Response to Senate Evaluation Recommendations

Recommendation: The executive team should create a list of action items that is distributed to all employees of Michigan Tech with updates given periodically on the progress of accomplishment. This is the same recommendation that was made last year but was not followed by the administration. Unless employees feel their input is valued by the university leadership, the decrease in participation in the annual feedback to the university leadership will continue.

Response: Initiatives in the president's office are reported at least 4 times per year, usually before Board of Trustees meetings. These presentations are open and are also streamed to be viewed on-line. Reports of significant accomplishment frequently appear in Tech Today and local media on university progress. There is also a budget forum held in January conducted by Vice President for Research, Dave Reed. Vice President for Administration, Ellen Horsch and Director of Human Resources, Renee Hiller have participated in benefit discussions in sessions of the Senate. Additionally, because this past year was a year to evaluate/refine the 5 year strategic plan, there were a number of discussion groups on the plan on campus.

Recommendation: The widespread dissatisfaction with the performance of IT was identified last year and continues this year. The administration needs to re-examine its strategy to improve IT and communicate it to the university community. In particular, the special needs of faculty teachers and researchers needs to be examined and their particular input should be incorporated into the restructuring of IT.

Response: After many changes, the Chief Information Officer and IT staff, aided by faculty from the Department of Social Sciences conducted surveys on campus to identify areas that need improvement, as well as areas of satisfaction with IT services. Those were reported in April of 2015 and details can be found at:

https://docs.google.com/a/mtu.edu/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=bXR1LmVkdXxp dF9nb3Zlcm5hbmNlIGd4Ojl4YjM1MDAwNjVkNWIyNWU

There were 1,436 surveys completed. Participation rates were 30% for faculty, 28% for staff, 14% for undergraduate students and 14% for graduate students. The results indicated a substantial improvement in almost every aspect of user satisfaction from the 2014 survey data. Overall satisfaction with the IT environment on campus improved from an average of 3.13 in 2014 to 3.56 in 2015. Among faculty, who were the most dissatisfied in 2014, the improvement was from 2.87 to 3.31. No metric decreased in a statistically significant way, and most improved significantly. There is still progress to be made.

Also related to IT strategy and communication, IT now reports to the Provost (dotted line to VPR). The Provost appointed an IT Governance Committee to

advise on the conduct of IT operations for the entire university. The committee membership, charge, meeting minutes, and supporting materials can be found at:

https://sites.google.com/a/mtu.edu/it_governance/home

We have also initiated a bond project to upgrade all antiquated Ethernet cabling (category-3), committed to upgrading classroom technology, and are adding wireless to all University classrooms.

Recommendation: The dissatisfaction with fairness in the allocation of salaries and benefits within the university continues to be of concern to faculty, professional staff, and the represented staff. Whether the unfairness is a perception or reality, it needs to be addressed as it has a demoralizing impact on the Michigan Tech community. The university community needs to be consulted regarding benefits changes early in the process, before budgets are fixed. In addition, the executive team should reconsider the issue of "benefits vs. salary": has the erosion of benefits affected the recruiting and retention of quality personnel?

Response: Promotional increases for faculty are controlled centrally and currently are a flat rate of $8,000 and $11,000 for promotion from assistant to associate professor, and associate to professor respectively, regardless of degree or department. Increments for faculty who are promoted from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer are $4,500. Salaries for professional staff members are informed by published CUPA-HR (College and University Professional Association for Human Resources) national data for analogous positions at doctoral institutions. Hourly rates for union staff are negotiated annually by each union on campus (UAW, POA, AFSCME).

Merit increases for individual faculty (excluding faculty promotional increases) and professional staff are determined by a person's direct supervisor. Any increases for union staff are negotiated by their respective union.

Benefit issues are vetted by the Benefits Liaison Group, who from time to time, work with outside consultants such as Aon Hewitt to determine benefit structure. Benefit changes are also made in response to Senate proposals, such as the recent change to increase compensation for faculty on sabbatical. The open enrollment period is timed in the fall such that employees are made aware of any salary increment they might receive beginning in December, to help inform their personal benefit choices. Also related to timing, budget forums for the coming year are held in January, budgets are approved by the Board of Trustees and become effective on July 1, salary changes are effective in December, and any benefit changes become effective on January 1, a year after the budget forum for that year. The salary/benefit issue is balanced broadly across all constituent groups, and all levels of compensation. It would be helpful to inform future efforts

on this issue, to be able to determine employee views on this issue by compensation level and constituent group. Recruiting and retention issues are protected personnel issues so it is not possible to give specific cases. However, overall, there have been no reports to suggest that benefits are inadequate for recruiting and retention; there have been reported instances where salary, research facilities/opportunities and lifestyle have been cited as a recruiting and retention issue.

Recommendation: Issues on the which the President or the executive team got an average below 3 for any group should be examined seriously and made part of the action list recommended above that would be sent to the Michigan Tech community.

Response: The above comments cover the committee recommendations, which also appear to be based on the issues that resulted in an average score of less than 3.0 in the university wide rankings.