

## Student Reports

### Montana Board of Regents Regular Meeting March 21-22, 2002 Havre, MT

#### Andy Parker, President MAS

Mr. Parker reported on the MAS Retreat held January 18-20. The issues covered were constitutional changes, fee equality, and Legislative plans. For the fee equality, research is being done to get information from other campuses on their fees. Legislative plans focus on going to the Legislature. UM-Missoula encourages a voter registration drive. Montana Tech hangs up posters with voter registration information. MSU-Billings (Bryce Anderson) reports that it is a State Law that the universities send out voter registration forms. We need to get on top of our administration. Northern is not presently addressing any voter registration issues but will contact the campus administration and offer assistance.

MAS will propose that each campus set its own transcript fee. Currently it is \$3 at UM-Missoula. Billings believes that \$3 is not that much. The fee will be \$5 for the first three transcripts and \$3 after that. UM-Missoula (Chris Peterson) believes that the fee is too much. Montana Tech (Tony Delmoe) states that the unofficial transcript is free. MSU-Billings (Bryce Anderson) reported that the Regents have just dropped the issue. This is more about principles, and the Student Government is watching what they are doing.

In Missoula, 33% of the employees receive the extended health benefits. It is extended to opposite sex partners who are not married. **(NOTE: In clarification, unmarried persons of the opposite sex can legally declare a common law marriage, and are required to do so before benefits are extended. Montana Law makes unions of same sex partners illegal.)** ASUM is proactive. This is a topic that has been covered nationally. There is a concern with out of state students wondering if Montana discriminates. Missoula is asking for support. Northern believes that this is a legislative topic, and not a student issue. UM-Missoula (Chris Peterson) states that the benefits should be offered with the same compensation whether one is gay, straight, or whatever. He also believes that this is a student issue, and change comes from the students. MSU-Billings (Bryce Anderson) believes that Administrative change needs to be made. Montana Tech (Tony Delmoe) said that they did not take a stand on the issue since it has not been put before the student body.

MSU-Northern (Dan Geelan) reported that Andy Parker has been working on a legislative action plan and was planning to distribute it to MAS for information purposes.

They want to be sure that when they approach the Legislature they all go with the same message. Montana Tech (Tony Delmoe) indicated that their Student Body President will be their lobbyist. UM-Missoula (Chris Peterson) believes they need to hire lobbyists. MSU-Northern (Dan Geelan) indicated that Northern and Billings will go together on their lobbyist. UM-Missoula (Chris Peterson) believes they need to be united. MSU-Billings (Bryce Anderson) recommended that Montana Tech work with UM-Western and perhaps go in with them. MSU-Northern (Dan Geelan) suggested that incoming officers be briefed on this and urged to have the lobbyists contact each other.

In regard to the Board of Regents Retreat in February on the proposed Budget Initiatives of Regent Semmens, MSU-Northern (Dan Geelan) said the system needs to be competitive with other states as far as the pay plan goes. For every 1% raise, there is a 1-2% tuition increase. This would ultimately be put on the backs of students if the legislature cuts too much out of next years funding proposal. MSU-Billings (Bryce Anderson) recommended watching the high schools on the issue of no foreign language requirement. UM-Missoula (Chris Peterson) discussed how the enrollment figures seriously affect the campuses. It was recognized by MAS members who attended the February meeting that Board of Regents' members were united in general support of Regent Semmens' proposed initiatives.

UM-Missoula (Chris Peterson) indicated he believed the IT Policies had been very rushed. It was introduced in November in Bozeman, but was put onto submission. In January, it was put on Action Consent. Now it is on the Action Agenda. He stated that the university system does not have a policy. People are wondering how private computers really are. E-mail is public information, and many feel that this is not right. In blocking sites, who will determine what is and what is not educational? There is an informational banner that is only on Windows Operating Systems which limits MUS to the use of Microsoft. The students will push to have this postponed for a careful review. MSU-Northern (Debbie Smith) says that this program monitors the porn sites. UM-Missoula (Chris Peterson) believes that the definition of porn is subjective. Who is it up to? MSU-Billings (Bryce Anderson) noted that this issue needs to be looked into further. He stated the students pay computer fees and wonders where the funds will come from to monitor this. MSU-Northern (Dan Geelan) raised concerns regarding censorship and who will govern and decide regarding which websites are going to be limited. Northern is trying to update their technology and this may discourage students from utilizing campus computers as much.

Lunch topics for this Board of Regents meeting were the transcript fee, IT policy and same sex health benefits.

#### Campus reports at MAS meeting

**UM-Missoula (Chris Peterson)** stated that the college is working on budgeting. They are dealing with the hate crime and the national media. However, they did raise \$60,000 for the family. The family has a 22-month-old son.

**Montana Tech (Tony Delmoe)** reported they had Executive Board elections last week, with a good voter turnout. The campus clubs are doing well, and the Circle K club has received many awards. The mining club is currently in Australia. They interviewed candidates for the head basketball coach position. They have just recently put in a new cardio room. Enrollment is down tremendously on their campus due to the downturn in their economy.

**MSU-Billings (Bryce Anderson)** noted they had elections with an 8% turnout. The Career Fair had 50 employers and over 600 people in attendance.

**MSU-Northern (Dan Geelan)** reported that David Ray, the Head Wrestling Coach deserved special recognition for bringing the National Wrestling Tournament to Great Falls. Northern took second as a team, with two National Champs and eight All Americans. Tournament Director Walt Currie did an excellent job of facilitating the tournament. Student government elections will be held April 10. The Senate office just received new furniture, and the Constitutional Review Retreat will be held this weekend with Jason Schakosky, Kory McDonald, and Chris Swinger in charge. Lewistown will be receiving some new computers.

It was decided that since MAS did not have a quorum due to the inclement weather, a 10:00 a.m. meeting would be held to vote on adoption of the proposed Constitution, support of the Semmens Initiative, and acceptance of the January meeting minutes. It was also decided that members should review and research the IT policy and discussion would resume at the 10:00 a.m. meeting.

### **Andy Parker, President ASMSU**

Mr. Parker welcomed the new **Athletic Director, Peter Fields** who will arrive on May 1.

Mr. Parker reported that the Associated Students of Montana State University took an interest and active participation in many events and issues over the past two months. ASMSU elections take place next week to elect a new President, Vice President, and 11 Senators. A student initiative also will be on the ballot regarding the increase in the athletic fee. Student Senate finished their budgeting process for FY03 and closed the budget with an ending balance of \$669,999 for general operations, \$8,664 for Capital expenditures, and \$29,320 in Reserve Expenditures.

He reported the MSU Mission for Mentoring proposal was recently released to UPBAC. The proposal will accommodate mentoring for every freshman in an attempt to increase retention. The proposal addresses needs of students beyond academics.

The ASMSU Constitutional Convention will re-convene on April 6 and 7, finishing up with the recommended changes and updates to their Policy and Procedures Manual.

Students are currently planning the annual Spring Banquet, and invited all members of the Board of Regents to attend. The Banquet will be held in the Stadium Club on May 2, 2002 beginning at 6:00 p.m. and ending by 9:30 p.m. Formal invitations will be forthcoming.

The ASMSU Multi-cultural Center has been moved to University consideration, as ASMSU feels that a program such as the Multi-cultural Center is indeed crucial to the further development and education of students, and ASMSU cannot provide the funding to continue the effectiveness and development of the program. The University is now considering this Center under the Vice President of Student Affairs and the Budget Amendment has been submitted to UPBAC.

Students participated in the Bobcat Challenge, an event providing a fun and safe Saturday night on campus. It featured events such as the bungee run, obstacle course, Frisbee toss, etc. This was followed by a concert. ASMSU Wellness co-sponsored the event and ASMSU Concerts put on the post-event concert.

Mr. Parker thanked everyone for all the help provided over the past year during his tenure as President. He thanked all the students and Administration of MSU, MAS schools, the State Legislature, Governor's Office, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and the Office of Public Instruction for striving to maintain high quality education in Montana. He thanked the Board of Regents especially for their commitment to the Montana University System and in particular their commitment to the best interests of the students.

### **April Keith, President ASCoTGF**

Ms. Keith indicated that Student Government approved all of the proposed new fees at their first meeting.

They are preparing for the annual Faculty and Staff Appreciation Picnic. This year they voted on whether to play softball or volleyball and softball won by four votes. They hope that this picnic will be very memorable and show their utmost appreciation to the Faculty and Staff. They are also preparing for the annual blood drive on April 11.

Student Government has also been involved in the Campus Safety Committee and Leadership Committee in determining the need for implementing security procedures such as cameras and/or security guards. Student

Government was also open for input concerning the graduation ceremony in May. They have also been involved in informing students of the benefits they are receiving due to the new Coca-Cola contract.

**Jamyne Richardson**, Student Government faculty advisor gave notice that this is her last term with Student Government. They are now in the process of selecting candidates to fill the position next fall.

Elections for Officers for next year will take place April 17.

### **Dan Geelan, President ASMSUN**

Mr. Geelan reported that Northern sponsored the NAIA National Wrestling Tournament in Great Falls on March 1 and 2. The tournament was a wonderful event and as the host university, MSU-Northern has many reasons to be proud of its wrestling program and the students and employees who worked on the event. Tournament Director Walt Currie did a fantastic job of facilitating an extremely effective tournament. Northern was the runner-up falling just short of Lindenwood University. Northern had two National Champs, Tyson Thyvierage and Emmitt Willson. The coaches also voted Tyson as the tournament's Outstanding Wrestler. Special recognition needs to go to the Northern Head Wrestling Coach, David Ray, who was instrumental in bringing this National Tournament to Montana. The Tournament will be held in Great Falls for the next two years.

Student Government sent representatives to the Lewistown and Great Falls campuses to include those students in Student Government. As a result of the visits, ASMSU-N is attempting to acquire funds or resources to get some new computers and a printer to the Lewistown campus, as some of the computers are antiquated.

ASMSU-N has set aside funds to offer two \$500.00 scholarships next year.

They are also taking nominations for the Golden N award to honor outstanding service to students from faculty and/or staff. They also are taking nominations for a first ever Humanitarian Award to honor a community member who has contributed to student life on the MSU-Northern campus. The awards will be presented April 17 at the Student Excellence Luncheon.

Northern's Strategic Planning process has been completed and work will begin on implementing those strategies. Students participating in the process enjoyed working alongside the administration, staff, and faculty and felt like part of the team.

Student government met with Vice Chancellor Chuck Jensen numerous times regarding the proposed fee increases. The students voted to support those increases.

### **Tony Delmoe, Senator ASMT**

Mr. Delmoe reported that student elections had already been held with the new officers for next year being Jared Robertson of Alaska, President, Forrest Jay of Washington, Vice President and Amy Boyle of Butte, Treasurer.

During the election a referendum of mandatory fee increases was put before the students. With a very simple majority the fees passed. They believed that greater student support was not attained due to an already high number of monetary increases over the past years and they feel their money is not being spent in the best way possible. A student satisfaction survey indicated that of the larger disappointments one was the spending of the student activity fee and another the parking problem.

The local student chapter of Circle K gave an outstanding performance at the state conference, bringing home many individual and chapter awards for everything from advisor of the year to chapter of the year. The club has increased its participation year after year and has made the entire school proud of their achievements.

During the past week, the athletic committee interviewed three finalists for the position of head coach for the men's basketball team. Those were Mike Bauer, current interim Head Coach, Shawn Neary, Miles Community College, and Shawn Huse of Oklahoma. The final decision of the committee will be released very soon.

Montana Tech experienced a large drop in student enrollment this semester. There were about 100 fewer students this spring than last spring semester. It may in part be due to a higher number of December graduates, or a smaller number of local students to pool from as local elementary and high schools are closing due to low enrollment. It is recognized on campus that this is a critical problem and everything possible is being done to increase enrollment.

The chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers continues to work steadfastly on their design for a human powered vehicle. An extreme amount of time has been put into this project by the students. Last year was the first entry of Montana Tech into this national competition, and they took fifth place. They are hoping to take first place this year. The ASME chapter is working to ensure that Montana Tech is able to participate in more of these activities to bring more recognition to the school.

### **Bryce Anderson President, ASMSU-B**

Mr. Anderson reported that students are working to get back in the groove of study after a week of spring break. Student elections were held in late February with about an 8% voter turnout. The new student body president as of May 6 will be Nicole Alley, and the Vice President, Christina Sprague.

ASMSU-B has worked on bylaw changes for the past few weeks, as well as their budgets for the 2002-2003 academic year. They have also been working on the annual Easter Egg Hunt to be held Saturday, March 30 in the Peaks to Plains Park on campus. Everyone is welcome to attend the event and there will also be an appearance by the Easter Bunny.

Student Government has also been working on request forms for the one percent quality enhancement tuition increase. They have not received as many requests as desired and will approach the students again. They hope to have these issues on the next election ballot.

Career Services held their annual Career Fair, with over fifty employers and numerous workshops. Participation of the students and community was great. There were over 600 people in attendance.

Mr. Anderson thanked the Board of Regents, Commissioner, and the Office of Higher Education for all the help and valuable information they provided during his tenure as president.

### **Chris Peterson, President ASUM**

Mr. Peterson reported that Student Government is continuing its efforts to find viable alternatives to the proposed Occupancy Standard in Missoula. Those working on this include Cooperative Student Housing, ASUM Off-campus Housing Coordinator and the Neighborhood Council Community Relations Committee.

ASUM completed its budgeting process in an exciting 16 ½ hour meeting.

Mr. Peterson indicated that ASUM is extremely concerned about the hate crime that was committed in Missoula. Specifically, they are concerned about the repercussions on out of state enrollment. They strongly urge the Board of Regents to reconsider their position in this matter. ASUM has collected around 1000 postcards that will be sent to the Regents, explaining the concern of discrimination.

**NOTE: In clarification of this issue, the Board of Regents has never condoned hate crimes of any sort. The matter in question is health insurance coverage for same sex partners of university employees. According to state law, these relationships cannot be recognized as legal, whereas opposite sex relationships are legally able to claim common law marriage, and are required to do so in order to become eligible for coverage.**