

The Senate Of Michigan Technological University

Minutes of Meeting 276

30 April 1997

Synopsis: The Senate

- (1) agreed to the ruling that Proposal 14-97, Policy on Correcting Student Grades and Retention of Student Work, was approved.
 - (2) heard Provost Dobney present the budget prospects for 1997-98.
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1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Bornhorst called the Senate Meeting 276 to order at 7:40 p.m. on Wednesday, 30 April 1997, in Room B45 of the Electrical Energy Resources Center.

Secretary Glime called roll. Absent were at-large senator Henry Santeford, and representatives from School of Technology, Army/Air Force ROTC, Physical Education, IWR, Enrollment Management, Student Affairs/Educational Opportunities, and Finance and Advancement. Liaisons in attendance Geoff Roelant (USG), Evan Schemm (GSC) and Ted Soldan (Staff Council).

2. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Guests included Marcia Goodrich (*Tech Topics*), Debbie Lassila (Provost's Office), and Provost Dobney.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Bornhorst requested that Item 4 be renumbered to item 5 and that a new item 4 be added to vote on Proposal 14-97. In Meeting 275, the vote on Proposal 14-97 was taken with both an open motion to amend and the motion to approve on the floor. The vote therefore only approved the amendment and the main motion remained open.

Sloan MOVED and Nesbitt seconded the motion to approve the agenda as modified. The motion PASSED on 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. OPEN MOTION ON PROPOSAL 14-97

President Bornhorst ruled to consider that Proposal 14-97 had passed as amended. There was no objection.

5. UNIVERSITY BUDGET--PROVOST DOBNEY [Appendix B]

Provost Dobney reported that this year the tuition netted \$500,000 less than budgeted. However, we anticipate a stable enrollment after this year. This year we will graduate more students than those coming in, so we could be up or down by 50 next fall. After that there should be more students entering than are graduating.

The House passed 5.9% for MTU. This includes \$1 million for undergraduate research. However, this amount probably will not pass the Senate.

The departmental activities will probably go up by \$200,000, mostly as computing lab fees.

From 1990 to 1996, the tuition plus fees nearly doubled. During the same period the state appropriation increased from \$36.4 million to \$41.9 million. The tuition and fees have really grown, mostly due to lab and computing fees.

Last year we experienced an increase in tuition revenue of \$133,901, but we lost most of it on additional financial aid.

The Provost presented four scenarios, stating that the most likely one was a 3% tuition increase and 3.5% increase in state appropriation. He pointed out that the graduate students pay a much smaller percent of the cost of their education.

Lassila (Provost's Office) stated that approximately 80% of the non-resident students are here under the special student status.

Dobney pointed out that Michigan Tech has the third highest tuition and fees in the state. When asked how we compare to other technological universities, Lassila responded with the following statistics:

Univ Minn \$4100

Madison \$3300

Milwaukee \$3100

MTU \$3948

If we raise the tuition, the special students will pay \$500 more and that will be more than the tuition at competing schools.

Dobney outlined his 1997-98 budget plans. Proposed budget considerations include a 1% across-the-board salary adjustment; TIAA-CREF 1% matching program; 50% tuition discount to employees, spouses, and children, a plan typical at other schools (it is a good recruiting tool); enhancement of department operating budgets by 8%; reduced relative amount of financial aid; maintaining equity pool for promotions and special adjustments.

The internal realignment will continue, but the Provost is considering a trial position control - if enough money is recovered, then he could eliminate the 1% realignment (this would mean that a position would be frozen when vacated unless the unit could make a good case that it is essential).

Among the realignment expenditures he hopes to wire EERC 100 for hyper media presentations.

The Provost stated that if he doesn't add to the SS & E budgets, he could give a 3% salary increase.

Senator Gale expressed concern about aiding a few at the expense of many. For example, TIAA-CREF money could be put into new positions; tuition breaks would go to some and not to others.

Senator Whitt asked about the existing employee educational benefit; Dobney responded that it is up to 6 credits for employees only.

Senator Suryanarayana asked when we would get to salary parity. Dobney stated that our School of Business faculty are way behind other campuses, but that we are not in the same class as the schools being compared. The School of Forestry salaries are about equal. He added that we aspire to attain competitive salaries with the best institutions. When additional money has become available, he has consistently put it into salaries.

Vice President Soldan asked if this would be considered a bad budget year. Dobney responded that the Governor says that he helped higher ed last year, but he will help K-12 this year; a bad year would be worse than this.

Senator Leifer asked what we are spending to support grad students through fellowships taken from the general fund. He questions whether we should do that. Dobney responded that it was a good point, but that if we don't support grad students, then we would not reach the doctoral status that gets us more state funding.

Senator Sweany asked if we have reached doctoral status, does this indicate that MSU etc are going down as fast as we in state funding. Dobney responded that we are one of the four institutions to get \$1 million for undergraduate research because we are a research university.

Lassila added that if we were a research II institution, we would be below the floor and we would get approximately \$800 per student more because we are a research institution.

Gale asked if enrollment makes a difference in state funding. Dobney responded that it does not.

Senator Arbabi asked why not give personnel a choice among the proposed benefits. Dobney responded that the spouse and family education break would only cost \$115,000, probably less, and that the younger faculty would probably benefit most from the tuition benefit (and could afford it least).

Sweany asked how much would be saved if we didn't give any TIAA-CREF benefits the first two years of employment. Dobney responded \$200,000, and suggested that those benefits would be more important to young faculty.

Dobney responded that he has never been anywhere with a better fringe benefit package than this one.

Continuing with his presentation, Dobney pointed out that the spending for instruction had increased from 48.09% of the budget to 50.65% from 1990 to 1996.

Gale asked where USA scholarships came from. Dobney responded that they come from the university, but that they will nearly disappear now that we have extended the exceptional student awards to all states and Canada. Leifer stated that at Northern the university contributes 15% to TIAA-CREF; why can't Michigan Tech do that? Dobney responded that Northern gets almost as much per student as we do but that the majors offered are much less expensive to run. Dobney bet Leifer that not all one-to-one comparisons of salary would come out with Northern ahead of us.

Senator Whitt asked what success we were having with student retention. Dobney responded that we have been averaging 83-87% first year retention. We have not put most of the recommendations of the Task Force on Retention in place because they cost money.

Bornhorst added that our retention rate is about the same as at other institutions.

Secretary Glime asked what had been done that caused the large reduction in the Student Services budget. Dobney responded that it had come from the loss of the position of Vice President for Student Affairs, support staff for that office, and moving resident life to another category.

Suryanarayana asked about support for maintenance of the new buildings. Dobney responded that they estimate a need of \$50,000 to operate the new buildings. The bigger cost is \$250,000 interest on borrowing, which can be met from Auxiliary Enterprises reserve next year, but after that it will be \$1.4 million per year after that.

Senator Green asked what we are doing about the decrease in research expenditures. Lassila responded that the decrease is only in expenditures from the general fund; research spending has increased.

Schemm (GSC) asked how GTA, GRA, and other grad student tuition funding would be affected. Dobney responded that these will be covered; Lee has recommended a 3% increase in graduate stipends.

Dobney pointed out that the only money we can spend for new endeavors must come from the \$530,000 from 1% realignment and \$400,000 technology money from last year plus any new state appropriations. There are \$5.4 million in requests from an estimated \$1.7 million new money. He assured Schemm that we would not punish the graduate students.

Senator Flynn asked if there is a cap on new positions. Dobney responded that Civil and Environmental Engineering graduate 9 undergraduates per faculty member, which is two times the national average; therefore they need more faculty.

Senator Melton asked when the position realignment would begin. The Provost responded it would be July through April.

Leifer asked where administrative travel is in the budget listing displayed. Dobney responded that it is part of institutional support.

Nordberg asked where we are in the cycle of input; can the Senate provide any input? Dobney welcomed input and responded that he would give Jeanne Meyers a copy of his presentation.

Gale commented that the family educational discount will not be equal to a 1% salary increment.

Dobney responded that the benefit will attract more people and fill empty seats. It will benefit all regular employees. He raised one concern that graduate students might demand a position for their spouses so that they could get 50% off their tuition. Two-thirds of the graduate students are supported. Consensus seemed to be that it should not be a serious concern.

Mroz asked if post docs were considered regular employees. Dobney responded that they are not.

Arbabi asked if lecturers are regular employees. Dobney was uncertain how they would be treated.

Vichich MOVED and Soldan seconded the motion to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Janice M. Glime
Secretary of the Senate