MINUTES OF MEETING NUMBER 86
OF THE
SENATE OF MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
28 January 1976

(Senate Minute pages: 1097-1113)

Meeting No. 86 was called to order on Wednesday, January 28, 1976 at 7:05 p.m. in the Faculty Lounge by President L.M. Julien.

The roll was called by the Secretary. Twenty-three members or alternates were present. Absent were ElRite, R.E. (PE), Hennessy, R.L. (AL), Juntunen, J.L. (AFROTC), Olson, C.K. (MG), Shetron, S.G. (FFC), Stebler, R.C. (AL)

Acknowledgement of Visitors: The following visitor was in attendance: Reynolds, E. (Dept. of Nursing), Romig, J. (Administration), Winnikow, S. (ME-EM), Zak, R. (Lode Reporters).

The Minutes of Meeting No. 85 were approved as distributed.

The President's Report

1. Steering Committee for Long-Range Planning. Committees A and B have been formed (see page 1078). A memo was sent to all Senators representing departments, asking that names be submitted. About 60% of the Senators responded to the request. (A listing of those selected is Available From the Senate Office upon Request).

2. Department of Nursing to be Represented on the Senate. Nursing is a new department on campus and as such is entitled to representation on the Faculty Senate. President Julien welcomed the Department of Nursing to representation on the Senate.

3. Successor to Dr. D.W. Stebbins. Dr. Stebbins will be retiring. The Senate has been asked by President R.L. Smith to submit four names of faculty members to the Steering Committee for Long-Range Planning, from which he will choose two of the four names of individuals submitted to be on the Search Committee for the new Vice President of Academic Affairs. The mechanism to be used for doing this will be discussed under new business.

4. Faculty Salary Information. Information will soon be coming. The Administration was asked to include salary information for three departments which had not been included in past Senate Annual Reports. Those departments are Institute of Mineral Research, Institute of Wood Research, and the Library. (Faculty salary information and schedules were received a few days after the Senate meeting, and have been included as Appendix A of these minutes - Available by Request from the Senate Office).

5. Selection of Nominees to be on the Board of Control. President Julien received a letter concerning selection of nominees for the Board of Control. He said that this is perhaps an area in which the Faculty Senate should have some interest, and that the Senate might want to think about this and perhaps come up with some suggestions.

6. Selection of New Senator-At-Large. President Julien spoke of the selection of a replacement for Dr. Robert Timm, who was a Senator-At-Large. One senator recommended that serious consideration be given to selecting as a replacement Harley Sachs who came within one vote of being elected Senator-At-Large. Julien said that he would talk with Sachs and see if he was still interested. Doane said that it would be an interim appointment for the remainder of the Academic Year, and that an election for a permanent replacement will be held when the annual election of Members-at-Large is held. (Since this meeting, the President notified the Secretary that Sachs has accepted the interim appointment, and his name has been added to the roster).

Reports on Two Meeting of the Academic Council were delivered by Vice President P. Nelson. (See Appendix B, C of these minutes -- Available by Request from the Senate Office).

There was a lengthy discussion at the conclusion of the reports. Some Senators expressed much interest in the fact that Dr. Stebbins announced at the January 27 Academic Council meeting that the Department of Mathematics was going to begin requiring that students have calculators in certain introductory courses. Many questions and comments were directed to Senator Boutilier from Mathematics. Booy asked how students would be alerted that they would need calculators when they come to MTU. Boutilier responded that the information could be sent out with registration materials. Miller asked Boutilier what coordination had been done with other departments. Boutilier replied that there has been no formal coordination at all. Miller and Booy pointed out the possibility of a situation in which the Mathematics Department requires one kind of calculator and another department requires the students to have another kind of calculator. Julien pointed out that it is difficult to set standards because they might be out-dated soon. Nelson said that a calculator slightly different from the type used in engineering or forestry might be the optimum purchase for a student in the School of Business and that there might be a need for some broader guidelines for the students at the time they get information. Dr. Stebbins said that someone in the Academic Council suggested that maybe the bookstore could carry a list of calculators, hopefully $50 or less, that would be adaptable for a variety of courses. Booy said that students should be able to get discounts on calculators downstate. Julien said that it would be worthwhile for more communication to develop concerning this. Boutilier said that she would take the comments of the Senators back to her department and that there should be communication between the Mathematics Department and other departments concerning the requirement of calculators in certain math courses.
Board of Control - No Report. (There have been no Board of Control meetings since the last Senate meeting).

Long-Range Planning - No Report.

Committee Reports

A. Curricular Policy

Senator P. Nelson, chairman, gave the report. The Committee is actively investigating the need for a policy on general curriculum guidelines. The type of policy the Committee is looking at would address the issue of free electives, oral and communication skills, humanities and social science electives, and minimum mathematics requirements. The policy, if the Committee decides to recommend it, would provide departments with guidelines on what proportion of a baccalaureate degree curriculum should be in the area of professional skills related to the field of the degree, and what kinds of things should be done in the balance of the curriculum. The Committee responded to a request from a member of the faculty to investigate the need for a policy covering the right of the student to graduate under the curriculum provided in the catalog in force at the time he matriculated. It is also investigating the related issue of a need for a policy to govern use of the petition to alter degree schedule forms. The Committee hopes to have recommendations in these two areas sometime in the future. It also hopes to have recommendations on the HU-SS list by the time of the next meeting.

B. Instructional Policy

Senator Baillod, Chairman, gave the report. The Committee met once since the last Senate meeting. Since then, one additional member has been appointed, Senator William Phillips, who has worked with the Committee over the past two years. Most of the discussion centered around the contemplated grading change which was mentioned in the last Committee Report. Baillod passed out two tables representing some of the data which were obtained from the registrar and said that it is not all of the data asked for. (See Appendix D in these minutes - Available by Request from the Senate Office).

Table I. Graduating senior grade point averages for the last ten years. Baillod said that by inspecting across the table from right to left for any single department, one gets the idea that there has been a rise in grade point averages. The very bottom line, for the last five years, indicates the true University average for all courses taught during a particular year; another rise is indicated again. Interpreting this data is a little difficult. The Committee has interpreted it to mean that over the past ten years, there has been an approximate .2 to .25 grade point average rise. Most of the increase seems to have taken place in the last five years. Professor Jewell of Michigan State University made a study of the grade point averages of some 200 schools, from 1965 to 1973, that was reported in the December 22, 1975 issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education. The average rise in grade point was .32. It would indicate that the rise at Michigan Tech has been somewhat less than what one might call a national average.

Table II. Grade distributions by departments for academic year 74-75. The table indicates the percentage of each type of grade given in each of the departments for all courses in that department, excluding summer and 500 and 600 level courses. There are some apparent differences among the various departments. It seems that much of the difference in their relative percentages are accounted for by the difference in relative percentages of upper division and lower division courses taught by that particular department.

Senator Phillips has conducted a preliminary study of grading policies at many other universities and determined that apparently some of the information given the Committee by Mr. Lucier was in error. It was reported by the chairman at the last Senate meeting that all state-supported Michigan colleges and universities, except for a few graduate schools, graded on the straight ABC system. That is not true. Michigan State University uses a numerical system: 4.0, 3.5, 3.0, 2.5, etc. Oakland University uses a numerical grading system allowing for grading in tenths: 3.8, 3.7. In Senator Phillips' preliminary results, close to 90% of the schools he surveyed grade with the straight ABC system. However, there are certain clusters of schools which use different systems, such as the schools in Utah which appear to lean heavily towards the plus, minus system. This study will be reported on further. The Committee decided to place number one priority on the study of the grading system, hopefully leading up to a recommendation.

The chairman sent out a memo soliciting the opinion of academic department heads on the current final exam policy as stated in the faculty handbook. So far, replies have been received from department heads of Electrical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Geological Engineering, Forestry, Physical Education, and Mathematics. Based on a preliminary analysis of these replies, it appears that some clarification, rewording, restatement, perhaps, of the final exam policy may be in order to help clarify it.

Crowther said that one MTU professor made a formal study of the students in his classes and found that a large proportion of those who were dropping were in the D and F range. He attributed a good share of increase in grade point average to the fact that poor students are dropping courses rather than getting poor grades; liberalizing the drop policy probably had a big effect on this escalation in grade points.


E. Elections Committee - No Report.

G. Roles of the Senate and Faculty Association - No Report.

H. Smoking

Senator Booy, chairman, gave the report. She said that the Committee noticed last week that the legislature of the state of Michigan is reviewing possible new legislation on the subject of smoking in state buildings and that it seemed foolish to come up with any more recommendations "until such time as the legislature tells us how much latitude we have left."

Old Business - None

New Business

1. Successor to Dr. D.W. Stebbins

President R.L. Smith, in a memo to the Academic Faculty, January 27, 1976, said that Dr. D.W. Stebbins, Vice President of Academic Affairs, has indicated his intention to retire before the beginning of the next academic year. President Smith intends to establish a Search and Screening Committee to aid him in the appointment of Dr. Stebbins' successor by identifying individuals who will be acceptable as Vice President of Academic Affairs. This Search and Screening Committee will be appointed in the following manner:

"The Academic Senate will be asked to nominate four faculty members; the Student Council to nominate four students; and the Deans and Department Heads to nominate four administrators.

These nominations will be submitted to the current Steering Committee for Long-Range Planning, a committee already in operation, and made up of Mr. Russell F. Hoyer, Board of Control; Dr. Larry Julien, president of the Academic Senate; Miss Phyllis Dorman, President of the Student Council; Dr. D.W. Stebbins, Vice President of Academic Affairs; and R.L. Smith, President of the University."

President Smith said that this Steering Committee will, from the twelve nominations submitted, select two members of the faculty, two administrators, and two students to be the Search and Screening Committee reporting to him, and that after the Committee is appointed, he would meet with it to discuss procedures.

President Julien initiated a discussion concerning the need for the Senate to set up a procedure for the selection of the names of four faculty members to be nominees for the Search and Screening Committee.

Nufer said that since he has been at Michigan Tech he has noticed that there have been at least two search committees in which the person chairing the committee has been the person selected, and that this seems to be a conflict of interest. He made the motion, that if during the process of the search, it becomes evident that one of those faculty members of the committee might be considered a candidate for the position of Vice President of Academic Affairs, then that person must resign from the Search and Screening Committee. Doane seconded the motion. The motion was voted upon and passed unanimously.

Julien said that since he is on the Steering Committee, he can certainly take this as a recommendation to the Committee. If either of the two faculty members selected to be on the Search and Screening Committee happens to be one in the running for the position, Julien will recommend that the person be removed and replaced.

Horvath suggested selecting members for the committee in the way that Senators-at-Large are elected. People who are interested in the position express their interest, their names are put on a ballot, and there is an election.

Nufer suggested that selection could be done the way it was handled for Committees A and B in the departments.

Julien asked whether the Senate wanted to solicit the names of those who are interested and then have an election or solicit the departments for suggestions of the names of persons.

Horvath moved that the Senate solicit names of people who are interested require that they fill out a form and send it to President Julien. Then, within as short a period as possible, a faculty-wide election would be called. Daavettila seconded the motion. Julien asked for discussion.

Crowther suggested that the selection of those to be on the Committee be conducted among the Senators rather than among the faculty at large.

One senator wondered how the four nominees would be selected from the list of those who submitted their names and were voted upon by ballot. Would the top four vote getters be selected?

The motion to have the Senate solicit names of those interested and to hold a faculty-wide election was voted upon and defeated.

Miller introduced the motion that the faculty would be solicited for volunteers who would like to be selected for the committee, their names would be sent to the Senate Executive Council, each Senator would vote by ballot, and the top
four vote getters would be nominated for the Search and Screening Committee. Doane seconded the motion.

Boutilier asked if it was implied that each Senator would go to their departments before voting. Julien responded that Senators-at-Large would not. But the Senator from the individual department would have that choice. He said that most departments would want it to be democratic. However, the Senate would not be regulating how a Senator would act in this particular case.

Doane volunteered to communicate with each faculty member if the motion passed. If interested in the job, the person was to write their name on the form sent them, and send it back to the Elections Committee.

Nufer said that Doane might want to include the statement, "If you might be a candidate, do not apply to be a member of the Committee." Doane agreed that the statement should be on the communication.

A vote was taken on the motion that the faculty be solicited for volunteers who would like to be selected for the Committee, their names would be sent to the Senate Elections Committee, each Senator would vote by ballot, and the top four vote getters would be nominated for the Search and Screening Committee. The motion was passed unanimously. Julien charged Doane with carrying this out.

2. Selection of Members of the Michigan Tech Board of Control

Julien said that some members of the faculty have suggested that perhaps the Faculty Senate should consider developing a means or process to suggest names of nominees for membership on the Michigan Tech Board of Control to replace those who resign.

Doane made the motion that the Secretary of the Senate write to the governor's office asking for complete information on how an individual is selected to be on the Board of Control.

Nelson asked Mr. Romig if he knew whether there is a conflict of interest policy that would prevent a Michigan Tech faculty member from serving on the MTU Board of Control. Romig replied that according to his recollection there is an Attorney General's opinion to the effect that a Michigan Tech faculty member could not serve on the Michigan Tech Board of Control. He added that this does not mean that a Michigan Tech faculty member could not be on the Board of Control of another university.

Nelson said that perhaps in the letter the Senate can find out whether the governor's office has any later information on whether faculty members of institution A can sit on the governing board of institution A.

A vote was taken on the motion that the Secretary of the Senate write to the governor's office asking for complete information on how an individual is selected to be on the Board of Control and to inquire whether a faculty member of an institution can sit on the governing board of the same institution. The motion passed.


Senator Boutilier stated that in December, 1975, a legislative act was signed by the governor which enables persons who went off the state retirement system to reelect the state retirement system. There is a March 1, 1976 deadline, but Boutilier said that she had seen no publicity regarding this. She wondered whether publicity had gone out.

Vice President Stebbins said that the publicity has not gone out but that Mr. Kopel has indicated that the information is going out very soon to the faculty. Romig said that the problem is that the present Board of Control policy does not permit persons to reelect the state retirement system. The Administration is asking the Board of Control to change the policy at the February 6 Board meeting.

Boutilier said that she thinks there are some faculty members who elected TIAA-CREF who would like to reelect the state retirement system, and who would like to have the information. Romig said that this information is very significant to the faculty.

Booy said that she understands from discussion she has heard at Faculty Association Council meetings that those faculty members in TIAA-CREF have relatively been losing ground financially with the increase in the University's contribution to Social Security affecting the amount of the contribution to TIAA-CREF, and that perhaps some clarification of what is really going on with faculty pension plans is needed. She requested that when the information comes out that information be given on both of the employee retirement plans and how they are affected by University contributions to Social Security.

Julien asked whether there is any way that the faculty can find out the total number of dollars the University is paying towards Social Security and how it relates to the amount being paid to retirement for TIAA-CREF and the amount paid into the state retirement plan. As more is paid to Social Security, is more deducted from the TIAA-CREF contribution? Is more deducted from the Michigan state retirement plan, as more is paid into Social Security? Romig said that John Gooch would be able to give this information. Horvath said that there is a fixed percentage of salary which goes into retirement. It is split between Social Security and TIAA-CREF; as more is paid into Social Security, less goes to TIAA-CREF. Romig said that the Michigan plan operates on a straight formula basis.
Booy said that *Tech Topics* seems to be cranking out some good information on medical benefits and that perhaps this would be a logical place for a clear statement on retirement plans.

Julien said that this question can be posed to John Gooch and that perhaps information could be put into *Tech Topics*.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

E. Erickson  
Secretary