

The University Senate Of Michigan Technological University

Minutes of Meeting 299 7 October 1998

Synopsis: The Senate

- (1) passed Proposal 5-99, Amendment to Teaching Evaluation Policy: Student Ratings of Instruction.
 - (2) heard from Senator Nadgorny the recommended changes to the existing emeritus policy.
 - (3) heard a preliminary report from Bob Keen (Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Separation).
 - (4) heard reports from Mary Durfee (SS), Dick Blanning (FA, by email), and Beth Flynn (HU) of the financial and other impacts on their departments of the general education proposal.
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1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Seely called University Senate Meeting 299 to order at 5:32 p.m. on Wednesday, 7 October 1998, in Room B45 EERC.

Secretary Glime called roll. Absent were representatives from Chemical Engineering, Education, Electrical Engineering, Institute of Wood Research, and Institute of Materials Processing. Liaisons in attendance were Pratima Ungarala (Graduate Student Council), Anthony Moretti (Undergraduate Student Government), and Ted Soldan (Staff Council).

2. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Guests included Bill Kennedy (Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development), Beth Flynn (Humanities), Robert Keen (Biological Sciences), Mary Durfee (Social Sciences), Les Leifer (Chemistry), Steve Bowen (Vice Provost for Instruction), Marcia Goodrich (*Tech Topics*), Eric Hannon (MTU *Lode*).

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Williams MOVED and Shapton seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion to approve 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. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING 298

President Seely stated that there is an update to the information presented in the minutes of Meeting 298 regarding the contribution of Michigan universities to TIAA/CREF. The paragraph regarding that will be updated when the information is available. Williams MOVED and Pennington seconded the motion to approve the minutes of Meeting 298. The motion PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

5. REPORT FROM SENATE PRESIDENT

President Seely reported on his experiences at the Scholarship Unbound Conference in Oregon. The conference focused on the Carnegie Commission tenure/promotion criteria with a reward system based on the importance of teaching. It is similar to the Faculty Success model the Provost has suggested, with a defined vocabulary. Seely pointed out that such a model is only successful to the extent that the faculty drive the discussions. We must avoid mandate by the administration OR the Senate.

Seely reported that the Administration is carrying out preliminary discussions with Blue Cross and Wausau in an attempt to find a cheaper health benefits program. They do not anticipate any substantive changes in coverage.

Seely reminded the committee chairs that he needs their reports.

Seely also reminded Senators that nominees are needed for University elections; eligibility is the same as that for being a Senator.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Proposal 5-99, Amendment to Teaching Evaluation Policy: Student Ratings of Instruction [See minutes, page 7705, for a copy of this proposal.]

Snyder MOVED and Pickens seconded the motion to remove from the table the motion to accept Proposal 5-99. The motion to remove from the table PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

Kennedy (Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development) stated that they are at the stage of looking at the wording of the evaluation form. Faculty had expressed concern about "I looked forward to taking this class" because it was ambiguous; wording was changed to "I wanted to take this class." At Senator Pennington's suggestion, they had changed the comment form from 3rd party to first person.

Pennington suggested that it read "I, the instructor..." Senator Pegg asked about ambiguity of using first person on page 1. Kennedy stated that they had kept page 1 from the student perspective.

Senator Drummer suggested, based on discussions in his department, that instead of ABCDE the choices be labeled SA A N etc. and be reverse scale listed, from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Kennedy responded that they were going with the convention used in the testing center and with the printed forms.

Drummer's constituents were also concerned that there was no question about learning. Kennedy responded that question 10 addresses learning indirectly. Student answers have dubious value on a direct learning question. In fact students often refuse to answer a question directed at how much they learned. However, we should be able to assess it by inference based on the responses to the other questions.

Senator Suryanarayana expressed concern that there was no longer any information on the student profile. He had had no chance to show the form to his colleagues or give them a chance to vote on it and felt that Senate voting was premature. Their response to the proposed change was that one bad instrument had been replaced by another bad instrument; they had been told that the IDEA form was a national form and now were asked to deal with yet another form with no way to assess its validity. They have no confidence in our decisions.

Kennedy responded that the new IDEA form was longer and that they had done all the wrong things in changing it. For example, there are six questions related to "I wanted to take this class." The new IDEA instrument has more problems and we should not have to pay for them. We are under a short time limit because we need something for this term and the IDEA form has become even less satisfactory.

President Seely reminded Senators that the form supported by Proposal 5-99 is not just Kennedy's form; it is a product of the old and current Instructional Policy Committee. Furthermore, the proposal has built into it the evaluation of the evaluation tool, so we will see if we are getting the information we want and modify the form accordingly. The statisticians will look at the responses carefully. Since we will be analyzing responses ourselves, we have the mechanism to look carefully to see if we are asking the right questions.

Suryanarayana asked how we will evaluate the evaluation; it should be done now before students perform the evaluation.

Kennedy responded that it will take time to gain assurance to interpret the results. If we want only one grade (number), then we need only one question, the summative question: overall, how does this faculty member compare with all others? Faculty were afraid that percentiles would be overused in administrative decisions on promotion/tenure/salary. He intends for the evaluation to come back to the faculty as a formative measure to help them improve.

B. Flynn (Humanities) asked if the forms will be used for merit evaluation. Kennedy responded that departments should make that decision. Several chairs asked him how to use the number on the IDEA form even though they had specifically been told not to. The idea is not to harm anyone by use of the evaluation tool. Only one question

is needed to know who is struggling in the classroom. This form is much less likely to be misused, he thinks, because it is much more likely to be seen as a formative tool to help faculty.

Seely stated that the old Instructional Policy Committee thought question 19 was the best summative question, "Given the opportunity, I would take another class from this instructor." The members of the Academic Forum thought it should be question 20, "Overall, I consider this to be an excellent teacher." Therefore, we will use both questions and correlate the responses before deciding which to keep.

Vice President Soldan expressed confusion about whether Chairs get the results of the evaluation. Senator Snyder clarified that the Chairs don't see the comments, but that they see the synopsis of scores on the individual questions.

Soldan asked why not put the comments first if they are the most important.

Pennington stated that he supports the form in general. If we support the concept, we should move ahead with that. There are three criteria important in an evaluation form: 1) provide input to improve; 2) permit the Chair to evaluate teaching; 3) provide a means for students to provide input. The old form didn't meet these criteria well - it was very confusing and could easily be misinterpreted; this form seems to meet all those criteria; it is short and succinct.

Soldan stated that the numbers will be in house so that we can pursue interesting statistical correlations.

Suryanarayana asked why comments are not seen by the chair; the chair can help a faculty member to improve. He hopes this information would not be used in an adverse manner.

Seely stated that prior discussions regarding faculty evaluations have indicated a clear intention to give the faculty member maximum control over the use of the forms. It is to the discretion of the faculty member whether the forms be passed on. This has been Senate policy for 14-15 years.

Suryanarayana states that now the form can provide up to 50% of the evaluation of teaching, so we have given up on that policy anyway.

Snyder stated that the faculty are at fault for the misuse of the forms by the administration; we have never chosen to challenge the administration for using them. We (faculty) have abrogated our control.

Suryanarayana responded that we (the Senate) said they could use them for up to 50% of the evaluation of teaching.

Seely stated that not one chair, when asked at the Academic Forum, had acknowledged using a formula, but that several had subsequently called to find out what number from the IDEA form they should plug into their formulas.

Kennedy stated that we had been fearful that some departments were using the number as 100% of the teaching evaluation and that the 50% was an attempt to back that down. Conventional wisdom is that this form should provide less than 1/3 of the Chair's evaluation.

Pennington MOVED and Watwood seconded the motion to treat Proposal 5-99 as an emergency proposal. Seely ruled that only academic units could vote on the proposal, but all units could vote on the emergency status. The motion to treat as an emergency proposal PASSED on secret ballot with 32 yes and 3 no votes.

Seely reported that when students are asked to sign evaluations, the evaluation (summative number) jumps substantially, especially if they are evaluating a faculty member in their major department. Therefore, the perception of who reads the evaluation has major impacts on how students evaluate the faculty member.

The motion to approve Proposal 5-99 PASSED on voice vote with no opposition.

Seely reported that Drummer has agreed to help with the statistical analysis.

B. Proposal 10-98, Emeritus Professor Policy [See minutes, page 7546, for a copy of this proposal.]

Senator Nadgorny, Chair of the Academic Policy Committee, reviewed the changes they recommend to the existing emeritus policy:

1. All emeritus faculty would hold the same rank (Professor Emeritus) and must have at least 10 years of full time service to be eligible.
2. Procedures for awarding the emeritus status would follow procedures similar to those for promotion and tenure. There would be public recognition of the award of the rank of Professor Emeritus.
3. Departments need to amend their charters to provide guidelines for attaining the rank of Professor Emeritus.
4. There are two groups of privileges. Some are the same for all departments; others are recommended, but must be decided by each department based on their own capabilities to provide them. [Discussion indicated that all faculty and retired faculty have access to the Credit Union.]
5. These provisions depend on the desire and financial base for the department.

Nordberg MOVED and D. Reed seconded the motion to accept Proposal 10-98.

D. Reed MOVED and B. Reed seconded the motion to amend the proposal to strike item 4n (to make all eligible for the Credit Union) since the Credit Union is available to all retirees.

Senator Pegg asked why not change the wording to refer to eligibility.

President Seely responded that we have no jurisdiction over the Credit Union.

The amendment to strike 4n PASSED on voice vote with one dissent.

Senator Watwood questioned the restriction to tenure in the professorial rank. Some lecturers are quite good; do we want to deny them? If someone works 15 years, retires, goes elsewhere, then wants emeritus rank here, how is that treated? If someone works 15 years and retires at 45, does that person lose the emeritus status if that person works elsewhere?

Senator Pickens asked if 80 points (age plus years of service) defined eligibility.

Seely stated that if someone retires from MTU and teaches elsewhere, that person is still retired from MTU.

Senator Leifer stated that 80 points determines if a person is eligible for benefits; if you retire at 45, you still retire, even if you have not attained 80 points.

Senator Nordberg stated that each department must decide the answers to these questions.

Seely stated that professorial rank in the proposal (and existing policy) does not mean professor but means that defined in the Academic/Faculty Hiring Guide.

Nadgorny stated that the person must have tenure in the professorial ranks.

Leifer stated that he is pleased that the proposal provides for all to have the same rank. It should eliminate any tendency toward politicizing; one should not need any higher administrative approval - recommendations should go directly to the President and the Board of Control. This is not a major cost item and should not be treated as such.

Nadgorny stated that the committee decided to include the administrative approvals so that there is a possibility for appeal like that for promotion and tenure.

Senator Williams stated that it is not clear if the policy makes it easier or harder to get the emeritus rank.

Nordberg stated that there are reports of inconsistency among departments; giving the rank to everyone is not acceptable.

Leifer asked how that answers the concern that it should not be like getting promotion and tenure. It does not increase the cost. Therefore it should not have a layered structure. What if an individual doesn't get along with the administration? Attainment of the rank of Professor Emeritus shouldn't be subjected to that.

Senator Suryanarayana asked what happens if the President says no; is it mandatory for the President to say yes?

Senator Pennington stated that the application is through the department and is not a cloud floating off on the side.

Pennington stated that "granted" in item 3 should be "granting." Seely ruled that to be an editorial change.

Senator D. Reed asked what is meant by *similar* to the promotion and tenure procedure.

Nadgorny responded that each college should develop a means to award the rank of Professor Emeritus. The idea is to have a committee make the decision.

Seely stated that the concern posed to him was the possibility of unfairness in the department.

Leifer stated that he preferred to keep the language of the faculty handbook except for the distinction of ranks.

D. Reed MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to eliminate item 3 and to alter item 2 to read "The retiree's department through a procedure *defined in its charter* shall make a recommendation for the Emeritus status to the President for presentation to the Board of Control. New emeriti will be given public recognition and an honorary certificate at a ceremony during the nearest commencement."

Nordberg stated that the policy should not allow a department to establish a procedure that does not allow all members to participate in the decision.

Senator Long expressed concern that the policy does not provide an appeal process; a faculty member may be unpopular in his/her own department but not in the college. Other Senators expressed the same concern.

Senator D. Reed stated that the Provost has to approve the [departmental] policy.

Senator Williams suggested that we could leave the policy as it is now and add an appeal procedure.

Seely ruled that only academic departments could vote on the proposal. The motion to amend PASSED on voice vote with one dissent.

Senator Gale asked if emeriti could be on committees, have representation on the Senate, and represent the departments on the Senate.

Williams MOVED and Shapton seconded the motion to amend item 2 to read "nearest appropriate ceremony" instead of "nearest commencement."

Nadgorny stated that they want it to be a public ceremony. This was accepted as a friendly amendment, to read "nearest appropriate *public* ceremony."

The motion to amend PASSED on voice vote with dissent.

Gale MOVED and Pollins seconded the motion to table Proposal 10-98. The motion to table PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

E. Proposal 1-99, Policy and Procedures for a Financial Crisis [See minutes, page 7675, for a copy of this proposal.]

Keen (Biological Sciences) reported for the Ad Hoc Committee on Separation. The committee was charged with determining the process by which the University may remove an individual for reason other than cause. Under the presidency of Dale Stein the Senate passed a policy which was ignored by the Administration. In 1991, Senate President Paul Nelson drew the attention of President Tompkins to that proposal, but it had no effect on the deliberations in that financial crisis.

Williams expressed concern that there was some concern by committee members over the exact wording of the proposal. Keen responded that indeed he and Dave Chesney had had such a discussion and that he would address that issue later in his presentation.

The committee members were Keen (Chair), Chesney, Greenley, Horsch, Lassila, McKilligan, Mroz, and Pletka.

Keen reported the first dichotomy was that the policy should go to the Board of Control; the procedures and policy should be under the control of the Administration so that the Board would not be in a position to micromanage under a situation of financial problems. The second dichotomy would be for those things that must be handled quickly. They considered a crisis as something that must be handled in 1-6 weeks and stress to be handled within one year. Therefore, there are four proposals: two policies requiring Board of Control approval and two policies with procedures, requiring administrative approval, for operation within the University.

The University needs to plan for financial distress. The committee has developed a plan for implementation. We need a buffer.

Williams understood that the proposals Senators now have are to be changed and that we do not have the proper ones. Keen responded that Chesney had suggested, at a meeting when only three committee members were present, that we ought to insert on page 4 regarding the disposal of faculty that "the separation of faculty members will follow AAUP guidelines." In discussions with Chesney, Seely, and other members of the committee, Keen has found little that differs from AAUP guidelines; it seems better instead of referring to nebulous guidelines that are subject to change to spell out specifically the policy and procedures as they exist at MTU. The committee hasn't met since Chesney made that request.

President Seely stated that he had hoped that Bob would meet with the committee before the Senate voted on the proposal, but that he had asked Keen to give the background of the proposal. This was not intended to be a discussion on the wording of the proposal, but is instead a preliminary report.

Williams stated that this is not the proper procedure to present a proposal because it has not been agreed upon by the committee. We should not be discussing a proposal before it is finalized.

Keen responded that there was not a quorum when Chesney raised his question, but that there had been committee approval at a previous meeting. The committee has not voted. If this proposal is not the direction the Senate would like us to take, Keen would like the Senate's directives to take back to the committee.

Senator Pennington stated that we should not consider Keen's report as a proposal but should use it as background and give our feedback.

Seely responded that such was his intention to start the process. However, our discussions of protocol have used up the time allotted and that we have another important item to discuss.

Senator Suryanarayana asked if Proposals 11-98 and 12-98 will come with time assignments at the next meeting.

Seely responded that Proposal 11-98 will, but that 12-98 might not. The Fringe Benefits Committee will be meeting with the Provost and may be altering Proposal 11-98 as a result of that discussion. The next meeting will be 28 October and we will be looking at the financial impact of the general education proposal.

7. COMMITTEE BUSINESS/REPORTS

Senator Pickens reported for the Finance Committee on the costs of conversion to the semester system. The committee had considered two types of costs. The first, direct costs, include training costs and ongoing costs for additional faculty/GTA's and coordination of the general education courses to maintain consistency. The second area of cost is what they have termed "opportunity costs," costs for faculty doing something other than their usual duties. The opportunity costs will impact mostly the SS, FA, and HU departments, with some effects also in economics, engineering, and other areas.

Pickens presented a yearly cost analysis:

fac comp gen ed coord

FB FB total budget

98-99 12680 4820 17500 92000

99-00 105000 21000 25360 9640 161000 150000

00-01 105000 21000 25360 9640 161000 150000

01-02 35000 7000 25360 9640 161000 150000

Pickens pointed out that yearly budgets don't balance because the budget is based on the academic year but many of the costs will occur in the summer, so they will extend into the next year.

Durfee (SS) presented the expected effects on the SS department. SS Chair Reynolds "ran the numbers" and it appears that there are enough present faculty who could cover the proposed SS contribution to general education courses. Their concern is that the preparation differs between the cultures course and everything else. Furthermore, there will be a big load to coordinate TA's in the big course, a responsibility not presently part of the SS teaching load. So far the department has had no discussion on the impact of these changes on departmental research or what happens to the current pre-requisite courses. The department will need to rethink and revise course numbers and prerequisites.

Seely reported on an email message from Blanning (FA). Fine Arts faculty are expected to teach 8 sections (6 perspectives and 2 world cultures). That department can teach 4 sections in the fall (a proposed drop from 6 perspectives to 4), without cutting into their present elective course offerings, which will provide 13% of the distribution courses for the University. Fine arts personnel feel that speech should be part of general education. They could continue offering all present quarter offerings and would continue to offer speech. There seems to be no significant financial impact.

B. Flynn (HU) reported the impact on the HU department. They are expected to offer perspectives-25 sections, world cultures-2 sections, revisions-66 sections, distribution-100 sections, for a total of 193 sections of the proposed general education program. The program would leave them with 12 courses that are not general education, graduate programs, and research. Resources available include 97 sections taught by tenure-track faculty, 14 by non-tenure track faculty, 6 staff, 91 GTA, and 16 by new faculty (total of 224). Most of the current humanities offerings would be supplanted by distribution courses to provide 99 sections. Replacement of the communications courses would provide 92 sections, a total of 191 sections. Therefore the department is within the ball park for number of sections available. However, there are hidden costs. The HU department is slated to teach 25 of the perspectives sections (first-term students), a total of 40% of the sections to be carried by their modest faculty of 30 (7% of all faculty); Flynn stated humanists know a lot about human inquiry but that the HU faculty would be delighted if more scientists and engineers would participate in the course. The HU department would be able to offer fewer upper level courses and fewer traditional HU courses. Overall, they would lose 5 sections of English literature, 1 section of film, 2 sections of world literature, 4 sections of philosophy, 2 sections of cultural studies, 2 sections of linguistics, and 2 sections of rhetoric (18 sections lost out of 41 semester equivalents). Currently about 26% of what they teach are these liberal arts courses; it will drop to about 18%.

They question whether this tradeoff is what we (faculty) really want. How do we want to define ourselves as a university and what opportunities do we want to offer our students.

Senator Williams asked if the number of GTA's is constant in HU. The Social Science Department was concerned that they would be dealing with GTA's for the first time; will there be more GTA's in the proposed general ed program? Flynn responded that there would actually be fewer.

Senator Watwood asked what is meant by opportunity costs; does it mean more money is needed? Durfee responded that it referred to preparing courses instead of doing research.

Pickens responded that it did not mean more money; it would just result in a different distribution of what we do with our time.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Gale MOVED and Malette seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

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