

MVCC Senate Faculty Caucus
Tuesday, December 8, 2015 Minutes
2:00 AB 233

Present: C. Miller (chair), J. Baumann, C. Bolton, J. Brown, L. Charbonneau, A. Doughtie, D. Elseth, A. Haines, E. Hantsch, D. Kelly, R. Mink, A. Radlowski, J. Roberts, R. Santos, G. Searles, R. Shulman

Guests: L Kahler, Jim Maio

Opening and Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 2:03, and the minutes of the Oct. 27th meeting we approved.

Chair Remarks

Christine Miller opened the floor to Lew Kahler for a presentation on SUNY Applied Learning

SUNY Applied Learning Timetable and First Deadline

Lew Kahler began his presentation by following up on some questions from the Dec. 1st College Senate Meeting. He spoke on the question: what happens if MVCC does not file the Applied Learning Report. Lew said it might be possible for the state to eventually link a portion of our funding to the report, or for SUNY to not approve our budget.

The first step is to compile a complete inventory of all applied learning opportunities at MVCC. To be efficient and organized, Lew suggested we begin conversations within centers about which activities constitute “applied learning”. We hope to have our inventory by early January and a draft document completed by the last week in January. The complete document is due on February 15th.

Lew offered to meet with faculty to clarify, and discuss discipline-specific concerns over the next few weeks.

Some discussion was had in general and other concerns brought regarding applied learning and assessment. Will this be an added assessment on top of Annual Program Review?

Other concerns included the perceived vagueness of the SUNY documents, and questions about the extent to which will we be assessed on these terms. For example, the question arose: does a traditional lab meet the requirement of an “authentic” experience, as the SUNY criteria call for? A general consensus came about that the faculty should define the terms, as well define what constitutes “applied learning”.

Academic Freedom Statement

Don Kelly reported on the status of the academic freedom statement, following up on the discussion from the December 1st college senate meeting. The committee would like the senate to formally adopt both the statement and its supporting documents, and display them on the senate and MVCC websites.

Some suggestions for revision came up and a discussion followed. In particular some faculty expressed concern about the wording of the document, particularly the line that states, “they may not, however, claim as their right the privilege of discussing in the classroom controversial matters which have no relation to their subjects”. It was suggested that the term “controversial” is too difficult to define, and such a policy may limit the spontaneity of open discussion in humanities classes. It was suggested that with the word “controversial” or the full sentence be struck. The caucus decided it is best to protect both the rights of students and faculty. It was also suggested that the current policy and proposed policy be merged into one statement.

College Calendar and Final Exam Schedules

A discussion was had on the calendar and final exam dates. Some suggestions were made to avoid having the extra Monday at the end of the semester, but no consensus.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Roberts