

The University Senate Of Michigan Technological University

Minutes of Meeting 304 6 January 1999

Synopsis: The Senate

- (1) learned that Proposal 5-99 (Amendment to the Teaching Evaluation Policy: Student Ratings of Instruction) has been approved by the administration.
 - (2) approved the formation of an ad hoc committee to formulate policy on distance education.
 - (3) amended Proposal 8-99, Semester Calendar, to set a 5-day maximum exam period, eliminate the half-day holiday for Good Friday, and to observe K-Day on Labor day. Senators defeated a motion to have the spring break occur the week after Easter.
 - (4) proposed to change the length of the semester from 15 weeks to 14 weeks (motion to amend is pending).
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1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Seely called University Senate Meeting 304 to order at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, 6 January 1999, in Room B45 EERC.

Secretary Glime called roll. Absent were at-large Senator Pete Tampas and representatives from Army/Air Force ROTC, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Institute of Wood Research, Metallurgical and Materials Engineering, and Mining Engineering. Liaisons in attendance were Ted Soldan (Staff Council) and Anthony Moretti (USG).

2. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Guests included Bill Bulleit (Civil & Environmental Engineering), Bill Kennedy (Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development), Sharron Paris (OSRR), Shalini Rudak (Educational Opportunity), and Kevin J. Walker (Black Student Association).

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Williams MOVED and D. Reed 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 303

President Seely pointed out several errors in the minutes of Meeting 303. In section 6, paragraph beginning "Sellars reported," the last sentence should be "The goal is to raise \$1 million by 2003." Under 8C the paragraph beginning "Seely reminded" should be "Seely reminded the Senate that this proposal does not have to go to the Board as a separate proposal; the *Board Finance Committee* had agreed in principle and the Senate had been charged to work out the details."

Nordberg MOVED and Vanden Avond seconded the motion to approve the minutes of Meeting 303 as corrected. The motion PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

5. REPORT FROM SENATE PRESIDENT

President Seely reported that Proposals 10-98 (Emeritus/Emerita Professor Policy) and Proposal 9-99 (Revision of Transition to Full Co-pay of Health Care Premiums for Retirees) have been sent to the Administration for approval. [Appendices B-C]

The Administration has approved Senate Proposal 5-99 (Amendment to the Teaching Evaluation Policy: Student Ratings of Instruction). [**Appendix D**]

The Administration has proposed changes to Senate Proposal 8-98 (Revision of Scientific Misconduct Procedures). These will be discussed under item 7 of the agenda.

Seely will represent the Senate at the Board of Control Meeting on 22 January.

6. COMMITTEE BUSINESS/REPORTS

Ad Hoc Committee on Distance Education Policy

President Seely asked the Senate for approval to form an ad hoc committee on the Distance Education Policy. There currently is no policy on distance education activities. The committee shall be charged with preparing a proposal that contains a suggested university-level policy governing the development and implementation of distance education activities for consideration and eventual approval by the University Senate.

The committee should be able to build upon the forthcoming report of the University Task Force on Distance Education, and shall respond to the primary elements of that report as appropriate. It shall, when necessary, gather information from other universities and appropriate organizations that have developed similar proposals. The committee should also seek input from relevant campus groups. The target date for completion of the committee's report to the University Senate is 15 April 1999. The committee may draw upon the resources of the Senate as needed.

Seely proposed membership of the committee to include Bill Shapton (ME-EM) as chair, Pauline Moore (Library), Dickie Selfe (HU), Martha Banks-Sikarskie (Extended University Programs), Tim Collins (Technology), Sandy Gayk (Dir. Intellectual Properties), Bill Kennedy (Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development), and Ann West (Manager, Distributed Computer Services).

Senator Suryanarayana inquired why a new committee was needed when there is already a Curricular Policy Committee.

Seely responded that that committee is already working on two degree programs. Forming an ad hoc committee permits the committee to have members with appropriate expertise but who are not Senators.

Senator Gale stated that some people in the Department of Business have participated in the distance education program, but that he hasn't had a chance to talk to them so that he could nominate them for the committee. Seely responded that they are welcome to join the committee either officially or unofficially.

Seely stated that the task force should make use of the report from the Council of Graduate Schools.

Williams MOVED and Pennington seconded the motion to form an ad hoc committee to form a policy on distance education with the stated membership but with the proviso that other interested persons can be added. The motion PASSED on voice vote with no opposition.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Proposal 8-98, Revision of Scientific Misconduct Procedures [Appendix E]

Seely reported that the Administration has returned Proposal 8-98, Scientific Misconduct Procedures, to the Senate, requesting several additions. President Tompkins has requested that a third paragraph be added to the preamble, stating "These procedures shall apply to all faculty, staff, and students involved in allegations of scientific misconduct." Sung Lee (Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School) requested an addition to part 3, paragraph 2, sentence 2, to read "Any termination of employment or removal from the graduate faculty *or removal from graduate degree programs* shall occur in a manner consistent with existing applicable University policies on employment practices and academic tenure.

Snyder MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to accept these two administrative amendments.

Senator Nordberg suggested that the second sentence refer to any such sanctions instead of being specific, since the stated ones did not apply to graduate students.

Senator Williams suggested removing the word "graduate" from the amendment so that it would also apply to undergraduates. Senator Pennington suggested that the motion be tabled so that the paragraph could be reworded appropriately.

Pegg MOVED to change part 4, sentence 2, regarding due process, to read "It is imperative that due process be followed, *including adherence to the procedures herein, and ...*"

Seely responded that the proposal had been drafted with the existing wording on the advice of the national AAUP because they contended that a prescribed procedure was safer than a generic one.

Pegg countered that his suggested wording should be more protective by being more inclusive. Seely reminded him that such a change would require another review by the Board of Control and University lawyer.

The motion failed due to lack of a second.

Seely suggested that the motion be tabled for better wording of item 3.

Ouellette MOVED and Lutzke seconded the motion to table Proposal 8-98. The motion to table PASSED on voice vote with no opposition.

8. OLD BUSINESS

A. Proposal 8-99, Semester Calendar [See minutes, page 7780, for a copy of this proposal.]

Barna MOVED and Lutzke seconded the motion to bring Proposal 8-99 from the table.

President Seely reminded the Senate that it needed to discuss the starting and ending dates and the possibility of a Martin Luther King holiday.

Senator Lutzke reviewed the history of the Martin Luther King Day holiday at MSU, based on an article in the MSU News Bulletin. They had decided to start the semester two days earlier in order to observe a Martin Luther King Day holiday. The school then planned a variety of activities and programs to honor Martin Luther King Jr.

Seely presented a table indicating whether certain midwest schools did or did not celebrate Martin Luther King Day with a holiday.

Senator Snyder asked why exams are limited to four days in the years when Christmas is late in the week, adding that there is no need to limit the spring term to 4 days.

Bulleit (Civil and Environmental Engineering) stated that the Calendar Committee had checked and found that almost all finals are over within four days.

Snyder countered with the fact that many freshman have their chemistry, mathematics, and biology final exams on the first day of exam week, indicating the need to spread exams over a wider period of time.

Senator Haapala stated that there were many unknowns when the Calendar Committee discussed exams. It might be appropriate to identify five days and then wait to see how many exams are to be given under the new curriculum. She clarified that if a student has three or more exams on the same day that student can appeal to the Dean of Students.

Senator Gale pointed out that he had had a Friday exam for the last three years.

Senator Drummer stated that he disliked the calendar - that we had tried to impose the quarter calendar on the semester system. He would recommend moving K-Day to Labor Day, to cancel the half-day holiday for

homecoming, and to limit the Thanksgiving holiday to two days, thus permitting the fall term to end on 8 December.

Senator Sloan stated that she supported having final exams earlier. However, she found that the greatest concern of faculty was the half-day holidays. She questioned whether we need Good Friday off; if it is a family event, then it would be better to have Monday off.

Bulleit stated that he would personally like to see all the half-day holidays gone. However, he disagrees with Drummer on having only two days for Thanksgiving. The weather at that time is bad and students need adequate time for travel.

Senator Seely stated that before the change to early quarters in 1973 the Thanksgiving break had been only three days.

Snyder MOVED and Sloan seconded the motion to amend the 4-day exam specification to a *maximum 5-day exam period*.

The motion to amend PASSED on voice vote with no opposition.

Senator Barna asked what is meant by 16 weeks in the semester, listed in the proposal. Seely clarified that it refers to 15 weeks of instruction plus the one-week break (Thanksgiving or mid-spring-term break).

D. Reed MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to eliminate the Good Friday half-day holiday.

Senator Blanning stated that this change would be in keeping with the modern world; we don't celebrate religious events of other religions.

Senator Nordberg stated that he would like to find out what his constituents thought before voting on these changes.

Seely stated that we would only be voting on the amendments. This would permit us to change them back again before voting on the main motion.

The motion to eliminate the Good Friday half-day holiday PASSED on voice vote with opposition.

Reed MOVED and Barna seconded the motion to move spring break to the week after Easter.

Snyder stated that since Easter is not a fixed date, it would be harder to plan courses. Furthermore, the mid-term break occurs when the weather here is still lousy, whereas in April it isn't too bad here.

Moretti stated that he likes the break where it is and that he thinks most students like the idea of the break in the middle of the term so that there is not such a short time before final exams.

Secretary Glime stated that having the week change each year would mean starting experiments involving living organisms at different points in the course each year, making it difficult to arrange the course content and necessitating a new arrangement each year.

Senator Shapton stated that their department (ME-EM) is beginning to teach some courses through video-conferencing where our faculty teach part and faculty from Michigan State University teach part of it. They would like to do more of that, so it is important to have the break time the same as that of other major schools because of the need to coordinate various programs that are shared by these schools. Other schools usually have their breaks the first or second week of March. He doesn't know how the calendar policy is worded to make it fall during that time. He recommends that we take these other calendars into consideration. Our term is so much longer that we don't have to worry about the beginning and end of the terms.

Seely stated that he didn't think the current language of the calendar would preclude that.

Senator Blanning stated that the Fine Arts Department is concerned about the disruptive effect of the mid-term breaks for the Department of Fine Arts; performing groups would be nearly ready for a performance, then have the interruption of a break at Thanksgiving, and would need to perform a week later when they were not adequately ready. A late spring break would cause the same problem. The department is concerned that they will have to cancel their Christmas performance.

Snyder stated that by moving the spring break to the week after Easter would mean that some years there would be only two weeks of classes after the break.

The motion to move the spring break to the week after Easter FAILED on voice vote with some assent.

Snyder MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to eliminate the half-day holiday for K-Day. Senator Gale amended the motion to put K-Day on Labor Day; Snyder accepted it as a friendly amendment.

Ouellette stated that K-Day and also Good Friday were holidays for staff and that impact needed to be considered in our deliberations.

Gale stated that Syracuse University has staff holidays at times when classes are held, so there should be ways to work out those differences.

Seely stated that he would inquire of Ellen Horsch on the effect this would have regarding holidays prescribed in union contracts.

Walker (BSA) reminded the Senate that students had been promised K-Day observance.

Seely responded that promising the observance was not a promise of having a half-day holiday and therefore such a decision would not violate the boundary condition.

Walker stated that the faculty would not be keeping good faith if they observed Labor Day and called it K-Day.

Moretti (USG) asked if the elimination of the Good Friday holiday could be accepted if it is against the boundary conditions.

Seely responded that he was not sure, but that the Senate has the sole authority on decisions regarding the academic calendar.

Senator Sutter stated that we should revisit the boundary conditions now that the calendar is better understood. These conditions had been promised when there was no information on how they would impact the whole calendar.

Kennedy (Dir., Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development) stated that the boundary conditions were very constraining in the formation of the calendar. Even though the Senate has sole jurisdiction, renaming K-Day to Labor Day would go against the spirit of the agreement with the students. It had been difficult to get student input in the calendar decisions. USG had been the best format for discussion with students; there was little participation in the open forums. The Senate is now whittling away at the process that the students and committee went through.

Sutter stated that he has a high opinion of the students and he thinks that if the problems are discussed with them they will understand.

Williams stated that he assumed that there would still be 145.5 instructional days after eliminating the half days.

Moretti stated that since there would be less time lost for start-up there should be more quality time available during the semester.

Snyder reminded Senators that the point of K-Day was to provide an opportunity for students to enjoy the Peninsula in the fall. If the observation is moved to Labor Day, there would be more opportunity to do that.

Nordberg stated that he felt it is a serious mistake to put K-Day on Labor Day.

Rudak (Special Academic Programs) stated that many faculty attend K-Day and that this contact with students would diminish if faculty chose to do family things on Labor Day instead of participating in K-Day activities.

Williams stated that we could also consider combining K-Day with Homecoming and making Homecoming a full-day holiday.

Walker stated that it is sneaky and underhanded to put K-Day with Homecoming.

Seely asked for a straw vote of the Senators; the majority favored having K-Day combined with Labor Day.

The motion to observe K-Day on Labor Day PASSED on voice vote with dissent.

Shapton MOVED and Sutter seconded the motion to change the length of the semester to 14 weeks.

Kennedy reminded the Senators that dispensing with the boundary conditions would increase student sentiment against the calendar.

Lutzke stated that K-Day was an important celebration for students and that hundreds of students attended.

Snyder stated that this is not a popularity contest. The Senate must decide what is best for education.

Senator Suryanarayana stated that schools that have a 14-week calendar have a short Thanksgiving break. He understood that the boundary conditions were open for discussion - that they needed to be considered that they could be changed.

Sutter stated that the summer loses instructional days under the 15-week calendar.

Kennedy responded that the summer calendar got the least attention. Having 15-week terms prevented having a 15-week summer term.

Nordberg asked what the advantages would be for having a 14-week term and how this would compare to other schools.

Seely responded that most schools in the state have 67-70 days in their 14-week calendars.

Nordberg asked why the decision was to have 15-week terms.

Kennedy responded that both the students and the faculty wanted 15 weeks.

Gale asked if there had been any Board of Control participation in the decision to maintain 15 weeks.

Seely responded that there had not been. Their only concern had been that the term not be any longer than that.

Nordberg asked how it compares bang for buck with other universities.

Seely stated that the strongest sentiments among the students related to the length of the Thanksgiving break. He personally feels that 70 days would be adequate.

Suryanarayana stated that we can reduce the term from 15 weeks to 14 weeks after we have experience with the semester calendar. It is much easier to reduce its length than to expand it.

D. Reed stated that it is easier to add material than to reduce it. He argued that we need to be like other schools; under the proposed calendar, our year is two weeks longer.

Moretti stated that he thought that a 15-week calendar that would be shortened later is the way things would happen.

Blanning asked how shortening the semester would affect pay. He raised concerns that MTU lacks traditions and that we are eroding the few that we do have.

Senator Prince stated that he supports the 14-week semester because it provides better opportunities for the summer term.

Seely answered Blanning's concerns about the salary by saying that the Provost had stated that a reduction in pay wouldn't happen.

Reed stated that we should set the number of instructional days instead of the number of weeks.

Barna stated that the week-long holiday at Thanksgiving should not be an issue in the 14-week semester consideration. The important issue is that it provides sufficient time for a 14-week semester in summer.

Seely stated that there was no way to get three 15-week terms.

Shapton stated that we could still run the intensive term in the summer, although it would overlap the regular semester term. Having 14-week terms permits to coordinate co-ops with those of other schools.

Pennington stated that a 14-week term is not the same as having 70 instructional days. There will be at least some holidays to shorten it. Furthermore, the 4-weeks provided for field courses is not long enough for some field courses that have previously been offered in the summer.

Suryanarayana stated that we need to be able to see both the 14-week and 15-week calendars so that we can compare details.

Nordberg stated that we are going over ground that the committee has worked diligently on.

Haapala stated that the boundaries were the biggest limit in their calendar deliberations, but that they had felt that they should stay with them.

Seely stated that the committee had accommodated the students' strong feelings on Thanksgiving break and the 15-week terms. Faculty seemed to be divided between opposing early starting dates and opposing late ending dates.

Nordberg stated that in 5-6 years there will be all new students who will come here based on the calendar decisions that we make.

Senator Long stated that under the changes we have made, a 14-week calendar would have only 68.5 days in the fall (keeping the homecoming half day holiday) and 68 days in the spring. Furthermore, moving K-Day to Labor Day would not work with that calendar.

Kennedy stated that he would put together a calendar with three 14-week terms. D. Reed stated that our calendar should be in the same range as other schools.

Lutzke asked what the calendars were like in other schools.

Suryanarayana stated that if there are only 14 weeks there is a loss of one week and departments have been developing their curricula on the basis of 15 weeks. That work would all have to be re-done.

Sutter pointed out that while it would be the loss of a week, it would be the gain of a semester.

Seely asked Kennedy to prepare a calendar of three 14-week semesters.

Nordberg asked if Senators could have a copy of the calendar in their hands in advance.

D. Reed asked if we need to meet next week to discuss the calendar.

Seely stated that we will schedule a special meeting next week for this topic only.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Gale MOVED and Lutzke seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m. with the motion to amend Proposal 8-99 (to have 14-week semesters) on the floor.

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