

**THE UNIVERSITY SENATE OF  
MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY**

Minutes of Meeting 287

4 February 1998

**Synopsis:** The Senate

- (1) heard from President Seely that the progress of the General Education Task Force will be reported on the MTU web site under the Tech home page button.
- (2) heard from Neil Hutzler (Asst. Dean of Engineering) about a proposal to institute a Master of Engineering non-research degree as a fifth-year professional degree.
- (3) heard from Bruce Barna on a cost analysis of the Master of Engineering degree.
- (4) heard that the USG wants to challenge the Senate to broomball.
- (5) introduced proposals 2-98 on a Pre-Law Option in Social Sciences and 3-98 on an Education Option in Social Sciences.
- (6) introduced Proposal 7-98 to drop the weather advisory from the University Closure Policy.

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**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

President Seely called University Senate Meeting 287 to order at 5:34 p.m. on Wednesday, 4 February 1998, in Room U113 of the Minerals and Materials Building.

Secretary Glime called roll. Absent were at-large Senators Shapton and Walck, and representatives from KRC. Liaisons in attendance were Geoff Roelant (USG) and Ted Soldan (Staff Council).

**2. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

Guests included Neil Hutzler (Asst. Dean of Engineering) and Dennis Walikainen (*Tech Topics*).

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING 286**

Vice President Soldan brought a request from Senator Leifer that the following statements be added to the minutes, following the sentence beginning "In his opinion" of the Leifer statement on page 7239, second column: "However, I am not putting in my opinion. Therefore, if we take 1+1 this year and 2+2 for succeeding years, then 2% is still our money. Therefore, the only people for whom the university is paying this benefit are those earning \$130,850 or more."

President Seely suggested that the wording "43 degrees" on page 7238 be changed to "43 hours."

Soldan asked that the word "linking" on page 7238 be changed to "supporting."

Williams MOVED and Pegg seconded the motion to approve the minutes of meeting 286. The motion to approve the minutes as amended PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

**5. REPORT FROM SENATE PRESIDENT**

Memos sent: President Seely reported that Proposal 30-95 on Academic Freedom has been sent to the Administration. [Appendix B]

Proposals 2-98 and 3-98 have been forwarded to the Finance Committee. [Appendices C and D]

**Other:** Seely met with Provost Dobney on 30 January. They made tentative plans for a retiree health benefits discussion with the finance committee representatives during the last week of February.

He also met with both the Provost and Carl Nesbitt to discuss concerns raised during the Academic Forum about Proposal 16-97, Minors in Degree Programs. The minor grew from a proposal for a minor in remote sensing. The Senate added the requirement that a home department be identified, for the purpose of advising. However, the program now has an office, a coordinator, and a curriculum committee, so that those needs can be met there. The proposal will come back to the Senate for minor changes to accommodate this structure.

The General Education Task Force wants to keep everybody informed. Senators should inform their constituents that the General Education Task Force progress will be on the MTU web site. It can be accessed from the Tech home page.

Seely commented that the *Chronicle of Higher Education* has an article on shared governance under siege. Vice President Soldan asked how Senators could get a copy. Seely responded that he would get a copy from the net and give it to Senate Assistant Meyers for distribution.

Senator Suryanarayana asked for clarification of the time of the anticipated meeting to discuss health benefits. Seely explained that it was the last week of February, which is also the last week of the term.

## **6. COMMITTEE/BUSINESS REPORTS**

Seely stated that three draft proposals are coming so that the Senate will know what they look like before the final draft and will be able to expedite their completion without needing to treat them as an emergency proposal. These will start with the Finance Committee report on the Masters in Engineering degree.

**Neil Hutzler** (Asst. Dean of Engineering) summarized the proposal for the Masters in Engineering degree [**Appendix E**], stating it would be a spin-off of the Master of Science in Engineering degree. This is intended as a fifth year (4 quarters) professional program that will increase graduate enrollment at little cost to the university. It is anticipated that students in the program will be self-supporting. The proposal has been to the Graduate Council two times and is now with the Senate Curricular Policy Committee.

### **A. Finance Committee Report**

Senator Barna reported on the Finance Committee study on the estimated cost of the proposed Masters of Engineering degree. He stated that they tried a scenario with 100 students, but the College of Engineering felt the number was too high, and the cost for 100 students would be too high. Instead, they used an estimate of 50 to build the cost estimates. Based on the current number of open seats in courses available for a Master's degree, they concluded that the program would not impose a major new cost [**Appendix F**].

The Committee computed that the cost of upper division/graduate courses is 3.5 times as much as that of the larger lower division courses. Tuition costs were estimated at a rate of 10% increase per year for two years. The following are costs of adding faculty to cover teaching an additional 50 students.

All new faculty: -\$574,000

50% new faculty: -\$162,000

30% new faculty: break even

25% new faculty: +\$47,000

More than half the upper division (300-400) courses have fewer than 20 students; 2/3 of the 500 level courses have fewer than 10 students. The Committee estimates that about 50% of the added enrollment would require new faculty. Furthermore, there will be additional minor costs in faculty time due to the larger enrollments in classes.

Based on this scenario, if the Provost has \$250,000 per year for new programs, this program is likely to require up to \$162,000 of that money on a continuing basis.

Vice President Soldan observed that it would take 30-50% new faculty to support the program and wanted to know the basis for that conclusion. Barna responded that it is based on teaching needs for 50 new students.

Senator Sandberg stated that in his department there are many students taking half a year of extra credits that they could convert to a Masters program; those credits would not add any additional cost to the university.

Senator Pickens added that the cost depends on how specific the program is. In their new Peace Corps MS degree, students have generated \$75,000, but no new faculty have been added. The cost depends on whether the new students occupy those open seats.

Barna added the concern that if this program takes all the open seats, then the next program considered would have to absorb all the cost because there would be no available seats.

Senator Nesbitt stated that there needs to be a limit to the senior rule so that students would not declare lots of courses for graduate credit while paying the tuition rate of an undergraduate.

Barna presented the following educational cost figures:

**net cash flow total**  
**\$/yr/student    \$/yr/student**

**Undergraduates**

direct costs \$2300 \$6000  
  
(no space)

incremental \$3300 \$7000  
  
(w space)

average \$10,000

**Graduates**

direct costs \$11,500 \$17,000

Sandberg observed that the cheapest way to run the university is to bring in lots of freshmen and then flunk them out. However, he continued, we are not in the money business, but in the education business, and we shouldn't run that way.

Barna stated that another question we might ask is what are the implications of the cost for the education of foreign graduate students.

Sandberg raised the concern that approximately one third of their department should get the M.S. degree, and that would be 30-35 students per year out of the proposed 50.

Senator Snyder suggested that if students take courses under the senior rule they should pay graduate tuition for those courses.

Barna asked if the Senate would like the finance reports as a package for the proposed programs or if they would prefer them one at a time.

Senator Nordberg stated that he would like the Finance Committee to be more definitive about whether they support or do not support the addition of a program.

Snyder argued against such a recommendation based just on financial matters; there are too many other issues and the proposals need to be considered as a whole.

Vice President Soldan added that he likes the financial separation from the curricular issues and would prefer doing one report at a time.

President Seely stated that the reality is that these reports will come to the Senate as the report is ready.

Senator Reed stated that if there are several proposals and they are uncoupled from the financial reports, it will be difficult to keep them straight when making decisions based on all components.

**B. USG Report**

Geoff Roelant reported that the USG is looking at the expected tuition increase. USG is trying to be involved in a positive way in the change to semesters and are encouraging students to go to their own departments with their suggestions. USG will hold their officer elections soon.

Roelant stated that a primary concern of USG is the medical clinic. It has been moved off campus and it is supposed to be moved back on with the construction of a new site, under a contract. That contract has not been honored and nothing is happening.

Senator Snyder stated that it is inexcusable that there are no health services on campus. Virtually every university has such on-campus services.

Seely stated that Portage was supposed to construct the new health facility and did not.

Roelant announced that the Undergraduate Student Government would like to challenge the Senate to a game of broomball. (Several Senators felt they were breakable and suggested that Euchre or Pinochle might be more appropriate.)

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Proposal 2-98, Pre-Law Option in the BS in Social Sciences Degree [Appendix G]**

The proposal was introduced as new business.

### **B. Proposal 3-98, Social Studies Education Option in the BS in Social Sciences Degree [Appendix H]**

The proposal was introduced as an extension of the current teacher education certification program.

### **C. Proposal 7-98, Amendment to University Closure Policy [Appendix I]**

The proposal was introduced by Senator Nadgorny. The present policy leaves the decision to individuals when there is a weather advisory. The rationale for the proposal is that the University should either be open or closed so that there is no ambiguity about expectations of students, staff, or faculty.

Williams MOVED and Nesbitt seconded the motion to accept Proposal 7-98.

Vice President Soldan asked what is left in the policy if this portion is removed.

President Seely responded that the original closure policy would remain. Closure is based on loss of visibility due to snow, roads too icy, parking lots closed, or wind chill below -50°F.

Senator Pegg stated that we may want to debate the rest of the policy and modify it.

Senator Nordberg stated that basically it states that the President or his designee can close the University.

Senator Carstens stated that he would like to review the original closure policy before voting.

Secretary Glime stated that in order to protect the students the policy needs language to clarify in advance the faculty member's policy for a course if a student misses class or a test due to weather.

Nordberg stated that such a statement should be a separate policy. Senator Snyder agreed that it is a separate issue.

Pegg stated that the policy should include the criteria for closing the University so that people have an idea when it will be closed (or not).

Seely responded that we need to check the faculty handbook because he thought that was already stated there.

**Next meeting:** President Seely stated that the next meeting might need to be somewhat longer in order to act on several program proposals that need to move forward, especially the education certification proposals that must be approved at the state level.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Nesbitt MOVED and Sandberg seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m. with an open motion on Proposal 7-98 on the floor.

Respectfully Submitted by Janice M. Glime  
Secretary of the University Senate