



**MINUTES**  
**Montana Board of Regents**  
Conference Call Meeting  
June 18, 2009

**Thursday, June 18, 2009**

Roll call indicated a quorum present.

**Regents Present:** Regents Stephen Barrett, Chair, Clay Christian, Vice Chair, Lynn Hamilton, Janine Pease, Lila Taylor, Todd Buchanan, Janine Pease, and Mitch Jessen. Commissioner Sheila Stearns, *ex officio*, was represented by Deputy Commissioners Mick Robinson, Sylvia Moore, Mary Moe and Tyler Trevor. Superintendent of Public Instruction, Denise Juneau, *ex officio*, was represented by Joyce Silverthorne. Governor Brian Schweitzer, *ex officio*, was represented by Jan Lombardi.

Sites represented by phone were: Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), UM-Missoula, UM-Western, UM-MT Tech, UM-Helena COT, MSU-Bozeman, MSU-Billings, MSU-Northern, MSU-Great Falls COT, Flathead Valley Community College, Dawson Community College and the Office of the Governor.

Regent Steve Barrett explained this meeting is a continuation of the May 28-29, 2009 Board of Regents meeting. He said the board wanted more study on the student driven fee at MT Tech and that fee, therefore, will be discussed at the September 2009 Board of Regents meeting. Chairman Barrett told the board that the campuses reviewed the remaining fees and reduced the total number of fees submitted as well as the dollar amount associated with the fees. He said the board will deal with the fees as a whole and regents can pull any particular fee out for discussion.

**ACTION**

1. Review and Approval of Remaining Fees – Continuation of ITEM 143-102-R0509

Deputy Commissioner Mick Robinson, OCHE, explained the current fee matrix that was submitted since the May 28-29, 2009 Board of Regents meeting. He said the fees to be voted on at this meeting are new fees and are categorized for the purpose of making the fee requests easier to understand. Deputy Commissioner Robinson said he has held discussions with the campuses on the fee requests and that it was determined that it is sometimes less costly for the campuses to arrange for pass-through fees. There are also some new course fees for classes that have consumable supplies, such as art classes, or science courses and labs. Deputy Commissioner Robinson noted fee requests connected with existing courses are appropriate because courses began subsequent to fee approval two years ago. He added that UM-Western has block scheduling and has, therefore, been evaluating the process and fees for the block courses to determine if program or course fees would be more appropriate. He pointed



out that there was some consolidation of fees into a program fee. Some campuses displayed a number of the fees that they eliminated from the requests.

Regent Barrett requested the continuation of including the list of fees that were eliminated at each campus for future board meeting decisions on fees.

Deputy Commissioner Robinson noted that MSU-Great Falls College of Technology had a fee associated with a program yet to be approved and decided to not take any action on that fee until that program is actually approved. He requested that the regents allow the campuses to put forth a fee that is associated with the academic approval.

Regent Barrett clarified that the fee requests were in accordance with Board of Regents policies.

Deputy Commissioner Robinson told the board that MSU-Bozeman proposed an alternative proposal for this board meeting where they reduced the three student fees, which in turn lowered the percentage range of all the mandatory fees close to the three percent level. He explained that a student-driven fee involving The University of Montana Law School was inadvertently not included in today's meeting material, and therefore, requested including the fee today.

Regent Lynn Hamilton moved to approve the fee matrix as presented, with the inclusion of the UM-Missoula student law school fee.

Regent Lila Taylor asked if assessed fees are refunded if a student drops a class.

President Dennison replied that scenario follows the campus refund policy.

Regent Taylor asked why there is a fee charged for people that accompany a student to orientation. She said it appeared this would be a good opportunity for parents to be involved and would not want the campuses to price the parents out of participating in orientation.

Chancellor Sexton said that is the practice on all the campuses.

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Stacy Klippenstein, MSU-Billings, explained that they have found a lot of guests have been attending orientation and the intent of this fee is to help offset the costs for food for the guests at orientation.

The regents concurred that the details on the documents and the manner in which they were presented were extremely helpful. It is helpful for the regents to know what the true cost of new programs is and the board agreed on allowing applicable fees to be proposed when the new program is proposed. The regents also agreed the campuses need to have consistency in how the fees are presented.

Chancellor Ron Sexton commented on the MSU-Great Falls College of Technology wind turbine program and clarified that there are several other campuses participating in that program.



MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Regent Lynn Hamilton requested that the Board of Regents Budget Committee provide better direction going forward through the development of policy on what portion of tuition is essentially fees.

Regent Pease clarified that she did not want costs included in fees that should actually be included in tuition.

Motion passed 6-1, with Regent Buchanan voting no.

2. Virtual Academy Authorization ITEM 143-101-R0609

Deputy Commissioner Sylvia Moore explained the level of partnering with K-12 involved with the Virtual Academy. She said The UM-Missoula campus was originally named by the legislature and Commissioner Stearns requested the more generic legislative language, "a unit of the Montana University System." This was requested to maintain flexibility in the future. Deputy Commissioner Moore encouraged the regents to approve UM-Missoula as the host for this program at this time.

Regent Taylor moved approval of ITEM 143-101-R0609. Motion passed 7-0.

Public Comment:

Dean Roberta Evans, UM-Missoula School of Education said this will serve the cause well across the state.

Marco Faro, MEA-MFT, appreciated the regents moving this forward so quickly and said he is looking forward to working together on the Virtual Academy.

Meeting adjourned at 10:31 AM.

Posted on

Approved by the Board of Regents on

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Date

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Date

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Sheila M. Stearns  
Commissioner of Higher Education  
and Secretary to the Board of Regents

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen Barrett  
Chair, Board of Regents

