition of inadequacies of grant submission support such as administrative aspects of developing budgets, pre-review, assembling teams for large programs, etc. Pera spoke of her similar experiences and noted that she would like to investigate further across MSU's campus where some obvious discrepancies in grant writing/submissions occur. Stanford pooled everything centrally where dedicated administrators (NIH, DOE, DOD, private foundations) were able to expedite the proposals in their specific area of expertise. Centrally locating grant activities is something Pera would like to implement at MSU. Lambert asked how Pera would be resourcing that. Pera would have to examine what each department is doing. At the stem cell research facility at Stanford, two administrators supported 75-100 faculty. Cell Biology and Neuroscience trained their departmental accountant to do grant budgeting, and the department conducts grant reviews in collaboration with U of M and other faculty.
- Brester asked whether, in her vision, MSU could continue to meet every one of those start-up requests. Pera stated that she needs to hear about anticipated start-up funds before the search for those funds is over. She would like to promote the best ideas that faculty have and learn about the different scenarios that faculty exist in.
- Rebane stated that Montana is an EPSCOR state and in reference to startups for physics, and without the help of EPSCOR, it would have been impossible to develop physics solutions to problems; EPSCOR is a matched commitment by the university and is a versatile grant that helps develop expensive programs. Recently, however, applying for EPSCOR has been discouraged. Pera is becoming familiar with EPSCOR and would like to continue to apply for them. She noted that there is a cost in taking grant money and sometimes no F&A's come with grants.
- Cloud-Ammons commented that underutilized assets at MSU include NTT research faculty and research scientists on professional staff that have very little incentive to be ambitious. Cloud-Ammons' experience with grants she has done with research scientists, NTT faculty and professional scientists have been very successful; big-name grants have not been very successful. Pera is amenable to working with all research faculty and believes all contribute to the research mission at MSU.

- Pera stated that the difference she wants to stress is how faculty determine priorities for research. Historically, it has been a top-down structure, but includes what space it will occupy, which projects will be promoted, and what will bring in private funds. If there is a method to determine priorities, Pera would like to collaborate with faculty every year on them, as things change. She is eager to tap into the unfunded ideas that faculty are fond of.

Mokwa thanked Dr. Reijo-Pera for bringing the discussion to senate.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:18 pm.

Signature,
Robert Mokwa, Chair

Signature
Michael Reidy, Chair-elect