

# The University Senate Of Michigan Technological University

## Minutes of Meeting 302 2 December 1998

Synopsis: The Senate

- (1) heard a report from the Calendar Issues Clarification Committee on their recommendation for the calendar configuration under semesters.
  - (2) heard that Phil Beckwith has been selected by President Tompkins to serve on the General Education Committee and Gopal Jayaraman selected for the Sabbatical Leave Committee; Carol MacLennan was selected by faculty election for the Academic Tenure Committee.
  - (3) heard that the Board of Control Finance Sub-Committee is willing to exercise some flexibility in the compensation plan for those who cannot save enough retirement money to cover the added expense of retiree health care premiums.
  - (4) amended Proposal 10-98, Emeritus Professor Policy, to eliminate the restriction to tenured faculty and to give the Emeritus Association non-voting representation to the Senate.
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### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Seely called University Senate Meeting 302 to order at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, 2 December 1998, in Room B45 EERC.

Secretary Glime called roll. Absent were representatives from Army/Air Force ROTC, Computer Science, Education, Metallurgical and Materials Engineering, Physics, and Institute of Materials Processing. Liaisons in attendance were Anthony Moretti (USG) and Ted Soldan (Staff Council).

### 2. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Guests included Fred Dobney (Provost), Marcia Goodrich (*Tech Topics*), Les Leifer (Chemistry), Steve Bowen (Vice Provost for Instruction), Mark Plichta (Associate Dean Acad. Prog., Eng.), Shalini Rudak (Associate Dir., Educational Opportunity), and Bill Kennedy (Director, Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development).

### 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Seely asked to exchange items 6 and 7 so that the Calendar Issues Clarification Committee could make their presentation first. Prince MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to approve the agenda as modified. 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 301

Senator Pickens requested a correction on page 7734 to the paragraph beginning "The Finance Committee." In the second sentence, "the \$45-55,000 category." should be changed to "the \$50-70,000 category." After that, a sentence should be added to read, "The Provost provided an analysis for a phase out between \$45,000 and \$55,000, which was presented."

Approval of the minutes of Meeting 301 PASSED as corrected on voice vote with no dissent.

### 5. OPEN MOTION ON PROPOSAL 11-98, REVISION OF TRANSITION TO FULL CO-PAY OF HEALTH CARE PREMIUMS FOR RETIREES

President Seely reported that since the last Senate meeting the Fringe Benefits and Finance Committees have had discussions regarding a new format for Proposal 11-98. Since this is not completed, it is not fruitful to

continue with the discussion of Proposal 11-98 at this time. Seely stated that Senators will get a copy of the new proposal in advance of the meeting when it will be discussed. He suggested tabling Proposal 11-98 until the meeting of 16 December.

Shapton MOVED and Pegg seconded the motion to table Proposal 11-98 until the meeting of 16 December. The motion PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

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

President Seely reminded the Senate that the calendar is the only issue on which the Senate has sole authority. Kennedy (Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development) presented the calendar proposed by the Calendar Issues Clarification Committee (CICC). **[Appendix B]**

Senator Chavis asked if consideration had been given to the Martin Luther King holiday. Kennedy responded that it had been discussed and that he would address the issue later.

Senator Suryanarayana asked if this plan would have only one graduation. Kennedy responded that this issue has not been decided; December graduation is a problem because of the weather and nearness to Christmas.

Senator Gale stated that the Business faculty had indicated their dislike of the discontinuity created by a one-week holiday at Thanksgiving. It would create the same problems as the Christmas break had done to the winter term on the quarter system. They prefer 3 or 4 days of class that week.

Kennedy responded that the one-week break was one of the boundary conditions set in the discussions with students. He feels that it should be one or the other extreme, i.e. don't go home at all for Thanksgiving or go for a whole week; a short break forces students to travel even if the weather is bad. Wisconsin legislated that there would be classes for the first two days of Thanksgiving week, but the students left before that anyway. There is no point in having an instruction day that is not an effective one.

Gale added that his department also favored having K-day on Labor Day.

Vice Provost for Instruction Bowen asked the Senate if they were students wouldn't they feel deceived if the faculty put K-day on Labor day.

Kennedy stated that one could argue that Thanksgiving is a disruption either way (short or long vacation).

Seely showed the Senate a stack of email messages half an inch thick and reported that they represented comments from constituents that ran the full range of possibilities on the calendar dates. The students had the strongest sentiment toward the one-week holiday for Thanksgiving.

Senator D. Reed stated that he had heard no argument against the week-long holiday in the spring term, so why are people so concerned about a similar week-long holiday in the fall term?

Other Senators asked why the spring break did not occur at Easter.

Senator Snyder stated that during the spring term we need a break from the weather more than anything else.

Leifer (Chemistry) asked about the length of the summer term. He expressed concern that it was not long enough for a student to get caught up if the student failed the first term of a 2-semester course. (The recommended summer term is only 7.5 weeks.) This problem would affect chemistry, mathematics, and physics, and perhaps other areas.

Kennedy responded that there might be other configurations between spring semester and fall semester to accommodate such courses. The proposed calendar includes a 4-week course period for intensive courses before the regular summer term begins.

Suryanarayana asked if the presentation tonight was just for information or if it was intended for suggestions and comments.

Seely responded that it is for discussion. The Senate has the responsibility for the calendar and must therefore vote on it.

Chavis asked again about the Martin Luther King holiday.

Kennedy responded that the Committee had discussed this as a potential holiday and raised the question what purpose it would serve because it would fall before or during the first week of spring term. In 2001 it would fall on the first day of the term.

Chavis expressed concern that currently there are no set rules about classes on that day and that one group of students is very concerned about it. In 2001, it would fall on the first day of classes of the spring term.

Kennedy responded that the CICC had considered the creation of a new holiday to be beyond the scope of their responsibility.

Several Senators commented that if the holiday fell on the first day of the term, students would be traveling back to campus on that day and not participating in any Martin Luther King Day activities.

Chavis argued that honoring this holiday is important to the African American students.

Bowen compared Martin Luther King Day to Earth Day, stating that if there are classes that day we could begin to build a campus commitment to its celebration and participation by having some classes participate in activities related to Martin Luther King Day.

Senator Lutzke countered that it would be recognized by everybody if students had the day off.

Snyder commented that if the holiday did not fall on the first day of the term it would have a different meaning.

Senator Shapton stated that for him it would be okay if we moved the spring term to begin a week earlier and he would support moving K-day to Labor day so we would get out earlier.

Kennedy responded that the registrar's office needs time to process grades, etc.

Shapton added to his earlier comments, that the students would probably find that their friends won't have the second week of January off and they will get bored at home.

Senator Tampas stated that half day holidays affect the same part of the day two times and that a single whole day holiday would be better.

## **7. REPORT FROM SENATE PRESIDENT**

President Seely reported that Senate Proposal 6-99, University Web Page Policy, has been sent to the Administration for approval. **[Appendix C]**

The Senate Executive Committee will meet tomorrow, 3 December, at 10 a.m. in the MUB alumni lounge.

Seely announced three committee selections: Phil Beckwith selected by President Curt Tompkins for the General Education Committee, Gopal Jayaraman selected by Tompkins for the Sabbatical Leave Committee, and Carol MacLennan selected by faculty election for the Academic Tenure Committee.

Seely reported that there are three scheduled meetings to inform staff about the changes to the employment policy regarding removal of the at-will clause, a probation period, and termination procedure. These meetings have been scheduled for 2 December (today) and 9 December (12-1, 1-2). These meetings constitute an official excuse from work and are important because staff need to make a decision on their employment status.

Seely announced that Blue Cross/Blue Shield representatives will be on campus to meet with faculty and staff on 3 December at 9:30, noon, 3, and 6:30 in the MUB. They will be available once a week until the new program is in place and once per month thereafter.

The Senate Secretary and Vice President (President Seely was out of town) met with Jim Mitchell, Chair of the Board, on 19 November to discuss current and projected Senate activities. At this meeting, Jim Mitchell indicated that he would support Seely's request to be present at the next meeting of the Board of Control Finance Sub-Committee, to be held 30 December in Detroit. Seely wanted to understand the Board concerns regarding the current retiree health care discussions and to apprise them of the basis of the Senate concerns.

Seely explained the current status of the fringe benefits retiree health care issue. The discussion began when concern was expressed on the Senate floor that individuals in the lower income brackets would have the greatest difficulty accumulating enough money to pay for their health care premiums. There were meetings with the Provost and Senate last spring and into the summer to address the Senate concerns. They discussed a variety of options for assisting individuals who won't have sufficient savings. Individual analyses were performed by Institutional Analysis based on actual earnings, rates of savings, etc. to determine effects on individuals and to determine cost to provide for these people. They used the Senate criteria and assumptions - the proposal has its roots in shared enterprise. There are 128 people who would not accumulate sufficient savings to cover health care premium costs; covering these all of these costs would require \$516,000. There are 67 people earning less than \$50,000 per year, costing \$314,000.

The basic proposal is that eligibility is capped at \$50,000; money would be paid into retirement accounts to provide the suggested individual compensation that these people could invest. During the last two Senate meetings, the philosophies of the Finance Committee and the Fringe Benefits Committee differed somewhat. The Fringe Benefits Committee took the position that everyone should get something, whereas the Finance Committee preferred a ramp rather than a fixed cap. These differences led to confusion in the Senate.

Since those meetings, these two committees have met two times. The Senate President is trying to get them to present their positions in a single proposal.

The result of these meetings is a movement toward a proposal that presents the various components of the proposed changes in one proposal, but with a clear opportunity for the Senators to choose the components they wish to support.

However, when Seely met with the Board of Control Finance Sub-Committee, the possibility of more flexibility emerged. The plan is restricted in some ways by legal issues - cutoff points cannot be arbitrary.

Several points became obvious in the Sub-Committee discussions. They don't want to hear any more about fringe benefits. For financial reasons, it was wrong to start these retirement programs, and they need to be ended. Nevertheless, they accepted our effort primarily because it is targeted at those with lower incomes. It should cost about the same amount of money as in the \$50,000 cap proposal (ca. \$314,000), but a ramp is possible. We need to show where the money will come from and the proposal will have to be incorporated as part of the regular budget priorities. Seely considered the meeting with the Board Finance Sub-Committee to be very useful.

The Finance and Fringe Benefits Committees will meet tomorrow (3 December) at 11 in the MUB to craft a joint proposal that incorporates these developments. Institutional Analysis will run scenarios to determine costs based on proposed payments to individuals.

Senator Nordberg asked about the number of people who wouldn't earn enough to cover health care premium costs and the number under \$50,000. Seely responded that there were 128 who would not earn enough, but only 67 of those earn under \$50,000.

Senator Leifer stated that the Institutional Analysis count of people in group C of 27 was in error because people had been double counted. There were only 7 in that group.

## 8. OLD BUSINESS

### Proposal 10-98, Emeritus Professor Policy [Appendix D]

Reed MOVED and Snyder seconded the motion to remove Proposal 10-98, Emeritus Professor Policy, from the table.

Pickens MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to change item 3r to read "Non-voting representatives of the emeriti association on the University Senate."

President Seely stated that the change would effectively make the representation that of a liaison.

Senator Suryanarayana asked if the emeritus faculty member is attached to the university or to a department.

Provost Dobney stated that they are attached to the department.

Suryanarayana followed by asking why they need a separate representation when they are represented by the department.

Senator Nordberg responded that they would be represented as a group for their issues, which are different from departmental issues. They might also be able to bring a useful perspective that could benefit the Senate.

Senator Snyder stated that we would have to change the Senate Constitution if their representation is through their department.

Suryanarayana stated that the Emeritus Association probably would not happen.

Vice President Soldan stated that people are not anxious to become liaisons.

Senator Long countered Suryanarayana's assumption, stating that on many campuses the emeritus association is a very active association.

The amendment to change 3r to a non-voting status PASSED on voice vote with no opposition.

Senator Williams asked if there had been any financial analysis.

Seely responded that there had not. Departments have options on items that present cost to them. There didn't seem to be any substantial cost.

Senator Pickens stated that he didn't know how the Finance Committee could do a cost analysis because they couldn't estimate how many eligible retirees would take advantage of the proposed benefits.

Senator Nordberg stated that the committee had attempted to put into part 3 only those items that wouldn't have significant cost.

Senator Pegg asked why, if a department is to recommend a person, they must approve that recommendation.

Senator D. Reed suggested re-wording that statement. Senator Sutter asked if we intend to block out the non-tenured faculty.

Nordberg responded that the committee had discussed that and decided that this way the university was more likely to approve consistently.

Senator Tampas asked if a department could, for example, nominate a lecturer as an exception.

Nordberg asked where we would draw the line.

Williams suggested that line 1 of the proposal be modified to state "*normally* has tenure."

Sutter stated that the department should have that latitude.

Sutter MOVED and Richter seconded the motion to strike the words "has tenure in a professorial rank and" from the first sentence of item 1. The amendment PASSED on voice vote with no opposition.

Pegg pointed out that the proposal is gender specific by using the word emeritus and that it should be changed to include the female ending of the word as well. The male form is emeritus/emeriti and the female form is emerita/emeritae.

Williams asked if the rank of Professor emeritus(a) could be extended to those who have already retired.

Dobney responded that we can put it in the cover letter to the Board that it is the sense of the Senate to do that.

Williams MOVED and D. Reed seconded the motion that all existing emeritus faculty titles be changed to professor emeritus/a. The motion PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

D. Reed asked for clarification of item 4 regarding eligibility to be recommended by the department. Would this follow normal procedure for these items?

Pegg asked to whom they were recommended.

Dobney responded that they were recommended to the department chair or dean. He stated that the charter is the right place to address the issues raised by Reed.

D. Reed requested that the minutes reflect this clarification.

Seely ruled that the change made in item 1 was a substantial change and that voting could not take place on Proposal 10-98 until the next meeting.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Drummer MOVED and Snyder seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m. with an open motion on Proposal 10-98.

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