

# The University Senate Of Michigan Technological University

## Minutes of Meeting 339

11 October 2000

**Synopsis:** The Senate

(1) heard a report from Provost Wray on the Strategic Plan.

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Keen called University Senate Meeting 338 to order at 5:38 p.m. on Wednesday, 11 October 2000, in Room B45 EERC.

Secretary Pickens called roll. Absent were At-Large Senators Kunz and Adolphs, and representatives from Army/Air Force ROTC, Chemistry, Fine Arts, Materials Science and Engineering, Mining and Materials Processing Engineering, Physics, Library, Institute of Materials Processing, Academic Services-Engineering, HR and Facilities Management, Research and Graduate School/University Relations/Administrative Offices, and Student Affairs and Educational Opportunity. Liaisons in attendance were Josh Bennett (USG), Geoff Roelant (GSC), and Ted Soldan (Staff Council).

Only 25 Senators were present; 26 were needed for a quorum.

Visitors included Kent Wray (Provost), Steve Bowen (Vice Provost for Instruction), Chung-Jui Tsai (School of Forestry and Wood Products), and Marcia Goodrich (*Tech Topics*).

President Keen announced that there was not a quorum, and that we could therefore not conduct any official business. He said that there were two things that would be done during the meeting, scheduling a Senate special meeting and a presentation by Provost Wray. The special meeting is required to elect Senate representatives to the search committee for the new Vice President for Research. The special meeting will occur on October 18 at the usual time and place. The agenda will also include the agenda from tonight's meeting.

### 6. STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE -- KENT WRAY

Provost Wray provided an overview of the current status of the strategic planning process. [Appendix A] They have received documents from the units which summarize the options for each unit. They are going through each of the unit programs during the fall. They have selected a group of campaigns, which are major thrusts for consideration of emphasis in the plan. They are currently evaluating the strategic planning model developed by Jim Friendewey and Rich Elenich. The model allows the Strategic Planning Committee to evaluate alternative scenarios in terms of resource utilization and productivity. They hope to have a composite university goals/objectives/strategies rough draft document by the end of the semester. This process will help them establish priorities for the various campaigns. After the semester break they hope to get a consensus for campaigns to pursue followed by a plan of recommendations. Next, they plan to generate a list of recommendations and submit it to the campus community for comment. The Board of Control (BOC) has scheduled a retreat in March when they expect to see an advanced version of the proposed plan. This will be followed by another period of input from the campus community and other concerned groups. Finally, the BOC will review the plan at the May meeting, and make decisions concerning plan ratification and implementation.

Senator Roggemann asked if the model includes commitments of matching resources for research grants and other contracts. Provost Wray said that he was not sure of the level of detail included. Roggemann

expressed concern that commitments had been made that were later not fulfilled or at least did not have funds provided.

Senator Strong asked how teaching of the new general education classes, specifically Perspectives on Inquiry, were included in the model. Provost Wray said that they were not included at that level of detail.

Senator Barna asked about the status of the model being developed by a larger group of faculty and staff. Kent Wray was not familiar with the effort. Senator Pickens, who had been a member of the group developing the model in the spring, stated that these two models were the same, but at different levels of development. However, three of the four faculty who were working on the modeling effort were not involved over the summer, and at least two did not even know that the effort was continuing.

Barna also noted that successful strategic planning models are generally developed with a rolling planning horizon approach, where they are continuously evaluated and updated. Wray stated that the previous effort he has been involved with did involve annual validation and updating. Barna asked if the basic plan would be updated continuously over time, and Wray said that was not clear at this time, but that the effort and resources needed to revisit the plan continuously would be a major concern.

Strong asked if there was a change in management direction away from efforts to provide more diverse program offerings at MTU over the past 15 months. Kent Wray responded that he was not sure he could answer the question. He did point out that the programs Tech has traditionally offered tend to be very high cost, while our peers tend to have more low-cost programs. He did note that the current strategic planning effort has not generated initiatives to broaden the offerings.

Senator Vilmann asked who the Provost was referring to when he mentioned achieving consensus, and also what efforts were underway to determine if the strategic plan was widely supported by the faculty. Kent Wray responded the planning group represents a range of perspectives, and that they hope to get feedback concerning the level of acceptance from the public comment period. This feedback will be solicited both before and after the March BOC retreat at open forums.

Senator Roggemann asked what mechanisms were in the plan for realignment of resources. Kent Wray responded that the initiatives always include far more expenditures than are possible. He did say that it was likely that some resources would need to be realigned.

Senator Snyder voiced concerns that the open forums attendance was poor because the faculty believed that the Washington Advisory Group and the Strategic Planning Group had already made the decisions and that their input would not impact the decisions. Wray expressed strong support for faculty input to the planning process, and that his view was that faculty input will have an impact.

Senator Pennington articulated some reasons for the faculty cynicism concerning the planning process. He pointed out that the strategic planning group had set the basic outline of the plan, and asked the units to develop their own plans within that framework. This approach limits the unit options dramatically and sends the message to the faculty that the decisions are already made. Wray asked what he could do to change that situation. Pennington responded that the Provost's efforts to receive fundamental input was a start but that the community would need to be convinced that their input could have an effect.

Respectfully Submitted by James B. Pickens  
Secretary of the University Senate