Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
February 28, 2017, 4:00 P.M. GBB 123

Call to Order   
Chair DeBoer called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.   
Camie called roll.  
  
**Members Present:** B. Allred J. Banville, D. Beck, T. Beed, A. Belcourt, O. Berryman, M. Boller M. Bowman, J. Bunch, S. Caro, A. Chatterjee, Y. Cho, T. Crawford, Z. Cooper, J. DeBoer, A. Delaney, D. Erickson, L. Fern, L. Frey, E. Gagliardi, J. Gallo, N. Greymorning, B. Harrison, W. Holben, L. Howell, J. Hunt, S. Johnson, U. Kamp, C. Kirkpatrick, G. Larson, J. Laskin, C. Lawrence, P. Lukacs, D. Lurie, D. MacDonald, J. Millspaugh, D. Patterson, G. Peters, S. Phillips, G. Quintero, Y. Reimer, J. Sears. Slater, A. Sondag, A. Szalda-Petree, J. Thomsen, E. Uchimoto, M. Valentin, N. Vonessen, A. Ware   
 **Members Excused:**, K. Harris

**Members Absent:** S. Bitar, J. Eglin, K. Griggs, B. Halfpap, K. Harris, M. Hamon, M. Maneta, L. Nichols, C. Off, T. Sanders, S. Stan   
  
**Ex-Officio Present:** UFA President Haber, ASUM President Forstag

**Guests:** Numerous faculty (40 +)

## Business Items

### Discussion of Resolution on [Forward125](http://www.umt.edu/facultysenate/documents/FSDocs%2016-17/Faculty%20Senate%20Resolution%20Forward125%20Final.docx)

Chair DeBoer prefaced the discussion with a recap of President Stearns presentation to the Senate at the last meeting. In particular, it raised concerns about the feasibility of completing program and services prioritization by October 2017. It did provide the timeline for dealing with budget realities based on projected enrollment for fiscal year 2018 and 2019. This was communicated as a draft at that time.

There have been follow-up discussions with President Stearns and Interim Provost Edmond to confirm that this is one possibility of how we might move forward. So, next month (starting tomorrow) frameworks and metrics will be set to meet budget reduction reconciliations. The timeline for Forward125 is short.

The reason for this special meeting is that we as a Faculty Senate need to decide how we are going to participate in Forward 125 exercise and then how we are going to move forward after that exercise is complete. We have eliminated the notion that what needs to be done in the next six months is program prioritization. Our understanding of program prioritization is that it takes up to 18 months for listening sessions, to decide on metrics, to gather data, and etc. Forward125 is not this process.

The resolution on Forward125 is a seconded motion from ECOS. The motion includes background language from the Collective Bargaining Agreement (7.100). The Faculty Senate has the right, in accordance with Board of Regents policies, to review and make recommendations concerning:

* development, curtailment, discontinuance, or reorganization of academic programs; and
* issues that pertain to the academic affairs of the University and matters of critical concern about the welfare and Administration of the University.

We are looking at both of these items as we head into fiscal year 18 and 19. Chair DeBoer has worked with the President and shared governance partners to secure some time at the March Board of Regents meeting. He has a half hour to talk about moving the university forward. So he will be taking some of your comments to the Board. The floor was open for debate. Senators have priority to speak and then guests.

Senator Beck, Native American Studies: Are there metrics that have already been discussed? Are there people putting these together? The faculty will want to be involved in these discussions.   
  
DeBoer: There are currently subcommittees of the University Budget Committee looking at metrics for the FY18 budget that has to be presented to the Board of Regents April 15th. He is on the committee, and it is looking at different ways of counting FTE and students as we plan for the FY18 budget. The FY18 budget is projected to be flat, which does not account for any increased costs. So there are budget metrics being discussed for this purpose. As far as he knows these are not the metrics used for Forward125. The Budget Committee has not discussed major changes to adjust to the projected 11,000 enrollment. Some of these matrices may be considered for Forward 125, but this was not the intended task.  
  
Senator Ware, Physics and Astronomy: At the last Senate meeting President Sterns indicated the Strategic Planning Council was working on metrics.

Senator Bowman, Social Work and member of the Strategic Planning Council: The Council has not been involved in discussing metrics. The President’s presentation was quite startling to the members and it was quickly addressed.

Senator MacDonald, Anthropology: At the last meeting Vice President Whittenburg indicated there was a draft.

DeBoer: The President’s presentation had not been vetted by the various committees mentioned. The Strategic Planning Council did have a follow-up meeting to discuss what was presented to the Faculty Senate. The SPPC needs to be removed from the Program Prioritization process. Their charge is to develop a strategic plan. Vice President Whittenburg researched metrics that were used by other universities that conducted a program prioritization process. This list was supplied to the SPPC and ECOS, but there has been no discussion. Vice President Whittenburg has been tasked with leading the Forward125 effort.

Senator Valentin, Modern and Classical Languages: Remember the Academic alignment and Innovation Program was used to make cuts. Program Prioritization will also be used to make cuts. Is there another way for Faculty Governance to go around the metrics? Instead of reprioritizing we should be restructuring. In order to avoid the student FTE issue in certain disciplines you create clusters around areas of knowledge. It has been done in other places. It takes a lot of work and innovation. By doing this you escape where we are, and make programs attractive to students. Abolishing departments to establish clusters could be the direction for the next 5 to 7 years. Why can’t Faculty Governance approach this from a different angle? Restructuring not reprioritizing (which means cutting). This forward thinking can address separation, vertical partitioning of knowledge that doesn’t work anymore. Why can’t we propose something innovative?

Chair DeBoer: Restructuring is a long term exercise, but we have a budgetary problem that must be addressed now. The motion is intended to address the current budget shortage before we work on a long term solution that will grow the university.

Senator Valentin: That would be too late. Why can’t we ask the Regents to put everything on hold in order that we can give birth to restructuring within one or two years? This could ensure the future of the humanities and the sciences.

Senator Lurie, Biomedical Sciences: There are two issues. One is our programs and the other is our short term budgetary crises. It is unclear, even though the narrative that has been put forward is that are programs are no longer relevant to our students. She is not convinced that our budgetary issues stem from our academic offerings. UFA President Haber intimated at the last meeting that there might be the possibility of the Regents loaning us some money with the understanding that we conduct a program prioritization process. Is there money from Helena to get us through the short term? The creation of this immediate crisis that is unsolvable and must be acted on in thirty days requires some clarification.

UFA President Haber: At the last meeting he tried to articulate what he had what he had been told. We should have more information after the March Board of Regents meeting. The reason they are projecting a relatively flat FY18 budget. He uses the term “relatively” because it is unlikely there will not be some cuts, and we should be ready. The FY18 budget will be less bad than it otherwise would be, because the Regents are willing to play with the allocation process for FY18 if we demonstrate we are on our way to making cuts for FY19

Senator Lurie: Bringing a university back from an administrative structure that did not work will take time. She has concerns about the narrative that the University of Montana is not meeting the needs of the students. She does not think that is true. We are in the budget crises for other reasons. If there is the possibility of an 18 month safety net that can help us improve our recruitment and retention, and realign some of our programs, then we turn things around. Creating metrics in a 30 day period of time is not reasonable and doesn’t speak of forethought from the Board of Regents. This is something that the Faculty Senate should think about.

Senator Chatterjee, Political Science: What’s the probability that if tell Regents we can’t do this by January, they will agree? The timeline is unreasonable. So what if you go to the Board of Regents as a unified voice to say we will do what you want us to do, but will need more time.

DeBoer: It is unclear from follow-up conversations with the administration whether the timelines presented in Forward125 are firm. We can’t discuss the possibility of tuition increase until the Legislative session ends and we can’t discuss allocations until May. The normal budgeting timeline is to submit the budget to the Board of Regents by April 15th. Asking the Board of Regents for more time could be a possibility. All the mechanisms for restructuring, prioritizing, or realigning indicate the process takes more time. We can take this to the Board of Regents, but they could just say “no.” The resolution is for plan B, and this is why we will discuss long term program prioritization next. We need to find a way to change the narrative after the cuts of Forward 125 and immediately start thinking about growing. How do we take what we have left and use it to grow the university. We will need to go through the prioritization exercise. As pointed out by Allen Szalda-Petree, a fellow ECOS member, we don’t want to taint the process of reorganizing and growing the university by tying it to the cuts.

Senator Banville, Journalism: Does the Forward 125 Taskforce already exist?   
  
DeBoer: No, other than VP Whittenburg, he has not yet been informed of the other members. However, VP Whittenburg is very much interested in shared governance.   
  
Senator Banville: Will the resolution hold any weight with the administration? Do you feel confident that the faculty will be included in the Forward 125 Taskforce?   
  
DeBoer: He provided the administration with the resolution when it was posted to the Senate Agenda. He immediately received an email response from VP Whittenburg that said “Good, we need shared governance participation in order to make this work.” There will be representation from the three shared governance groups, the bargaining units and the administration. They will ultimately be making the final decisions.   
  
Senator Banville: So Forward 125 is the group that comes up with Metrics by March.

DeBoer: And continues to work through the summer until they deliver their recommendations in October. The group has not yet been assembled.

Professor Liz Putnam, Biomedical Science: Speaking from her experience on the Performance Based Funding Taskforce, coming up with metrics is not something you can do in 30 days. It took a year of weekly phone meetings with the MUS campuses and lots of arguments. Many of the items considered such as published books and creative works (things that our campus excelled at) could not be included because they were not applicable system-wide. It’s inconceivable to develop agreed upon, valid and appropriate metrics in a month.

Senator Delaney, Missoula College, Health Professions: Missoula College is completely different from the main campus. We are a two year college that offers work force development associate of arts degrees. So the metrics that would be appropriate for Missoula College should be different from the main campus.   
  
Senator Erikson, Teaching and Learning: He supports the resolution because it supports shared governance, gives a timeline and because President Stearns asked for our participation.

Senator Caro, Mansfield Library: If we are going to have any kind of voice we are going to need to have representation on this group. Even if our participation is not going to be ranked very high we need someone who is going to communicate back to us what is actually happening.

Chair DeBoer: There was a phrase used in the UFA meeting last week about challenging the assumptions of the administration. This will be a vital role of any faculty that participates in this Taskforce as it is devising metrics.

Professor Pavilack, History: There is also a structural problem here with the administration, so presumably the administration is also on the table. And the administration is making the decisions, so someone needs to be there to ensure the metrics are applied to them as well.

Senator Harrison, English: Given that half the administrators are squatters in main hall, it seems that the permanent administration would want to have some input in how the cuts are made. Forward 125 looks like a lot of work in a big hurry with the potential for a lot of damage. This cannot possibly be done fairly or judicially.

Senator Lukacs, Ecosystem and Conservation:It is actually a good thing to have the temporary administration do the cutting, so the new administration can proceed with a clean slate.

Senator Vonessen, Mathematical Science: He guesses that the Commissioner Christian wants the interim administration to make the cuts. They are scheduled to be here until the end of December, so he believes the timeline is set in stone.

Senator Greymorning, Anthropology: We are being forced to do this. We need to consistently pressure them that the administration be prioritized within the formula. They must fall within this prioritization process as well. Their justification for keeping themselves outside of the process will be interesting.

Senator Ware: The budget allocation model only uses student credit hours. His fear is that if we don’t participate in the process the default could be based on something like that. It is clear that cuts are coming, so the question is whether we want to do this with any kind of strategic planning. What is lacking is any kind of bold vision. We don’t have any ideas other than we need to meet our budget for fiscal year 2018. It would be nice to be able to think about how to move forward in a positive manner more broadly and longer. But we need to have at least a modicum of a strategy on how to make cuts in short term

Senator Valentin: Why don’t we think about a motion to put on hold the guillotine over our heads? Then all of us can think of bold ideas to avoid the cuts. We could create a counter proposal to avoid cuts. It is possible, we have PhDs.

Senator Holben, DBS: We have had indicators of lower enrollment for years, and have been putting band aids on the problem. We should have started prioritization three years ago. But it is inconceivable that everything has to be fixed in three months, when this has taken years to manifest. The timeline is too rushed to be wise about the decisions.

ASUM President Forstag: There hasn’t been a time since he has been on campus (2012) that budget cuts have not been discussed. It is his impression after sitting on cabinet that there is a pressing need to make difficult cuts. We have been avoiding this issue for some time. ASUM passed a resolution two weeks ago specifically about program prioritization. The resolution from ECOS sets the faculty sights low. One way or another there will be some sort of reconciling for FY 18 and a mid to long term process for FY 19. There should be shared governance participation in every step. He doesn’t see the value in being a conscientious objector to the condensed time line with the process is inevitable. ASUM asked that the Taskforce be primarily shared governance representatives because we have interim administrators that are still learning about UM. We need to have faculty that are here for the long term to be involved in the process to protect the identity of the university and integrity of programs. Students are invested in UM and need to be involved. They will have a degree from the institution for the rest of their lives. We should be pushing for shared governance to be a primary part of this Taskforce. ASUM’s resolution called for this to be primarily a shared governance led process with participation from the administrators who will ultimately make the decision. He would have hoped the faculty governance would have set its sights higher.   
  
Senator Laskin, Physical Therapy: He is not hearing anything that indicates we should not pass the resolution ECOS.

The question was called. The resolution was approved with two senators opposed. Chair DeBoer will deliver it to the Cabinet tomorrow and to the Board of Regents March 9th.

### Discussion of [Faculty Role in Long-Term Program Prioritization](http://www.umt.edu/facultysenate/documents/FSDocs%2016-17/Faculty%20Senate%20-%20Program%20Prioritization%20Discussion%20Final.docx)

Chair DeBoer briefly summarized the document pertaining to long-term program prioritization. The options were adapted from the UFA meeting. We need to determine how to look to the future after the cuts from Forward 125.

Senator MacDonald, Anthropology: Planning for these cuts in some ways has been in operation beginning with the AAIP. We do have data from the AAIP effort, which was a faculty effort. Also the Strategic Planning Advisory Council is collecting data. So there are these planning processes that have been in motion. So the 30 day timeline isn’t completely true.   
  
Senator Lurie: We are in the process of turning the university around in terms of enrollment. There have been a lot of changes with Tom Crady and her College has made adjustments. But it took five years to get where we are, and it will take a few years to get back out. She is not opposed to examining our programs- realigning, readjusting. It is difficult to get back what is cut. We need to hold the Board of Regents accountable to a reallocation process to get us through, while we get back on track. As a Faculty Senate we need to hold the Commissioner and Board of Regents accountable for a life-line.   
  
Senator Chatterjee: We need more information. This is like “Groundhog Day.” It might be a good idea for the administration to say once and for all this is what we intend to do. He has been here since 2012 and every fall without exception the sky is falling. You are not going to attract students or junior faculty with this message. He has spoken to some junior faculty. They are all on the job market. People who can leave will leave. It looks terrible to everyone. Four years in a row, we have been dealing with the same thing. We will not be able to attract junior faculty. We need to ask for more information – “what are you thinking by the way”. We need to stop speculation, and stop this from happening again.

DeBoer: He will ask at the Cabinet meeting tomorrow.

Professor Crummy, Modern and Classical Language: Last year it was brought up that our tuition was lower than MSU. Has there been any movement on equalization?

DeBoer: No movement can happen on tuition until the May Board of Regents meeting. From what he understands you do not talk about tuition with legislators during the legislative session. Essentially the freeze on tuition has been lifted from Helena. We can speculate that if they are giving us less money they are also giving us the ability to raise tuition.   
  
Crummy: Do we know where the administration stands on this?   
  
DeBoer: Everything is on the table right now. We are out of money due to bleeding students. We will graduate a big class this year, so unless we replace them next year we will be at a lower head count. So everything has to be on the table.

Professor Joel Iverson, Communication Studies: It is important that we ask OCHE to evaluate the allocation process in terms of how it prioritizes things. A small variation in students creates a lot of consternation about how much money we do or don’t have. Manufacturing this type of perpetual crises is part of the problem. Even though UM proposed the current allocation model, it has proven to be detrimental and needs to be reconsidered.

Valentine: Shared governance is not being used correctly. Raising tuition will not increase enrollment. And now President Trump is going to cut the education budget by 10%. So it is not time to increase tuition.

Macdonald: It is a good idea to stabilize enrollment at 11,000, because it removes the up and down cycle. Another thing to think about with the budget is that the operating budget ($10 million) has been reduced significantly in the last five years. This is one of the reasons the percentage of personnel is high. We don’t even have phones in Anthropology. Another way to flip this is to restore the operating expenses to reduce the personnel percentage. We need to be able to operate the university. He hears complaints that the shortage of staff in the Financial Aid Office impacts the level of service that can be provided to students and their parents.

Senator Delaney: Educating the administration about the metrics that are important to our different units is critical. This is such a short timeline she wonders whether the decisions have already been made. We will just be fighting amongst ourselves and in the end will be handed the decision that we must accept. So maybe we just assist with the Taskforce and then just start over.  
  
DeBoer clarified defining rather than applying.

Senator Beck, Native American Studies: It’s crazy to think we can come up with decent metrics in a month’s time. He hopes that we define metrics in a two or three step process- perhaps one for FY 18 and another for FY 19. When we think about where we want the university to be in 10 to 15 years we take the time needed for a full process, which has been between 1 to 2 years at other universities. We shouldn’t try to shortcut the process based on the budget crises. He urges the administration to let us think in those terms.

Senator Vonessen, Mathematical Science: He prefers that we do not start the full process until after the Forward 125 has run its course. So at this point we should not put too much effort into a long term program prioritization effort.

Senator Hunt, English: There has been little mention of faculty buyout incentives. If the problem is that we have too many faculty members for the current numbers of students. A practical solution is to provide faculty that are close to retirement incentives to retire.

UFA President Haber: We’ve been pushing for this with the administration. We are in favor of this option because it would be less painful than terminating faculty. From conversations with deans, he suspects there is a buildup of faculty not retiring. Some would require a rather significant monetary incentive to leave. I just don’t think there is going to be a new pot of money. So this will be difficult and he doesn’t think this will happen. And the Commissioner has indicated this as well. However, he has also been told by deans and informally from some faculty that they may consider early retirement, but have intense loyalty to their departments. Dean Comer has said that some faculty considering early retirement want a guarantee that their line will be replaced. Currently Dean Comer is not empowered to grant a guarantee. He hopes the Deans can be empowered to make deals. There is some resistance in the administration to do this, because they want to do things systematically. It might be nice to have some systems in place for the future, but to get through this crisis we need to be able to make some deals. The UFA is pushing for this and there is a lot of support from a number of administrators. He is hopeful that some negotiated deals could lessen the pain.

Professor Pavilack, History: There is such differential between faculty close to retirement to junior faculty. So if a senior faculty member retires doesn’t that free up money.   
  
UFA President Haber: Some people seem to think that budget cuts are an option. He worries that there are significant cuts coming because we are funded according to a formula. The cuts are coming especially for FY19. The math is obvious. We are funded according to student FTE. He doesn’t see a revolution in the funding, even if we are to push as hard as possible. The savings from the retirement of senior faculty would be used to save pre-tenure and non-tenure track faculty. Who we want to save.

Senator Greymorning: We all understand that FTE is linked to money. When classes are cut the rational is too few students enrolled and we need to save money. We need to bring administrators into the formula with student FTE to look at salary differentiation. This happened in Australia and scared the administrators. Thinking about the formula took some time. A lot of changes resulted from this exercise. What are the administrators generating in terms of productivity?   
  
Professor Ware: Whether it is the short term or long term, program prioritization always seems to be about where to cut and where to grow. He does not know how to change this conversation. Let’s get Tom Crady in here to see what exactly he needs to grow the enrollment. This is going to take some investment. Where are we going to come up with this money? Why are we not fundraising for new initiatives? What other things can we do in terms of international recruitment? Instead we just lost our Director of International Programs. One of the things we need to work on is changing the idea of program prioritization to what we need to do to grow to move forward in a positive way.

Professor Bustos- Fernandez: We know that we are having big issues right now with cross listing courses. In our area it has created enormous problems. Students are having difficulties finding courses. This is a practical issue that needs to be solved.

Chair DeBoer indicated there is a meeting regarding cross listing on Friday.

Senator Berryman, Chemistry: It is important that metrics are vetted at the department level so administrators don’t make errors. Often a narrative is required to explain the data.

Professor Coffin, Biomedical Sciences: Evoking the CBA in this matter is a good approach. The CBA language regarding curtailment and retrenchment should be taken seriously because this is a 3-4 month process. We should not allow any short term process subvert our rights under the collective bargaining agreement. If the administration needs to terminate a program the section of the contract should be evoked and followed accordingly. This discussion bothers him somewhat because it seems to back off some of the assertions we made under the resolution. He would like to see someone from the UFA on the committee. One of the positive outcomes of the crises is a partnership between the Faculty Senate and the UFA. This process needs to be renamed. To some extent our inactiveness and the Senate’s declining to be proactive in the program review process has contributed, but fundamentally this is about money management. While we should take responsibility and practice shared governance to get out of the crises we do not need to take the blame for it. Prioritization implies that a certain number of programs must fail. They don’t. We need to turn the message around from this death spiral.

The Federal budget proposed by the White House has a 10% cut to Department of Education ($68 billion). This will translate into 2-4 billion dollars cut from Pell grants. They want to eliminate AmeriCorps, eliminate the student loan support and forgiveness programs. 70% of UM students receive financial aid. This will mean approximately a $900 increase in tuition for our students. They can’t sustain this.   
  
We have to put together a campaign of letter writing and phone calls to lobby Senator Daines and Senator Tester to vote against any cuts in student support. We should invite them to campus for a Forum. They need to hear the stories live. He is going to attend the ASUM meeting tomorrow night to try to work together on this campaign. We could even get Governor Bullock to attend the Forum.

## Adjournment

Adjourned at 5:08