MINUTES OF MEETING NUMBER 142  
OF THE  
SENATE OF MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY  

6 February 1985  

(Senate Minute pages: 2393 -2417)

President Baltensperger called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on February 6,1985 in the Faculty Lounge of the Memorial Union.

Roll: Thirty members/alternates were present. Absent were: Bruce A. Haataja (IWR) and Dale Stein. Visitors present were: Duane Abata, Randy Freisinger, Beth Flynn, Bud Glassner, Richard Liba, Jack Jobst, Sandra Boschetto, George Meese, Billie Wahlstrom, Duane Ressler, Narasipur Suryanarayana, Bill Powers, Ted Kearly, Don Mikkola, Mike Gorman.

Minutes of Meeting 139:

The minutes of Meeting 139 were approved as written.

President's Report

President Baltensperger's written report was presented (Appendix A - Available by Request from the Senate Office)

Vice President's Report

The Vice President attended the Academic Council Meeting of January 15, 1985 and submitted written minutes of that meeting (Appendix B - Available by Request from the Senate Office)

Committee Reports

A. Curricular Policy

The committee has completed revisions on the General Education Proposal which will be discussed under Old Business. The committee has received information on three of the proposed options under the Ph.D. in Engineering: Geotechnical, Signal Processing and Structural. Proposals will be forthcoming.

B. Instructional Policy

The committee is planning on submitting a survey to the faculty during the first week of the spring term. Some of the topics to be addressed include: the late drop policy, K-day, the academic calendar, quarters vs. semesters.

The committee asked for input from the faculty on a grade change policy in response to the report from the Academic Council. Points that are of interest include: Under what conditions should grades be changed and under what conditions should make-up exams be given. The committee requested that Senators get some input from their departments and report that response to Dennis Miller in Chem./Chem Eng.

Senator Predebon reported that his department would like to consider using the "P" grade in some of the self-paced courses that they teach. Currently, students who do not complete the course by the end of the term are given an "X" grade. Senate Proposal 1-83 extended the use of the "P" grade to include project courses at the junior and senior level; however, the ME course under consideration is a sophomore level course. Senator Predebon stated his desire to use the "P" grade on a trial basis in a sophomore level course during the spring term. The results of the trial would then be evaluated by the Instructional Policy Committee, and if appropriate, a new proposal could be developed.

C. Budget

The budget liaison officer reported having met with Bill Eilola and President Stein. Bill Eilola provided him with a copy of next year's budget which has been submitted to the state.

D. Faculty Fringe Benefits

A written report was submitted (Appendix C - Available by Request from the Senate Office).

E. Elections

The Senate President called for one or two volunteers to run Senate elections.

F. Faculty Handbook

The committee submitted a written report on their comparison of the 1984 Provisional Information Booklet and the 1980 handbook for Academic Faculty (Appendix D - Available by Request from the Senate Office). Three sections of concern are noted in the report on which the committee is asking for input from the faculty.

G. Retrenchment Planning
The revised policy from last spring has been reviewed by the University lawyers and AAUP lawyers. The committee met with President Stein to discuss the proposal. Some compromises were discussed and a newly revised proposal is currently being circulated among the committee. It is hoped that a proposal will be complete for presentation at the next Senate meeting.

H. Teaching Effectiveness

The committee requested that the Senate sponsor two meetings, one for faculty and one for students, at which the committee's report would be discussed. The committee is planning on proposing to the Senate at the March 27 meeting that the plan be implemented on a trial basis for one year to determine its effectiveness. All faculty members will be mailed a copy of the committee's recommendations.

Old Business

A. Proposal 4-85: General Education Requirements

The Curricular Policy Committee presented a revised proposal 4-85 (Appendix E - Available by Request from the Senate Office) which incorporated some changes prompted by discussions at the two special Senate meetings. It was moved, seconded, and approved that the revised document be considered as an emergency proposal. After a short discussion of the background, the Senate proceeded to a point by point discussion of the requirements.

Senator Olsson introduced an amendment to the Communications requirement (Appendix F - Available by Request from the Senate Office). The motion was seconded. Points made during the discussion which followed include: the document does not imply that existing requirements should be reduced; the only University-wide requirement is 15 credits of Humanities and Social Sciences which means departments are requiring freshman English because they feel it is necessary; students should be required to take English during their freshman year since communications skills take time to develop. A fair amount of discussion took place concerning HU103. It was pointed out that during the last ABET accreditation in 1981, the ABET visitors indicated that the content of HU103 was primarily that of a humanities course and not a communications course (which HU101 and HU102 are considered). Some engineering programs have been counting HU103 as a humanities course to satisfy the ABET requirements. However, the content of HU103 has been changed since then, and now it has a strong communications component. After some further discussion, the motion was voted on and defeated. A second motion was then suggested by Senator Olsson. It was moved and seconded that the Communications requirement be changed to nine credits of freshman English including written and oral communications. The following discussion centered on the possible loss of flexibility that this change in the requirement would cause. The motion was voted on and defeated.

It was pointed out with regard to the Science requirement that the laboratory requirement was meant to imply a course with a significant laboratory component such as PH204 and not just a course that was specifically a lab course such as CH111. In response to a question concerning the computer science requirement, it was stated that the requirements were not meant in any case to imply courses taught by a specific department. As stated in the section on implementation and administration, courses should be developed by faculty in departments with the appropriate expertise. It may, however, be necessary at times for the general education committee to indicate that a particular course does not meet the intent of the general education requirements.

It was indicated that the humanities requirement was meant to include such communications courses as mass communications and interpersonal communications that are not skills-oriented.

During the discussion of the Social Sciences requirement, it was indicated that there would probably be a way of satisfying the American Government regulation in three credits.

It was moved and seconded that the physical education requirement be changed to six credits in physical education. The motion was defeated. It was moved and seconded that the requirement be amended to include the additional statement: An additional four credits in activity and/or study may be applied toward a baccalaureate degree. The amendment was defeated.

Senator Hodek introduced an amendment to the Upper Division Thematic Studies requirement as follows:

In the first paragraph of the requirement, the phrase "at the upper division (300 or 400) level" is deleted and the following statement is added "Six of the nine credits should be at the upper division level and these nine credits may also count toward meeting the humanities or social sciences requirement as described in 3. and 4. above." In addition, the last sentence of the introduction to the general education requirements should be changed to reflect that nine credits of the thematic studies may be counted toward the humanities or social sciences requirement.

The amendment was defeated.

After a brief discussion concerning whether the general education committee should be appointed as specified or elected by various groups, a roll call vote was taken. The proposal was approved.