

THE SENATE OF MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL
UNIVERSITY

Minutes of Meeting 264
6 November 1996

Synopsis: The Senate

- (1) heard that Henry Santeford was appointed as Senator At-large to replace Bill Shapton who is on leave.
- (2) heard that Proposal 31-96, Social Security Numbers as Student Identification Numbers was referred to the FERPA Committee for review.
- (3) heard that President Tompkins has approved the charters for Physics and Electrical Engineering.
- (4) heard a report from Bill Kennedy, Director of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Developments.
- (5) heard a report from the Senate Fringe Benefits Committee.
- (6) approved Proposal 27-96, MS in Environmental Engineering Degree.
- (7) approved Proposal 28-96, BS in Applied Ecology and Environmental Sciences Degree.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Bornhorst called the Senate Meeting 264 to order at 5:33 p.m. on Wednesday, November 6, 1996, in room B45 of the Electrical Energy Resources Center. Acting Secretary Soldan called roll. Absent was a representative from Metallurgical and Materials Engineering. Liaisons in attendance were Geoff Roelant (USG), Andy Londo (GSC), and Ted Soldan (Staff Council).

2. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Guests included Marcia Goodrich (Tech Topics), Rolf Peterson, Kurt Pregitzer, Ed Frayer (School of Forestry and Wood Products), Bob Baillod, Kurt Paterson (Civil and Environmental Engineering), William Kennedy (Center for Teaching, Learning and Faculty Development), and Kim Maxwell (Advancement).

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Carstens MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion to approved PASSED on a voice vote with no dissent. [Appendix A. NOTE: Only official Senate and Library archival copies of the minutes will contain a full complement of appendices.]

4. REPORT FROM SENATE PRESIDENT

President Bornhorst reported that he had sent several memos; one appointing Henry Santeford as Senator At-large to replace Bill Shapton while he is away, one to Joe Galetto referring Senate Proposal 31-96, Social Security Numbers as Student Identification Numbers to the FERPA committee for review. President Bornhorst also reported that Terry Monson has provided a draft memo outlining a proposed Faculty Distinguished Service Award that was sent to the Academic Policy Committee for review. [Appendices B-D] President Tompkins approved charters for the Departments of Physics and Electrical Engineering. President Bornhorst also said he had investigated the issue of the two year delay of

retirement benefits to new faculty and staff and has asked the Provost for more information.

President Bornhorst reported nominees for two committees: Academic Integrity and Sabbatical Leave. He displayed the list of nominees for the Academic Integrity Committee on an overhead, and called for nominations from the floor. There being none, the Senate Assistant passed out ballots. Ballots were collected and counted by Election Committee members Christa Walck, Dan Rypma and Mark Perrott. Fred Williams received the most votes and was declared the winner. Dallas Bates was the next highest vote-getter, followed by Mary Ann Beckwith and David Sprague. Next, the overhead showing the nominees for the Sabbatical Leave Committee was displayed, and nominations were called for from the floor. There being none, ballots were handed out by the Senate Assistant. They were again collected and counted. The three top vote-getters were Larry Lankton, Ann McLean, and Sigrid Weinmann. These names will be forwarded to President Tompkins for selection to the committee.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Proposal 1-97: Policy on Threatening or Violent Behavior was introduced. [Appendix E]

6. COMMITTEE BUSINESS/REPORTS

A. Teacher Evaluations Bill Kennedy [Appendix F]

President Bornhorst introduced Dr. William Kennedy, Director of the newly formed Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development.

Kennedy said that the teaching evaluation system at MTU needs to be addressed. The evaluation instrument is crude and used only for summative evaluation. The instrument gives those being evaluated insufficient information to help people improve. Since the data are limited to chairs and the faculty themselves, the center does not keep or see the results, and therefore can not help faculty that need it.

Kennedy noted that about 50% of the departments use the core items in merit increase algorithms.

Kennedy said some common concerns expressed by faculty are:

- 1) Students are not effective evaluators. In fact, student and peer evaluations correlate highly.
- 2) Faculty evaluations are just popularity contests.

In fact, studies have shown that students can assess good teaching both during and after the teaching ends.

Are teaching evaluations useful? Kennedy said that they are only if there is follow up and help from the teaching center.

In order to improve the process at MTU, Kennedy says several things are necessary:

- 1) MTU needs to move to a nationally normed evaluation instrument
- 2) The instrument should be useful for both summative and formative evaluations
- 3) The instrument should be adaptable to different teaching styles
- 4) Should allow the instructor input into learning outcomes.

Kennedy said he reviewed eight instruments, and found the Instructional Development and Effectiveness Assessment System from KSU looks best. It has 10 instructional objectives developed to allow instructors to assess themselves. Evaluatees can choose from the list prior

to the evaluation process. Kennedy said the KSU system is currently being used by 141 institutions of higher education. He believes the program causes faculty to focus on learning outcomes.

Kennedy asked the Senate to approve a pilot testing of the KSU IDEA system with tenured faculty as the test group, and to approve releasing the results to his office.

Senator Beck expressed concern that only 33 of the 141 institutions currently using KSU IDEA offer Ph.D. degrees. Beck wondered if there would be questions on the instrument pertaining to Ph.D. degree granting institutions such as Michigan Tech.

Senator Leifer asked Kennedy what the cost of the program would be. Kennedy said the current program costs \$8,000 - \$9,000 per year, and involves MTU performing the scanning and data analysis in house. The KSU program would cost about \$16,000, and all scanning and reports would be handled by the vendor.

Senator Shonnard asked what the pilot would cost. Kennedy said the cost would be minimal.

Senator Nordberg asked if the results would be made available to the students. Kennedy said that should be a faculty decision, but that he personally favored making the data available to students. The results might be able to be phased in over time, he said.

Senator Sweeney asked how quickly faculty could expect to receive feedback. Kennedy said reports would still come out quarterly.

Senator Santeford commented that he found the comments on the back of the form valuable and wondered if such a mechanism existed with the new system. Kennedy said it does allow for that, but that the comments should remain confidential as they are now.

Sweeney wondered if we should switch from a summative to formative evaluation system. Kennedy said the proposed IDEA system is capable of both.

President Bornhorst commented that Department chairs would possibly only see selected information from the evaluation reports. It could be up to the faculty to decide what their chairs will see. The ideal situation would be to have volunteer faculty from each department to administer the program.

Senator Keen said his committee had looked at several evaluation instruments and came to the same conclusion as Kennedy that the KSU IDEA system seemed best suited to MTU.

B. Fringe Benefits Committee [Appendix G]

President Bornhorst introduced Freydoon Arbabi, chair of the Fringe Benefits Committee. Arbabi talked about the plan Provost Dobney plans to propose to the Board of Control at the November meeting regarding health benefits for TIAA/CREF retirees. Arbabi said the Fringe Benefits Committee looked at both plans and said there is agreement between the faculty and the administration that there must be a plan. The plan must be viable, affordable, and secure (prefunded). Arbabi noted that he had heard the argument that the money that is put away could be used for other things by the administration. The Fringe Benefits Committee did not think this was a good argument, he said.

The committee wished to propose an alternative plan that would prefund the benefit. The necessary annual contribution to this plan would be about \$500,000 per

year. The alternative, pay as you go plan starts out fairly inexpensive, but balloons to a large cost after about 10 years. It was mentioned that health care costs are hard to predict 20 years in the future. Arbabi said that prefunding provides separate funds for benefits, provided that costs do not get out of control.

Vice President Soldan asked if the numbers were calculated for a strictly medigap coverage. Arbabi answered that the calculations included benefits for 80 point retirees at the 60% co-pay level.

Arbabi continued to say that the plan was based on a base funding of 2.6 million.

Senator Lutzke asked if the co-pay was for the premium, or for the cost of the care. Arbabi answered that it was for the premium.

Lutzke then wondered about the 20 year projection for health care costs. Isn't it a little unreasonable to think we can predict the costs of health care that far in the future? Might there not be some form of national health care by then, or if not, how can we predict how expensive health care will be?

Arbabi answered that if there is a national program by then, the money that had been put aside for the benefit could be used for something else.

Senator Vichich noted that the rate of increase of health care costs is currently slowing down.

Leifer commented that in 1992, when the TIAA/CREF retiree health benefits program was passed, the Board mandated prefunding. Their logic was to not burden future administrations with the costs of maintaining the program during the out years. The Board also mandated an outside study by the Wyatt Corp. The board abandoned prefunding on Provost Dobney's recommendation in 1995. Leifer said that the cost of health care for retirees would increase, but that the returns from the endowment would cover it. The Board could cancel the program in case of a financial exigency. He said that lack of prefunding could cause the Board to balk at the \$3 million dollar cost during the out years.

Leifer said that pay as you go is cheaper in the first years of the program. Provost Dobney will be gone in 5 years, and so he doesn't care what happens after that.

Whitt asked if the task force reported to the Senate. Bornhorst responded yes. Whitt then asked if the task force had achieved a consensus for their recommendation? Leifer responded it was unanimous.

Jim Gale wondered what the cost of a 1% salary increase is. Leifer responded about a half a million.

Reed asked if the senate will be asked to vote on one of these programs? Leifer answered that you now have two things: a report from Provost Dobney, and the report from the Benefits Committee.

Arbabi reported that he had received a large number of responses to the survey that the committee had sent out to all faculty and staff.

Beck said he couldn't see any difference between the two plans if the money couldn't be put away so it can't be touched. He suggested that the money be transferred to a reliable group to administer. Vichich said he would support this.

President Bornhorst said that he would be addressing the Board of Control on this issue at the

November meeting, and that he thought they planned to vote on it at this meeting. How should he proceed? Should he bring the survey results to the Board?

Whitt asked if they would entertain a presentation? Bornhorst answered that when he has the floor at the Board meeting he can present a certain level of this material. It's up to the Senate what they want him to do.

Williams asked if the Benefits Committee won't also be on the agenda. Bornhorst said no.

Shonnard asked what the current cost of health care is for retiring faculty. Someone answered \$2-3,000 for medigap coverage, and \$6,000 for 80 point coverage before medigap.

Vichich said the minimum he would like to see is the Board not act until they have all the facts.

Sloan said she saw no downside to the Board not acting on this at this time. If the Senate feels the issue needs more study, could they delay the decision until later?

Gilles said that the plan Provost Dobney is bringing to the Board is totally different than the plan the they asked for. The intent of the Board was not to eliminate prefunding. The administration is in favor of eliminating prefunding. Data are available indicating that 80 point people tend not to retire. There are currently about 100 MTU employees with over 80 points.

Carstens MOVED and Walck seconded the motion to petition the Board of Control to postpone any decision on the TIAA/CREF retiree health benefits issue until the Senate can offer more input.

Whitt asked what will the senate do in the interim?

Reed asked if the Benefits Committee will come up with a proposal to present to the Board?

Sweeney asked if we should ask them just to delay?

Carstens said he would like to hear more from his constituents.

Leifer said that some results were in from the E-mail survey that was sent out. He said 80% of the people in his department were in favor of the level payment plan. He said they were seeing similar numbers in other departments.

Sandberg said "Let's vote"!

Whitt said we need to provide the Board with more information so they'll have some information to deal with.

There was no further discussion. The motion PASSED with no dissent.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Proposal 27-96, M.S. in Environmental Engineering Degree [See minutes, page 6655, for a copy of this proposal.]

Sandberg MOVED and Arici seconded the motion to approve Proposal 27-96.

Peg Gale (Chair, Curricular Policy Committee) made a motion to add 3 courses to the bottom of page 4. They are: BA461/561, BA463/563, and BA450. Jim Gale seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion to amend PASSED on a voice vote with no dissent. President Bornhorst ruled that the changes were editorial.

Shonnard said the proposal should be changed to reflect the following courses that were out of date:

CM495 should be changed to CM498 - Pollution Assessment and GE496 should be changed to CM/GE496. President Bornhorst ruled that this change would be made and was also editorial. There were no objections so the

ruling stands.

Whitt asked if the courses listed on page 4 were examples? Kurt Patterson (Civil and Environmental Engineering) answered yes.

Sandberg suggested that page 2 under Plan B Report Option, the bulleted item, 9-15 credits of thesis research, for a, be changed to 3-9 credits of project research, for a. President Bornhorst ruled that this change would be made and was also editorial. There were no objections so the ruling stands.

Nordberg noted that he saw no mention of additional funding being required to support this new degree. Robert Bailod (Civil and Environmental Engineering) said there was absolutely no need for additional funds for this degree.

There being no further discussion, President Bornhorst called for a voice vote. The motion PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

B. Proposal 28-96, B.S. in Applied Ecology and Environmental Sciences Degree [See minutes, page 6661, for a copy of this proposal.]

Reed MOVED and Arici seconded the motion to approve Proposal 28-96. There was no discussion. The motion PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

C. Proposal 36-95, Scientific Misconduct Policy Statement. [Appendix H. Also, see minutes, page 6086, for a copy of this proposal.]

President Bornhorst noted that since the Provost had made changes to the wording of the proposal, the Senate will need to vote on it like a new proposal.

Bornhorst commented that the proposed changes by the Provost were to make the statement as strong or stronger than the original due process wording. Whitt disagreed. She made a motion to retain the original wording of the Senate proposal. There was no second to her motion.

Keen asked if the wording, "it is imperative that," sounded any stronger than "must be followed?"

Vichich said that shall be is stronger than will be.

Pegg asked what we are losing if the phrase due process is taken out?

Whitt responded that due process makes allowances that procedures are not comprehensive. Having the phrase in the document forces the administration to go beyond procedures.

Sandberg said the Senate had discussed due process last year. Words have a specific meaning. The intent is to avoid litigation.

Sweeney asked if it matters that the document says to follow due process?

Whitt replied that due process constitutes these procedures where fairness might be breached. We are here in part to ensure the rights of MTU employees are protected.

Seely said that it is clear what is driving this. Good language constitutes what can easily be defended in court.

Nordberg asked if the older proposal is our current policy.

President Bornhorst said the proposal would amend the words due process in both proposals (36-95 and 23-94).

Carstens MOVED and Vichich seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Ted Soldan
Acting Secretary of the Senate