MINUTES OF MEETING NUMBER 140
OF THE
SENATE OF MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

22 January 1985

(Senate Minute pages: 2382-2389)

President Baltensperger called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. on January 22, 1985 in MEEM 302.

Approval of Agenda

A special meeting was presented by the President which dispensed with the approval of the minutes of the last Senate meeting and all committee reports except the one related to Proposal 4-85. No objections were raised.

Roll: Twenty seven members/alternates were present. Absent were: Gary Gimmestad (KRC), William Predebon (AL), Bruce A. Haataja (IWR), T. Apparao (Graduate Student Council), and Dale Stein. Visitors present were: David Sikarski, Don Mikkola, Ed Williams, Bill Powers, Susan Bagley, Bud Glassner, Beth Flynn, Deborah Lockhart, Ted Lockhart, Ted Kearly, Wayne Torgeson, Phyllis Boutilier, David Boutilier, Chris Passerello, Duane Abata.

New Business

A. Proposal 4-85: General Education Requirements

The President prefaced the discussion on the proposal by stating that this proposal was quite close to the one presented by the committee chaired by Don Mikkola two years ago. It was suggested that after an introduction of the proposal by the Chair of the Curricular Policy Committee, the discussion proceed following the proposal point by point.

Senator L. Ottenstein reported that the Curricular Policy Committee had reviewed earlier documentation related to the General Education Proposal and had received and studied reports from most of the departments on campus. Some revisions were made to the proposal received by the Senate. A revised proposal (Appendix B - Available by Request from the Senate Office) was sent to all Senators prior to this meeting. Senator Ottenstein stated that the members of the Curricular Policy Committee were strongly in support of the general education concept and that they felt that the current document was probably the best possible compromise that could be worked out at this point in time.

The discussion was opened to the floor. A few general points were raised including: Departments should be allowed to make requirements more specific. A function of the General Education Committee would be to monitor these activities to ensure that the intent of the general education policy is not being circumvented.

The discussion then proceeded to the specific requirements.

1. Communications Requirement: In response to questions about the communications requirement, Don Mikkola stated that although the committee that he chaired assumed that most students would be taking the freshman English courses to satisfy this requirement, the committee did not want to specify particular courses. This allows departments to decide for themselves the best way for their majors to get the required material. It also allows for the addition and deletion of courses without affecting the general policy.

2. Quantitative Knowledge: The option to allow philosophy of science and history of science was eliminated as a substitute for science as allowed in the previous version of the general education policy. It was pointed out that it seemed appropriate that students take some science, including at least one course with a laboratory component at a technological university.

3. Humanities: Senator Olsson suggested that if breadth was desired, the 9 credits should be taken from at least two areas. Allowing foreign language to count as a humanities was considered problematic, particularly since students could potentially test out of their humanities requirement. Students, however, receive credit for foreign language courses only after completing a follow-up course.

4. Social Sciences: Senator Hill indicated that the government requirement should have specified American Government if the intention was to pay some heed to the state law. The point was raised that the preface to the document mentions the importance of the students being exposed to the legacy of human civilization, but that the requirement does not insure this. The reply was made that it seems impossible to specify exactly what specific areas should be covered and meet each individual's concept of general education.

5. Physical Education: Ted Kearly reported the results of a Physical Education department self-study taken earlier in response to previous versions of the general education policy. He felt that their study indicated a need for more physical education courses, particularly activity courses. Some discussion followed concerning whether or not physical education activities courses should receive academic credit, should be graded pass/fail, or should be graded on the traditional A through F scale.
The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 with another special meeting scheduled for January 27 to continue the discussion (Appendix C contains a proposed amendment distributed, but not discussed, at this meeting - Available by Request from the Senate Office).

Linda M. Ottenstein  
Senate Secretary