MINUTES OF MEETING NUMBER 130
OF THE
SENATE OF MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
4 May 1983

(Senate Minute pages: 2239-2259)

President Abata called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m., May 4, 1983 in the Faculty Lounge of the Memorial Union.

Roll: Twenty six members/alternates were present. Absent were: Hutzler (CE); Janke (BI); Mandley (Aerospace); Monson (BA); Shust (Student Council); and Sathyanarayanan (Grad. Student Council).

Recognition of Visitors: S. Weinmann (HU) and V. Hauge (SS) were recognized.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

Meeting No. 128: Due to the lack of a quorum, these minutes were not approved at Meeting No. 129. They were approved at this meeting with the corrections given on page 2208 concerning the Master of Science in Mineral Economics degree program.

Meeting No. 129: Senator Pintar noted that under item 6 of the President's (page 2212), Proposal 6-80 deals with AMCF expenses and not Proposal 24-78. The two references to Proposal 24-78 should be corrected to Proposal 6-80.

A correction was suggested to clarify the Board of Control report on page 2220. Under "Patent Policy" part of the third paragraph should read:

"Under the old policy, inventors received 15% of net royalties. Under the new policy the distribution, which is based upon gross royalties, is:"

The minutes of Meeting No. 129 were approved with these corrections.

President's Report:

President Abata's written report (pages 2244-2245 - Available by Request from the Senate Office) included the following items:

i. AMCF participation
ii. Senate Retrenchment Policy
iii. Departmental Governance
iv. Status of Senate Proposals

In discussion of item i. it was noted that in Proposal 6-80, the cost of AMCF membership, as well as travel expenses, are shared equally by the University and the MTU Faculty Association. Therefore, even though the Faculty Association no longer supports travel to AMCF meetings, the membership dues should be shared.

Items ii. and iii. will be discussed later.

Committee Reports

A. Elections

Senator Crowther indicated that the Senate is required to nominate three people for the Sabbatical Leave Committee and three people for the Athletic Council. President Stein will then select one of the nominees for each of the committees. The nominees, unanimously approved by the Senate were:

Sabbatical Leave Committee: Kathleen J. Brahney, Gilbert N. Lewis, Paul H. Lewis
Athletic Council: Donald A. Daavettila, Roswell K. Miller, Terrell L. Warrington

There were no other committee reports.

Old Business

A. Proposal 3-83, Amendment of University Promotion Policy and Procedures

Senator Pintar, Chairman of the Promotion Policy and Professional Standards and Development Committee, introduced this proposal which is a revision of that presented at Meeting No. 128. There was no discussion and Proposal 3-83 was unanimously recommended for adoption.

B. Ad Hoc Retrenchment Policy Planning Committee
In the absence of Vice President Monson, Chairman of the Committee, President Abata presented the material given on pages 2246-2256 (Available by Request from the Senate Office). This document contains proposals for a long-range retrenchment plan both in general and specific terms. A number of recommendations are made and general guidelines for the treatment of faculty are presented. The policy is not meant for short-term fluctuations in the budget such as the cash flow problems experienced by MTU earlier this year.

It was suggested that the document implies that tenure is granted by a department whereas a faculty member has University tenure. It was also pointed out that tenure gives a faculty academic freedom but does not prevent termination for economic reasons. These and other points in the document will be reviewed by the University lawyer. In addition, Vice President Koepel will determine the cost implications of such a retrenchment policy.

Much of the discussion centered on the guidelines for treatment of faculty. Priorities will vary from department to department, so each department will require guidelines. The document indicates that there should be faculty involvement in generating these guidelines. Depending on the specific priorities, a non-tenured faculty member may meet the guidelines better than a tenured faculty member.

It was suggested that the guidelines should be established before the retrenchment process starts to prevent arbitrary actions being taken. However, it was noted that the documentation of guidelines for a process that may never take place could have negative effects either on faculty who felt they would be the first to go or on hiring of new faculty. As a compromise, it was suggested that the policy set up a mechanism for guideline preparation, indicating that the guidelines be consistent with overall policies such as maintaining program quality or meeting accreditation standards. However, the specific guidelines would not be established until retrenchment is required but then would be completed in a timely manner.

A motion was made to support the document as a working document which is not in its final form. It was unanimously approved.

New Business

A. Proposal 6-83, Certificate Program in Foreign Language and Area Study

The proposal was introduced by Senator Ottenstein, who indicated that the Curricular Policy Committee unanimously recommended adoption of Proposal 7-83.

During discussion, the question was raised as to whether approval of this proposal would open the door to a considerable number of certificate programs at MTU. In response, it was noted that there is no major in foreign languages at MTU and therefore the certificate program provides a means for students to indicate their capabilities and enhance their job opportunities. Future applications for certificate programs would be studied carefully and probably would not be recommended in areas where majors exist.

Professor Weinmann noted that this proposal had been several years in preparation and one of the first steps had been an informal poll of students. The majority had indicated that the awarding of a certificate would encourage them to take foreign language courses. It was also pointed out that the certificate would be an actual piece of paper given to the student and it will also be noted on their transcript.

It was emphasized that the certificate program requires a significant commitment of time by the student with 30 credits needed for completion. In response to a question, it was agreed that a student could complete these requirements and obtain the certificate but not complete their degree. When put to a vote, Proposal 7-83 was recommended for adoption with 18 yes votes and 7 abstentions.

C. Proposal 8-83, Departmental Governance

"Any department proposing a change in its form of departmental governance shall present a detailed plan (constitution) to its Dean. Every reasonable effort shall be made to reach agreement on the goal, implementation and timetable. In event of the failure to resolve differences, an appeal may be made to the Senate. The Senate President shall, in consultation with the University President, establish a committee of three whose members are not affiliated with the respective department or college (if possible). The committee shall be chaired by a Senator and include one faculty member from a department with a chair and one member from a department with a head.

After its investigation, the committee shall make a final report to the Senate and the appropriate administrative officials. This report should include an evaluation of the preparedness of the department for the change in departmental governance. If the committee decides that the department is not adequately prepared for the change in governance, they may recommend methods to alter the situation. If the committee finds that the department is prepared, the administration shall allow the change."

The above proposal was introduced by Senator Beske-Diehl, Chairperson of the Institutional Evaluation Committee. The proposal has some changes from the original but the committee felt that these were editorial changes designed to allow change in either direction and not to favor the Chair form of governance, although most departments at MTU would currently be concerned with a change in that direction. However, the question was raised as to whether the revised proposal was just an editorial change. The Head and Chair models given on page 2236 are extremes intended to provide a basis for discussion.
In the discussion that followed, it was pointed out that the committee believes that departments should have the right to choose their form of departmental governance. This proposal does not recommend a specific change but recommends that change be allowed if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the department. The proposal was also designed to ensure that a department is suitably prepared for the change. It was noted that problems could evolve if the transition is implemented without a carefully developed plan.

It was suggested that the Head or Chair would be somewhere between the extremes indicated. These positions are very difficult with the person required to satisfy both the administration and the faculty. A number of opinions were expressed concerning differences between Heads and Chairs.

It was stated that a Chairperson has to take account of faculty input whereas a department head does not. The opinion was expressed that a Chairperson who is not effective can be removed by the faculty whereas a Head can not. It was also suggested that it is easier to attract a strong person into a department Head position compared to a Chairmanship.

Another point was that the issue is really one of getting the faculty and departmental leadership to work cooperatively to produce results. The proposal was intended to provide a mechanism to ensure that departmental governance does not depend on the goodwill of the administration. If approved, vertical communication within the University should be enhanced, by guaranteeing a line of communication for faculty who feel that they are not being listened to.

It was pointed out that it would be beneficial for departments to have a governance plan whereby both faculty and either Head or Chair, whichever the case might be, would know what their particular roles are. One may not completely agree with the plan but it would be valuable to know what was expected. This could help in the hiring of people.

While recognizing that the committee had put a great deal of effort into the proposal, a motion was made to refer the proposal back to the committee for possible revision of the background statement and proposal in light of the discussion. The motion was unanimously approved.

D. Late Drops

Senator Suryanarayana suggested that the late drop policy should be reviewed. Although the University already has a liberal late drop policy of allowing drops up to six weeks into the quarter, it seems that students are being allowed to drop classes even up to finals week. Students are apparently using this as a means to get out of courses in which they are not doing well.

E. University Committee on General Education

In response to a question, President Abata indicated that at present the Senate will not be playing a role in regard to the recommendations from this committee. It was suggested that the Senate could take a position of support for the document. Abata indicated the Senate Council would consider this.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Roy D. Adams
Senate Secretary