MINUTES OF MEETING NUMBER 181
OF THE
SENATE OF MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

23 January 1991

(Senate Minute pages: 3176-3182)

President Julien called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. on January 23, 1991 in rooms B2 and B3 of the Memorial Union Building.

Roll: Twenty two members/alternates were present. Absent were Phyllis Boutilier, Josiah Heyman, John Lukowski, Richard May, Allen Niemi, William Shapton, Terry Shipley, and Peter Tampas. Continuing members President Stein and Provost Powers were not present.

Visitors: Betty Gaff, Gary Quick, Susan Yrjana, Cynthia Selfe, Michele Saxton, Diane Garrow, Mike Abbott.

Minutes of Meeting No. 180 were approved as revised.

On page 3165, paragraph 3, "Senator Hubbard reported [that] the Committee's activities are contained [summarized] under Old Business." On page 3169, last sentence "A majority [All] of this expenditure is being funded by private sources." And on page 3172, next to last sentence in the November 13 report "Attachment #3 shows the fees assessed [assessed] students from the various units of the university."

Senator Bagley requested that future Senate Agenda notices be addressed to the MTU Faculty and Staff rather than to the MTU Faculty as has been the practice.

President's Report

President Julien continued the practice of inviting speakers to inform the Senate about important issues within the University community.

A. UAW Clerical and Technical Bargaining Unit Negotiations.

Betty Gaff reported on the ongoing UAW Clerical and Technical Bargaining Unit negotiations with the university administration. Some of the Bargaining Unit’s concerns are job security, pay equity, wage increases, classification system, and respect. There has been progress in the negotiations, particularly in the non-economic issues. However, progress was stalled on the last few issues, so both sides decided to start negotiating on economic issues. In December, the union members conducted a strike authorization vote to enable the Bargaining Committee to set a deadline of January 24, 1991. Betty Gaff was very positive about the amount of progress in the last few negotiating sessions, and indicated that the union intends to continue negotiations until there is a contract. The membership will vote on January 25 to ratify or reject whatever is on the table.

Betty Gaff stressed that the membership is concerned with how the faculty, staff and students perceive the union. The purpose of this report (one of several to various campus groups) is to keep people informed about what is going on.

Mike Abbott presented the views of administration on the negotiations. He indicated that under the press of time due to the deadline things may be said or done that people hear about. But, "when all is said and done, when the dust settles, when the contract is finished, you will find an enormous amount of integrity on both sides to getting an agreement that is fair and equitable to everybody."

Both Betty Gaff and Mike Abbott stressed that the negotiations are proceeding even though the negotiations are being held in closed sessions.

A motion to "register support for the initiatives of the clerical and technical staff during these negotiations" was offered to initiate a dialog. Arguments against this motion included: a) with the negotiations in their final phase, it is too late for the Senate to have any impact, b) it is inappropriate for the Senate to take sides in this particular personnel issue, and c) it will not help the cause of either side by supporting one side or the other, this would be meddling to no good purpose. The motion was tabled on a voice vote.

B. Report for the Academic Community Committee

Cynthia Selfe presented a general progress report for the Academic Community Committee of the President Search Committee. On November 12, 1990, the Committee sent a letter to the faculty requesting input and nominations, and the Committee is still looking for input. The Academic Community and Nonacademic Committees are working with a search firm and are casting the broadest net they can to attract a broad set of applicants. The two committees have a common pool of applicants, but each works separately screening candidates. One January 31, 1991 both committees will submit an initial list to the Board of Control Committee. The Academic Community Committee has been urged to keep searching after this initial list has been submitted.
The Board of Control will conduct the final screening and invite candidates to campus. The Academic Community Committee will attempt to influence the interview schedule so that the candidates will be able to meet with some faculty groups.

"The Board of Control and the Board of Control Committee has impressed me by exhibiting a great deal of good faith during the whole process." The Board has indicated that after the candidates have visited campus they would appreciate a faculty response to the candidates.

The Academic Community Committee invites faculty input, comments, recommendations, etc. from all faculty and staff.

C. Winter Carnival Meeting with the Board of Control

There has been a mixed response to a request from the Senate to meet with the Board of Control. Due to the current Board agenda and logistics only two Board members will be available to meet during the Winter Carnival meeting period. The role of the Senate in relation to the Board of Control, clarification of the academic calendar, and the evaluation procedure for the upper administration are topics that could be on the agenda.

D. Constitution and Bylaws

There have been only two volunteers to serve on a committee to examine the constitution and bylaws of the Senate. Until this committee is staffed, the issue of reconstituting the University Senate into a faculty senate will not be examined. Volunteers should contact Senator Freisinger.

E. Joint Meeting of the Senate and the Academic Council

The first meeting of the Senate with the Academic Council took place January 8. The items discussed included the formation of policy and the interaction with the Board of Control, tenure decisions in the Humanities Department, and the development of a release time policy. There was considerable discussion about the lack of any formal release time policy in various academic units. The Institutional Evaluation Committee will initiate an investigation into current teaching loads to provide information from which release time policies for each department could be developed.

F. The Research Office is working on a review of indirect costs from externally-funded research.

Vice President's Report

President Julien provided a copy of Vice President Tampas' reports on the Academic Council meetings in the Vice President's absence (Appendix A - Available by Request from the Senate Office).

Committee Reports

A. Budget Liaison Officer

Senator Hubbard reported that there is no new information about the budget situation.

B. Curricular Policy - No report.

C. Elections - No report.

D. Faculty Handbook - No report.

E. Fringe Benefits

Senator DePuydt reported the Committee has met several times. The Committee is working jointly with a subcommittee exploring short- and long-term disability plans offered by the University. A meeting is scheduled with a representative from a new company which might provide long-term and short-term disability coverage. An evaluation is underway to determine if the University should change carriers for this particular coverage.

A question was posed about the financial integrity of Traveler's Insurance, and Senator DePuydt indicated that there is no evidence that Traveler's is in any kind of financial difficulty.

F. Institutional Evaluation

Senator Hubbard provided a set of questions that had been proposed for the round table discussion with the Academic Council for the January 8 joint meeting. Senator Hubbard also reported that the search for an external member to the University Administration Evaluation Commission is in process.

G. Instructional Policy

Senator Suryanarayana submitted a written report and recommendations (Appendix B - Available by Request from the Senate Office). Senators expressed concerns about:
1. the limit of a minimum number of student evaluations required for eligibility,
2. invasion of privacy since the faculty evaluation was initially approved on the condition that results were confidential,
3. cross discipline and cross department comparisons, and
4. the validity of using a single question from the evaluation as a measure of teaching quality.

A motion to accept the report from the Instructional Policy Committee was approved on a voice vote.

The motion "The Provost should take no action on the request by Tau Beta Pi -- there should be no release of names of faculty members to be recognized for their teaching, and there should be no release of statistical information from faculty evaluations." was approved on a voice vote.

Reports from Affiliated and/or Ad Hoc Committees

A. University Academic Calendar Committee

Senator Vable reported the results of the faculty poll on the question of changing the academic calendar. There results were: 144 for semesters; 123 for quarters, and 16 expressed no preference.

B. University Planning Committee - No report.

C. University Computer Executive Committee - No report.

D. University Administration Evaluation Commission

Senator Suryanarayana reported the Commission has met twice, and is still awaiting the selection of an external member. The Commission is proposing a campus visit by the chair of the comparable committee at Carnegie-Mellon to obtain some insights into the procedures used there. It will be almost impossible to complete the evaluation by March. The best that can be hoped for is to put in place the mechanics for collecting the information by the end of the academic year, and perform the actual evaluation in the fall quarter.

Old Business - No old business

New Business

There was a proposal for a Senate resolution to support the student efforts to have public accountability in the Ventures Group disposal of their assets. This resolution was tabled for consideration under old business at the next meeting.

President Julien adjourned the meeting at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Lyon, Secretary