

# **The University Senate of Michigan Technological University**

## **Proposal 23-22** (Voting Units: Full Senate)

### **“Proposal for the Creation of an Ad-Hoc Committee to Evaluate the Structure and Timing of Senate Meetings”**

Submitted by: The Senate Executive Committee

#### **I. Introduction**

The timing and duration of Senate meetings continues to be of concern for those who volunteer to serve on this body. A continuing increase in the workload of the Senate places undue pressure on Senators and Alternates who must balance the demands of this service with their regular duties as faculty and staff and their lives outside the University. Exploring potential alternatives to when meetings are held, along with options for restructuring and expediting the business of the Senate should provide solutions for improving the work/life balance of those who serve.

#### **II. Rationale**

Members of the Senate have long recognized the inherent difficulties and limitations associated with meetings that are scheduled outside of normal business hours and that frequently run long beyond the prescribed time. Holding Senate meetings that in practice are often of open-ended duration after normal business hours creates many issues and limitations related to who is able and/or is willing to participate on the Senate.

An ad hoc committee studying the length and timing of meetings was formed during the 2019-20 term (Proposal 1-20). Unfortunately, this committee did not propose any updates to the nature and timing of meetings, and as a result, no changes were implemented. A new ad hoc committee will be tasked with presenting a suite of specific strategies meant to counter the limitations associated with the current meeting model. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, exploring options for scheduling meetings during regular business hours, altering the frequency of meetings, and the restructuring of meeting agendas with efficiency and time limits in mind.

### **III. Proposal**

The University Senate will constitute an ad hoc committee, *The Committee to Evaluate the Structure and Timing of Senate Meetings*, which will commence work immediately upon approval. The ad hoc committee will be comprised of volunteers from among the roll of current Senators and Alternates. The committee will study and make recommendations concerning specific strategies for the holding, structure, and duration of meetings with the goal of making Senate participation more inclusive and conducive to a healthier work/life balance. The ad hoc committee will be disbanded upon dissemination of their results, which are due by the end of the 2021-22 Senate term.