

THE SENATE OF MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

Minutes of Meeting No. 223  
9 November 1994

Synopsis: The Senate

- (1) Approved Proposal 2-95: University Closure Guidelines.
- (2) Approved Proposal 7-95: An Amendment of Proposal 86-5: Grading System Change.
- (3) Returned to committee for further study Proposal 4-95: Definition of Academic Appointments.

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1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Bornhorst called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm on Wednesday, November 9, 1994 in Room B37 of the Electrical Energy Resources Center.

Secretary Jobst called the roll. Absent were Senator-at-Large Roblee, representatives from Chemical Engineering, Army and Air Force ROTC. Absent Liaison Members were Lumsdaine, Seel, and a representative from Staff Council.

Visitors were F. Dobney (Provost and Executive Vice President), M. Goodrich (Tech Topics), Ellen Horsch (Human Resources), Pauline Moore (Library), Ruthann Ruehr (HU), Elizabeth Flynn (HU), Susan Beske-Diehl (Geological Engineering and Sciences) and Terry Reynolds (SS).

2. AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

President Bornhorst made several agenda adjustments: First, move "6: New Business, Proposal 8-95" to immediately after "Report from Senate President"; second, under Old Business, move "D: Proposal 7-95" to immediately after "A" in the same section. Finally, to "Committee Reports" add a "C" for "Chair of Finance Committee." [Appendix A. NOTE: only official Senate and Library archival copies of the Minutes will contain a full complement of appendices.]

Carstens MOVED to approve the agenda adjustments; Heyman seconded. No discussion. Motion CARRIED.

3. REPORT FROM SENATE PRESIDENT

A. The name change for the Geology Department has gone to the Administration [Appendix B].

B. The Senate officers met with representatives of the Staff Council. The two groups agreed to exchange meeting minutes, and hold the ballot results on the health care proposal until both groups had voted.

C. Bornhorst said he was working on a closer relationship with the USG and GSC.

D. The 1994-95 Senate Handbook is moving towards its final form, and Bornhorst suggested that Senators with topics for the Issues List should send their material as soon as possible to Senate Assistant Meyers.

E. An increasing number of proposals await Senate debate, and this will probably necessitate an extra Senate meeting on December 7.

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NOTE: This section was moved by an agenda adjustment.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. PROPOSAL 8-95, UNIVERSITY HEALTH CARE AGREEMENT

The Senate staff mailed an amended copy of the proposal [Appendix C]; it indicates that the difference between the proposed plan with Wausau and remaining with Travelers is "increased employee cost."

The recent health care forum, held in Fisher 135, attracted 75 people. A vote on this proposal should come at the November 30 meeting. This vote, once again, will be a recommendation to the administration. The issue is on the "B" list of the Senate constitution.

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4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS / REPORTS

A. APPOINTMENTS

1. Sabbatical Leave. President Tompkins has selected Bill Shapton for this committee.

2. General Education Bornhorst said the Senate needed one more name, preferably from the College of Engineering, since this major group is unrepresented. Arici said that this committee works hard, and thus finding volunteers is difficult. Bornhorst said he would help find someone if needed.

3. Academic Tenure

Bornhorst reminded the Senate that Jim Gale has resigned, and thus a replacement is needed. Current members are E. Flynn, D. Nelson, E. Carlson, and C. White. Glime recommended B. Seely as a committee nominee, and no one objected. Bornhorst suggested that three eventual nominees (the Senate's goal) should be on the faculty ballot, and no one objected.

4. Commission to Evaluate the Administration

Bornhorst said that 35 people should be available for Senate consideration, according to the approved proposal, but currently only 24 nominees are available. He said several departments had not yet offered nominees.

5. Computer Advisory Committee

The Subcommittee on Ethical Concerns needs a Senate representative.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

Steve Vanek, committee chair, requests Senate input to the committee for the purpose of selecting an outside member for the Administrative Evaluation Commission.

C. FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Chair position remains unfilled. Bornhorst recommended a Senate ballot, but Bulleit said that since Proposal 3-95 has been passed, the committee should try again to elect its own. Finance Committee members, however, felt they were at an impasse. Beck recommended the committee search for a compromise chair.

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5. OLD BUSINESS

A. PROPOSAL 2-95: UNIVERSITY CLOSURE GUIDELINES

Arici MOVED to approve Proposal 2-95; Irish seconded. [Appendix D].

Dobney offered background: Last winter, during a major storm, the University would not have issued a closure, but the administration had parents calling, "worrying about their babies." The purpose of this proposal is to help students worried about being penalized for missing classes. This proposal would protect them. Last winter, students, at

some risk to themselves, made it to class only to find the instructor absent.

Fynewever said the proposal does not adequately protect students from instructors using detailed attendance criteria. She MOVED to include an amendment under 2C of the proposal: "Students will be allowed to make up missed classwork." Filer seconded.

Keen argued that the University already has an approved absence policy that covers this. Debate ended, and on a voice vote the amendment FAILED.

Discussion of the entire Proposal 2-95 concluded, and the Senate CARRIED it on a voice vote.

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NOTE: This section was moved by agenda adjustment.

D. PROPOSAL 7-95: AMENDMENT OF PROPOSAL 86-5, GRADING SYSTEM CHANGE  
Heyman MOVED to approve Proposal 7-95; Keen seconded. [NOTE: see Minutes, p. 4784, for a copy of this proposal.]

Keen said the USG has seen the proposal and offered no objections. The proposal, Keen continued, is meant to clarify what exactly is a "B+". Law Schools, he said, translate a B+ to a 3.3 instead of a 3.5, thus making our students less competitive.

Carstens said the proposal seems a "patchwork to a flawed system," and Galetto suggested that a note added to students' transcripts would work just as well. If this passes, Galetto asked the Senate, does this mean the Registrar must go back and change the grades from the past? Keen said "no."

Arici asked about cost to the University, and Galetto said there would be some, primarily in time spent by staff, but it would be minimal.

The general discussion ended, and Bornhorst asked for direction on voting units. Galetto said he would like to vote on the issue, but Leifer argued against including non-academic units. The Senate agreed on a voice vote to include only academic and other course-offering units. Representatives from these groups then voted 13 to nine in favor, and Proposal 7-95 CARRIED.

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B. PROPOSAL 4-95: DEFINITION OF ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Bulleit MOVED to approve Proposal 4-95 [Appendix E]; Mroz seconded. Bornhorst asked if anyone objected to the voting units; there were none.

Bulleit, citing as his source the Faculty Handbook Steering Committee, then MOVED to amend several phrases in the proposal; Mroz seconded. First, strike the words (which appear twice) "pursuing a graduate degree" and replace with "who are enrolled as a full time graduate student." Second, under "Research," strike two sentences: "appointments are made on a contract basis for periods of one to three years and may be renewed." Third, also strike "These appointments and their continuations are dependent upon the availability of research support funds." Replace the latter with "Appointments are initially for up to one year, but renewable depending on funding for one year periods for up to a maximum of three years."

Discussion on this topic ended, and the amendment CARRIED on a voice vote.

Whitt announced that the Presidential Commission for Women wished to offer amendments, and she distributed a rewritten proposal [Appendix F], MOVING for their acceptance; Jobst seconded.

Bornhorst asked visitor, T. Reynolds (Social Science), who was chair of the committee which drew up the proposal during the last academic year, to offer background on the issue. Reynolds said he supported many of the changes in the revised proposal and suggested the document be returned to the committee for further consideration. Bornhorst asked Reynolds if he would comment on a phrase in the amended proposal, "continuing appointment." Reynolds said it translates to "de facto

tenure," even though individuals in this category will not have undergone a national search, nor review by a tenure committee. Allowing this plan, Reynolds continued, would produce a two tiered tenure plan, with one group doing more teaching and with no hope of promotion.

Dobney, commenting on the word "continuing" for certain untenured personnel, said this proviso in the revised proposal diminishes the flexibility of departments, which must work under changing enrollments.

Ruehr began her comments by saying that the Presidential Commission for Women took an interest in this topic because a disproportionate number of non-tenure track people are women. She then took issue with Reynolds' view that the amended proposal indicated a de facto tenure, saying that Michigan courts have agreed that the allowing of continuing appointments do not constitute tenure. Dobney said other states have ruled that there is, in fact, a de factotenure, but Ruehr said tenure can only come with a formal proceeding. The AAUP, said Ruehr, along with the President's Commission for Women, does not want to replace tenure; they do, however, object to the increased use of non-tenure track faculty. These individuals, Ruehr said, who usually teach introductory courses, need some element of security. The proposed amendment includes the academic title of Instructor for such people.

These individuals, Ruehr said, don't know until mid-summer whether they have jobs. Ruehr said she had called a "benchmark institution" [a school used for comparison purposes with MTU], the University of Missouri-Rolla, and they have a system for non-tenure track positions.

Carstens then MOVED to return the issue to the Taskforce and Academic Policy Committee. Mroz seconded. Without further debate, the Senate then voted: the motion CARRIED.

#### 7. ADJOURNMENT

Leifer MOVED and Mroz seconded to adjourn. Without debate, the motion CARRIED. Bornhorst declared the meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Submitted by Jack Jobst  
Secretary of the University Senate

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