

# The University Senate Of Michigan Technological University

## Minutes of Meeting 311 31 March 1999

Synopsis: The Senate

- (1) heard that Peck Cho will complete the term of N.V. Suryanarayana as Senator from ME-EM.
  - (2) were requested to nominate Senators at-large by 14 April, including permission from the candidates.
  - (3) heard from Tom Drummer on Proposed Amendments to Academic Policies regarding changes necessitated by the conversion to semesters.
  - (4) passed Proposal 19-99, Extension of Insurance Benefits to All Employees, and will request that the Board of Control remove Article 3.6 from the Board Policy.
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### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Seely called University Senate Meeting 311 to order at 5:31 p.m. on Wednesday, 31 March 1999, in Room B45 EERC.

Secretary Glime called roll. Absent were at-large Senator Pete Tampas and representatives from Army/Air Force ROTC, Business and Economics, Institute of Wood Research, Mechanical Engineering-Engineering Mechanics, Metallurgical and Materials Engineering, Institute of Materials Processing, and Human Relations and Facilities Management. Liaison in attendance was Ted Soldan (Staff Council).

### 2. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Guests included Fred Dobney (Provost), Marcia Goodrich (*Tech Topics*), Les Leifer (Chemistry), and Ingrid Cheney (Assistant Director for Benefits and Wellness).

### 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

B. Reed MOVED and Williams 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

Long MOVED and Drummer seconded the motion to approve the minutes of Meeting 310 as presented. The motion PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

### 5. REPORT FROM SENATE PRESIDENT

President Seely announced that Peck Cho had volunteered to serve in place of Senator Suryanarayana (ME-EM), who had resigned to protest the decision of the Board of Control to implement 15-week semesters contrary to the vote of the Senate and of the faculty for 14-week semesters. Seely has contacted runners up for the position of Senator at large, but no one has agreed yet to replace the position vacated by Senator Shapton (at-large), who also resigned in protest; Bill Bulleit was among the runners up but is now assistant chair of Civil and Environmental Engineering and declined the position of Senator-at-large.

Proposal 18-99, Amendment to Academic Distinction Policy, and Proposal 21-99, Policy on Religious Observance, have been forwarded to the Administration for approval. [Appendices B and C]

In the previous meeting, Senator Gale asked how the registrar's office calculated GPA's and whether they were rounded down. Seely had asked and found that they were truncated at two decimal places. Gale's point had been

that the method of calculating the GPA for transcripts and for awarding of honors at graduation should be made clear in the catalog.

Senator Pegg asked why grades were converted back and forth between letters and numbers and back again.

Senator Ouillette responded that each time the GPA is calculated all grades are converted to numbers times credits and a single division by total credits is done. The reason for truncation at two decimal places is that the software package does that. Most of the other schools they have investigated do the same.

Williams added that it is a matter of precision when more grades are added.

Seely reported that Bob Keen has gotten AAUP feedback on the financial crisis proposal and that proposal should be coming to the Senate soon.

Seely requested nominations for Senators at-large by 14 April and reminded Senators that they need permission from the candidates as part of the nomination.

Seely reported that the Senate Executive Committee had met on Monday, 29 March and discussed the pending proposals. Among these is Proposal 24-99, which deals with adjustments of rules for the semester calendar; this is provided as a new proposal with the agenda of this meeting.

Senator Williams asked if the 6-year term limit applies to the Senators at-large. Seely responded that it does.

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

In the absence of Senator Gale, chair of the Administrative Policy Committee, President Seely announced that this is the year in which the evaluation of the central administration is to begin. He presented a list of the positions covered, stating that he was not aware of any new positions that needed to be added; 8-9 people need to be evaluated. The committee is defined as 3 engineering faculty, 3 sciences and arts faculty, 1 faculty member from each school, 1 representative from research units, 1 from the non-academic professional staff, one external evaluator, and one person chosen by the Senate. The one chosen by the Senate need not be a Senator, but Seely stated that he preferred it be a Senator; that person would serve as chair of the committee. Paul Nelson had served as the Senate's choice last time and was not a Senator.

Seely stated that the task should be easier this year because the previous committee had designed the procedures and Paul Nelson had provided a list of things that worked and those that didn't work. The detailed report of evaluations will be available to the committee.

Seely reported that last time the committee had 15 members. This resulted from the resignation of Tom Merz from Business because the School of Business had two representatives. The Senate had agreed to have three professional staff representatives on the committee.

Vice President Soldan agreed that the committee as defined is weak on professional staff; the administration of the university affects the entire university.

Senator Sloan added her support of adding more professional staff.

Senator Watwood asked why the committee was so large.

Seely responded that he doesn't know why.

Leifer (Chemistry) stated that the evaluation process and summarization are very time-consuming. In the last one, no administrator got very high grades, and some got low ones. He saw no effects afterwards. Therefore, why bother. However, in the Executive Committee meeting, it had been pointed out to him that we had only one data point. He agreed with that, but wanted to know what the consequences are. If there are none as a result of the evaluation, then we should not continue this process another time.

Provost Dobney stated that he "resembles that remark" and that he had made changes as a result of his evaluations, but that he could not speak for other administrators.

Senator Lutzke asked what time frame we have for the evaluation.

Seely responded that it had begun in April of one year and been completed in April of the following year; he anticipated about the same time frame this time.

Senator Sutter stated that he would encourage the designation of the professional staff members to be at large; many of them are in research units.

Secretary Glime stated that prior to the last evaluation she had tried to find other universities that evaluated administrators in order to establish some sort of yardstick but had been unable to locate any that had procedures in place. It is possible that all administrators receive relatively low evaluations.

Leifer responded that we don't need another apology for the administrators. Perhaps other schools did not have evaluations because they had found the effort to be fruitless.

Senator Pegg stated that the committee may need to tweak the questions to find those of more value.

Seely responded that he assumed the new committee would make use of the previous survey in crafting this one.

Provost Dobney stated that we need some comparability between questions in both years of evaluation so that we can see if there has been any improvement.

Seely stated that we would make the professional staff representatives at-large but he needed direction from the Senate to change the policy.

Senator D. Reed stated it was his recollection that more professional staff units had been added to the Senate constituency after the policy had been established.

Senator Watwood asked if the three College of Engineering members have to be faculty.

Seely responded that the policy specified that members be tenured except in those units having no tenure-track appointments. Members of research units are tenured in academic departments, not in the research unit, so it was possible that they could be represented by a non-tenurable professional staff member; a non-tenurable professional staff member had represented them on the previous committee.

Barna MOVED and Sloan seconded the motion to have three at-large professional staff on the committee.

Senator Long asked if the research unit is professional staff or faculty and if this motion would have the effect of increasing the number from two to three.

Seely responded that the research unit could be represented by professional staff or faculty.

Barna argued that the policy required tenure and the research units have tenured faculty.

Seely clarified that their tenure is not with the research unit.

Pegg suggested that the representatives of engineering and of sciences and arts be expanded to four with one of those being a professional staff member.

Soldan stated that 15 is a big committee.

Barna stated that the policy assumes the representatives of colleges, schools, and research units are all tenured.

Seely stated that the previous representative of research units was not a tenure-track faculty member. He would check on the reasons for the decision to add three professional staff and conduct an email vote.

Senator Lutzke stated that the history of why professional staff were added the last time was irrelevant. Adding them is the right thing to do now.

[Subsequent to the meeting Senate Assistant Jeanne Meyers checked the records and found that the committee had requested that two-three non-faculty members be added to provide input, especially in developing questions pertaining to the Chief Financial Officer, the Vice President for Development, and the Vice President for Government relations. Hearing no objections, President Bornhorst had ruled that three more members be added and that he would ask the professional staff constituency for nominations.]

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

Senator Drummer introduced Proposal 24-99, Amendments to Academic Policies, as new business. He outlined the primary changes proposed: 1) A student could only repeat a course once; any additional repeat would require a successful petition to the Dean of Students. 2) The drop period would be extended to 10 weeks. 3) Mid semester grades (S & U) would be given to first-year students. [**Appendix D**]

## **8. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Proposal 20-99, Announcement and Commencement Date of Raises [See minutes, page 7936, for a copy of this proposal.]**

Leifer (Chemistry) stated that the proposal asks that all salary increments to all Tech employees be given at the same time. Therefore, summer salary would increase in July at the same time as it does for administrators and professional staff.

Pegg MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to approve Proposal 20-99.

Provost Dobney stated that it would be difficult to administer the proposal. Grant and summer school salaries are negotiated on the basis of the previous year's salary. The budget for these might not accommodate the increase.

President Seely stated that he had inquired of Anita Quinn about any problems for those supported by research accounts. She had responded that if the proposal is written with the adjustment included there would be no problem. Most granting agencies, however, assume that the increment occurs in September. She does not see this as an unsurmountable problem.

Seely had also inquired about the effect for faculty who received their salary in 26 increments, thus extending it through the summer, but who also got salary from grants or summer school. He had been unable to get an answer yet as to whether the computer program could handle these two simultaneous salary rates.

Secretary Glime stated that there are already two rates since summer school salary is not at the same rate as that in the academic year.

Dobney stated that he had been responsible for changing the starting date of raises for professional staff to July and that it seemed inappropriate to hold the staff hostage to the faculty.

D. Reed MOVED and Drummer seconded a motion to amend the proposal to read that "all raises be announced to administration, faculty, and staff and that they all go into effect at the same time." In effect, this motion is to strike "in July of each year."

The motion to amend PASSED 13:12 by show of hands vote with President Seely voting to break the tie.

Vice President Soldan suggested that we should not vote yet because some issues needed to be clarified.

Senator Snyder stated that there has been more than one year in which the Administration did not know what raises would be until September.

Dobney stated that the faculty contract starts the first week of September and asked if faculty wanted to start working sooner.

Senator Pennington stated that the faculty contract starts in September and that faculty have always assumed that raises would start then.

Senator Watwood stated that the Senate should be struggling with other issues; this is nit-picking and he is opposed to the proposal.

Leifer stated that benefits are tied to salaries and thus this issue was within the purview of the Fringe Benefits Committee. If the university is operating like a K-12 school, then we wouldn't get any checks after the first of July. However, if faculty are working at the university in the summer, then they are like staff and Administration.

Dobney asked Leifer if other universities are doing this.

Leifer responded that he didn't know, but that it doesn't matter.

Senator Nordberg asked if the university can alter the contract 3/4 of the way through the year.

D. Reed recalled that the previous Provost had stated that raises could take place any time of the year.

Senator Williams asked when the senior administrators start their raises.

Dobney explained that Administrators are 12-month employees and their raises go into effect on 1 July.

Senator Barna stated that he understood that there no longer are faculty contracts.

Dobney responded that faculty have a continuing implied contract that covers the period of one week before the fall term starts and ends one week after the spring term ends.

Snyder stated that after we change to semesters, in some years faculty will have to start the first week of August anyway, so we are only talking about one month of pay.

Watwood MOVED and Long seconded the motion to table Proposal 20-99 until the next meeting. The motion to table passed on voice vote with no opposition.

**B. Proposal 19-99, Extension of Insurance Benefits to All Employees [See minutes, page 7978, for a copy of this proposal.]**

Williams MOVED and Vanden Avond seconded the motion to bring Proposal 19-99 from the table. The motion to remove from the table PASSED on voice vote with some opposition.

President Seely asked what is the intent of this motion. Board Policy 3.6 is the only statement saying that the Administration gets a different policy coverage from other members of the University. Therefore, article 3.6 should be removed as the means to implement this motion.

Senator Pegg asked if the effect would be to restrict the Central Administration to use of the same PPO as available to the rest of the university.

Ingrid Cheney (Asst. Dir. for Benefits and Wellness) responded that now the physical examination would be covered anywhere because the BCBS PPO providers are everywhere. Mayo and now Marshfield (as of 1 Feb.) are both part of the PPO group.

Provost Dobney asked if there are differential benefits of other kinds for Administrators. Cheney responded that there are not.

Senator Watwood asked if the proposal is intended to affect all University employees or only the professional staff and faculty.

Seely responded that it referred only to professional staff and faculty; this coverage extends to the 3/4 time employees and 9-month full-time employees.

Leifer countered by stating that we don't know if BCBS will continue to represent us and that we could use the widespread availability of PPO physicians if we went back to a provider like Wausau. Furthermore, Sloan Kettering is a leader for certain types of cancer but is not one of the BCBS PPO members. The President can go there, but the faculty and staff cannot.

Cheney responded that if a condition is diagnosed and the Sloan Kettering Institute is an appropriate provider, the physician can refer anyone to that Institute and MTU will pay. In her 11 years of experience at MTU, the University has never refused to pay.

Senator Nordberg asked for clarification of the intent of the proposal. Does it mean that Seely would write a cover letter to the Board that asks that article item 3.6 be removed from the Board policy.

Seely clarified that the vote would be on the principle, but that this would be accompanied by action to ask the Board to change the wording of Article 3.6. While the necessary action of removing Article 3.6 was important, he didn't want just that because the Board needs to understand the philosophy of the policy. Therefore, he will link the policy with a specific action.

The motion to approve Proposal 19-99 PASSED on voice vote with one opposing vote.

### **C. Proposal 22-99, Marginal Cost/Revenue Information for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs [See minutes, page 7975, for a copy of this proposal.]**

Senator Barna introduced Proposal 22-99, stating that many faculty do not understand that tuition does not cover all the costs of faculty salaries. He stated that the University should retain an outside firm to evaluate yearly the costs per student for adding new or maintaining programs and that all faculty should be made aware of these estimates. He pointed out that 2/3 of the cost of educating a student comes from the state and other sources of funds, not from tuition.

Nordberg MOVED and Haapala seconded the motion to approve Proposal 22-99.

Senator Watwood asked if the proposal would provide a framework in which to evaluate existing programs.

Barna stated that it would be less useful for that purpose but that it could.

Senator Snyder stated that it could identify programs that are losing money.

Senator D. Reed stated that he needed clarification of the intent of the consultation. Did it mean they would obtain a single number for educating an undergraduate and another for educating a graduate student?

Dobney stated that there were many issues to consider, including an economy of scale, unused capacities - that one needs to understand a whole range of issues when estimating costs. He repeated his statement from an earlier meeting [thus clarifying the question raised by Senator Sloan in Meeting 310] that if he had gotten back into the general budget the cost of educating the 600 students lost from the electrical engineering program he would not have the budget problems he has now. [That department used the loss of students to reduce their very high student to faculty ratio and bring it more in line with that of the rest of the University.] There are too many factors involved in estimating the cost per student and applying it throughout the University.

Barna added that we can look at whether new students can be plugged into existing holes in programs.

Senator Williams stated that perhaps a consulting firm could establish where there is slack.

Vice President Soldan asked how we institutionally determine how many students we can bring in.

Dobney stated that we do this now. We take back positions that are not productive of student credit hours, research, advising, etc.

Soldan asked how the "alarm bells" go off.

Dobney stated that the faculty sound the alarm. When the "bell" is loud enough the department gets more faculty. Most departments at the University are understaffed. Faculty increases always trail student increases. The proposal for computer engineering asked for too many faculty to start the program. Instead, the Provost approved only a few and will add more as the students arrive.

Senator Pegg asked if a consulting firm couldn't find numbers that provide a better decision-making tool.

Senator Watwood agreed that it could serve as an administrative tool. The administration has the responsibility to determine where there is a need. The computer engineering program fits our mission, but establishing a program such as theology does not. We should have introduced a computer engineering program five years ago. This proposal appears to have the intent to shoot down programs. All programs are money losers. That's what makes it a university and not a business.

Barna stated that the Administration didn't do the financial analysis and that they had told the Finance Committee that theirs was flawed.

Dobney asked if the Finance Committee would recommend any new programs.

Barna responded that they had already recommended the M.S. in Environmental Engineering Science and other recent programs. He argued that if the Finance Committee estimates a large net outflow and the Administration estimates a net inflow of money, they need a means to resolve the differences.

Leifer stated that all benefit by increased knowledge. If the Administration knows that a program will lose money but that they think there will be a long-term benefit, then they are operating with knowledge.

Secretary Glime inquired about the cost to hire the consulting firm. Barna responded that it should only cost about \$5000.

Nordberg asked how we resolve differences in estimates. Dobney stated that the only way to resolve it is to discuss the assumptions.

Senator Sweany agreed that it comes to the assumptions; we can do the calculations with a spreadsheet without spending the money.

Barna stated that this approach is not new and that firms should already have standards; they do it for industries regularly.

Sweany countered that industries have different goals in mind.

Seely stated that there is a perception that the intent is to prevent new programs. Common sense tells us that added tuition from new programs or students does not cover costs. If we can use this to understand ALL costs, that is different from preventing new programs from being established. We are talking about trying to have a tool, but this is not so useful as a budgeting tool. The computer engineering program will be different. It cannot be covered by existing faculty and staff; we must have resources before we can begin.

Dobney stated that we can also assess existing units.

Senator Jurgensen asked if the Committee has been working with Dobney and been unable to agree on assumptions. Why do we need an external opinion?

Barna stated that we need to get formulas for accounting for program costs.

Williams stated that outside consultants wouldn't get us knowledge, they would just get another opinion.

Snyder stated that this discussion began when he sat down some time ago with paper and pencil to estimate cost when the computer engineering proposal called for 20+ new faculty. He estimated that the new faculty positions would take all the discretionary money for the next 20 years regardless of the number of new students. There was agreement between the Senate and Dobney that this number of new faculty would be too costly.

Sweany asked Snyder if he had assumed that the allocation from the state would remain the same. Snyder responded he had.

Sweany asked if the state appropriation would remain the same if we closed all our programs.

Dobney stated that it would for a while until they figured it out.

Seely stated that a consultant could provide another perspective but it can't tell us yes or no.

Leifer stated that Barna had presented data and Dobney didn't believe it so Dobney got an outside firm and that firm confirmed Barna's cost estimates. He complained that the number of administrators had gone up exponentially while the number of students had not gone up by as much as a factor of 2.

Dobney stated that it appears that the Finance Committee is trying to get a one-size-fits-all number, which won't work. He is willing to sit with the Finance Committee on all new proposals. A generic number for all is meaningless. Any formula would have to be adjusted to fit reality.

Sweany stated that the estimate by the firm might be valuable, but that he didn't think we need to pay \$5000 or \$5 to do it.

Lutzke MOVED and Nadgorny seconded the motion to table Proposal 22-99. The motion to table passed by acclamation.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Drummer MOVED and Long seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m. with an open motion on adding three professional staff to the Administrative Evaluation Committee; the vote will be conducted by e-mail. Motions 20-99 and 22-99 were tabled.

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