

The University Senate Of Michigan Technological University

Minutes of Meeting 346

28 February 2001

Synopsis: The Senate

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

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Keen called University Senate Meeting 346 to order at 5:37 p.m. on Wednesday, 28 February 2001, in Room B45 EERC.

Secretary Pickens called roll. Absent was At-Large Senator Adolphs and representatives from Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Education, Materials Science and Engineering, Mining and Materials Processing Engineering, Physics, Keweenaw Research Center, Auxiliary Enterprises, Finance and Advancement, Research and Graduate School/University Relations/Administrative Offices, and Student Affairs and Educational Opportunity. Liaisons in attendance were Anup Bandivadekar (GSC) and Becky Christianson (Staff Council).

Only 24 Senators were present; 25 were needed for a quorum.

Visitors included Kent Wray (Provost), Nancy Seely (Center for Teaching, Learning and Faculty Development), Max Seel (College of Sciences and Arts), Bob Warrington (College of Engineering), Dan Roblee (*Daily Mining Gazette*) and Marcia Goodrich (*Tech Topics*).

President Keen announced that there was not a quorum, and that we could therefore not conduct any official business, but would hear an update on the Strategic Plan from Provost Wray.

5.C. STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE -- KENT WRAY

Provost Wray presented the current status of the MTU strategic plan [**Appendix A**] <http://www.doe.mtu.edu/strategic/draft.html>

Senator Roggemann noted the potential need to realign some academic units, and asked how committed the administration is to facilitate that realignment. Wray responded that a plan prepared by the proposing unit that outlines the process is needed, and that plan should be specific about the resources and actions needed.

Senator Barna asked if entirely new programs were likely to occur. Provost Wray indicated that MTU has achieved what level of national recognition we have because of the efforts of the current units, and that entirely new units were not likely. Initiatives should generally build on existing strengths to move them to the next higher level. Barna clarified that new programs include issues such as new buildings, and that those initiatives should compete with the other opportunities. Wray responded that buildings were a fundamentally different issue because the costs exceed what could be available from the strategic plan funding pool. Also, there are activities that are done to support the institution in general, and those activities seek funding through the standard budget process, not the strategic planning resource pool. Senator Vilmann commented that everything we do should help us achieve our strategic goals. Provost Wray agreed in theory, but emphasized that certain support functions needed to be enhanced because they facilitate much of what we do, but that they could not be considered strategic initiatives.

Senator Strong asked about the commitment to multi-disciplinary efforts. He noted that the administrative structure tends to discourage these efforts. The unit administrators tend to look at the effort and ask what credit the unit will get if the multi-disciplinary effort occurs. Wray responded that he would do what he can to create a climate where multi-disciplinary efforts can be supported by the unit administrators.

Strong also asked how initiatives intended to increase enrollment would be evaluated in the strategic planning process. The largest problem is that the supporting financial data concerning costs and revenue are very uncertain. Wray confirmed that he had concerns about this issue, and has discussed it with both the Senate Finance Committee and the Senate leadership. This type of initiative does support the strategic plan, but also must be entered carefully because it requires an ongoing commitment of resources to hire the required faculty.

Closing comments by the President

President Keen announced that we need nominees so we can elect a committee member for the Dean of Engineering Review.

Keen asked for permission to conduct the election of Senate representatives for the Dean of the Graduate School Search Committee via campus mail. There were no objections.

Keen reminded the Senate that Don Beck, Research Policy Committee Chair, is soliciting comments regarding research faculty positions.

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