Michigan Technological University

University Senate

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DATE: November 3, 2016

TO: Jacqueline E. Huntoon
Provost & VP for Academic Affairs

FROM: Martin J. Thompson
Senate President

SUBJECT: Senate Proposal 3-17

COPIES: Glenn D. Mroz, President
Roberta M. Dessellier, Secretary of the Board of Trustees

At its meeting on November 2, 2016, the University Senate approved Proposal 3-17, "Amendment to Senate Procedures 506.1.1: Evaluation Procedures for Department Chairs/School Deans". The Senate looks forward to approval of this proposal by the administration. Please keep me informed about the decision of the administration on this proposal and feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

This proposal is approved pending acceptance of editorial changes as noted in the attached document.

APPROVED:

Jacqueline E. Huntoon, Provost & VP for Academic Affairs — Jan 16, 2017 (Date)

APPROVED:

Glenn D. Mroz, President — 1/20/17 (Date)

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 3-17

(Voting Units: Full Senate)

"Amendment to Senate Procedures 506.1.1, Evaluation Procedures for Department Chairs and School Deans"

Proposal

This proposal proposes that Senate Procedures 506.1.1, *"EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AND SCHOOL DEANS,"* be changed so that Section IV (Survey Instrument), Section VIII (Unit Constituency Input, Section X (Survey Report), and Section XI (Department Chair/School Dean's Response) provide more flexibility to the respondent to provide written comments.

We propose that only the individual unit's constituents, when participating in the survey, be given the opportunity:

1. to declare if they wish their comments to be summarized by the review committee, or be reported verbatim and
2. to provide a set of comments that can be seen by everyone in the unit including the unit's chair/dean and their immediate supervisors (college dean for department chairs and provost for school deans), and a set of comments that can be only viewed by the unit's chair/dean's immediate supervisor.

Background and Justification

The Senate Procedures 506.1.1, *"EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AND SCHOOL DEANS"*, Section VIII, stipulates that a "decision should be made if the survey comments in verbatim should be included in the review committee report."

The unit's constituency, through their comments, is making a recommendation to the chair's or school dean's supervisor regarding reappointment. Both positive and negative comments will be useful to that supervisor when they are deciding whether or not to reappoint the person being reviewed.

Unfortunately, in many cases it may possible to determine the identity of an individual making a specific comment based on either the content or phrasing of a comment. In order to protect the respondent, to the maximum extent possible, the privacy of individuals who provide ~~negative~~ feedback (which, if given, is important for a supervisor to consider as part of the review process), it might be preferable to have the unit's review committee summarize all comments before they are shared with the individual being reviewed or the unit's constituency as a whole.

On the other hand, some individuals within the unit might not favor their comments being summarized by the review committee, due to the concern that their view might be over- or under-emphasized one way or the other.

Further, accommodations need to be made to protect the rights of those that vote with the minority in a unit (either to share verbatim comments or not). The voting minority faculty in the unit may have voted against sharing verbatim comments because they are uncomfortable having their own comments shared widely among their colleagues and/or the individual being reviewed. Alternatively, the voting minority faculty in the unit may have voted for sharing the verbatim comments because they are uncomfortable having their comments summarized by the review committee.

We need to recognize that the comments of all faculty, not just those who vote in the majority, are important during the review of chairs and school deans. We wish to protect the confidentiality and freedom of expression of all those who participate in the review process and do everything possible to promote frank and forthright communication between faculty and those that will ultimately make a recommendation to the president regarding the reappointment of a chair or school dean.

This proposal is intended to maintain collegiality among all members of a unit while at the same time encouraging the sharing of any information that is relevant to consider as part of an individual's review.

Specific Changes to Senate Procedures 506.1.1 (Evaluation Procedure for the Department Chairs and School Deans)

1. Changes to Section VII. Survey Instrument

   Insert the following after item c.

"d. insertion of two boxes for the free written comments; one that can be seen by everyone in the unit including the unit's chair/dean and their immediate supervisors (the college dean for department chairs and the provost for school deans), and one that can only be viewed by the unit's chair/dean's immediate supervisor. Associated with each box there will be a compulsory question asking the constituents to individually select if they want their comments to summarized by the review committee in the report or produced verbatim."

2. Changes to Section VIII. Unit Constituency Input

"The department chair/school dean's self-evaluation report, the redacted letter of appointment describing the charge, and the survey instrument should be made available electronically to the entire unit constituency. This should be followed with a meeting of the unit constituency without the department chair/school dean present. At the meeting the past evaluation results may also be shown. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss, change, and approve the survey instrument. ~~In addition a decision should be made if the survey comments in verbatim should be included in the review committee report (Section X. Survey Report)~~.

If required by the unit charter that survey results and ballots be tabulated separately for faculty and staff, then faculty and staff in the unit constituency will meet separately to discuss their respective survey instruments~~, and decide on the release of the survey comments in verbatim in the report~~."

3. Changes to Section X. Survey Report

"a. tabulated results of the survey

b. the survey comments in the manner elected by the individual constituents ~~in verbatim if approved by the unit constituency~~

c. summary statements of the major accomplishments over the period of evaluation and areas for improvement of the department chair/school dean"

4. Changes to Section XI. Department Chair/School Dean's Response

"The review committee will give the department chair/school dean the survey report, except for the part that contains the written comments that are intended for the their immediate supervisors (Section X. Survey Report)."

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