

**THE UNIVERSITY SENATE OF
MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY**

Minutes of Meeting 436
22 March 2006

Synopsis:

The Senate

- (1) heard a report from Bill Kennedy on teaching evaluations and teaching awards
 - (2) heard that nominees are needed for Senator-at-Large and several university committees
 - (3) passed Proposal 23-06, Master of Business Administration Degree
 - (4) passed Proposal 24-06, Proposal to Extend Martin Luther King Jr. Day to a Full Day Recess
 - (5) passed Sense of Senate Resolution on Exams on or Soon After Career Day
 - (6) heard a report from Joanne Polzien on activities of the Professional Staff Committee and recommendations for restructuring professional staff representation
 - (7) heard a report from Bruce Mork on the faculty and staff evaluation of President Mroz.
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1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Sloan called the University Senate Meeting 436 to order at 5:30 pm on Wednesday, 22 March 2006, in Room B45 EERC.

Secretary Glime called roll. Absent was Senator-at-large Brenda Helminen. Liaisons in attendance were Becky Christianson (Staff Council) and Nick Nanninga (GSC). Biomedical Engineering, Academic Services C, and Auxiliaries currently have no elected representatives.

2. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Guests included Jay Dulmes (undergraduate), Dennis Taylor, Jr. (graduate student), Iman Blyther (graduate student), Dawn Young (undergraduate), Marco Riollo (graduate student), Kayla Stewart (Daily Mining Gazette), Christa Walck (Dean School of Business & Economics), Bill Kennedy (CTLFD), and Betty Chavis (Dir. Outreach).

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Monson MOVED and Boersma seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion to approve PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

4. TEACHING EVALUATIONS AND TEACHING AWARDS PRESENTATION – DR. BILL KENNEDY

According to Board of Control Policy, the results of student evaluations of teaching must constitute less than 50% of the evaluation of teaching used in promotion, tenure, and salary decisions.

Most people feel that these evaluations are a necessary, helpful component. However, some units use these as the sole form of evaluation and some plug the overall question score into a formula. But it is colleagues providing formative feedback that is most helpful. The most frequent feedback Kennedy gets from faculty regarding use of the forms is that the comments on the back of the form are the most useful.

The current evaluation form is homegrown in response to the IDEA form. When Kennedy arrived, the form had five questions. Kennedy asked faculty to try the IDEA form because the results could be compared to data from other universities. However, faculty and students complained that it was too long. The current form has nineteen items generated on the basis of literature that indicated they related to student learning. Question 20 is the overall question; the university mean on that question is always 4.1 with a standard deviation of 1.0.

There are some problems with that type of instrument. Some courses have a mix of students from freshmen to seniors with widely ranging backgrounds and ability to keep up with the course expectations. The last question on our current form is ambiguous, asking if you strongly disagree that this person "was an excellent teacher." Does strongly disagree mean the teacher was terrible, or that the teacher was okay, but you strongly disagree that the person was excellent?

Most scholars involved in evaluating feel that one summative question is appropriate and advisable as input for personnel and compensation issues. The assessors who visited the university didn't want to listen to reasons for lower scores such as section size, unpopular subjects, or wide mix of student academic backgrounds.

Only the faculty member is able to see the written responses, despite their importance for guiding a faculty member to improve. Kennedy suggests that the chairs be permitted to see more of this information in order to be helpful to the faculty member.

He suggests that we try a much simpler version with two open-ended questions and one summative question. The first question would be for students to tell the thing that was particularly helpful in the course. The second would be to describe one thing that was not helpful or needed improvement. The summative question would be to choose if this faculty member is a) among the very best, b) better than average, c) about average, d) less than average, e) among the worst.

Most evaluation forms are based on a lecture model, yet we know that lecture is not the best model for teaching.

Senator Johnson stated that the Instructional Policy Committee has been discussing some of these issues and are considering the fact that we live in a global world. We seem to benchmark with the US only, but we need to compare ourselves globally. We are losing our position in other areas of leadership; we should not allow ourselves to lose our leadership in education. He asked how faculty are evaluated in other countries.

Kennedy responded that some emulate us. The student evaluation should be considered as a student opinion survey. Students can't judge the content of a course or they wouldn't need the course.

The chair, CTLFD, and colleagues cannot see the written comments and only the chair typically sees the numerical evaluations. Therefore, it is difficult to help people improve.

Kennedy prefers to do two evaluations in a course. The first one would be about three weeks into the course, use a simple form, and the faculty member would make definite attempts to correct some of the perceived problems.

Johnson asked if we should benchmark with the rest of the world. Kennedy responded that the approach is pretty much the same elsewhere.

Senator Wood stated that he understood Kennedy to say "there was a weak positive correlation" that would be a strong positive correlation were it not for a few anomalous negative correlations between student grades and the grades they give the faculty. Kennedy said there is a correlation, but not always. Sometimes faculty give all high grades and get very poor evaluations.

Kennedy then discussed the teaching awards.

In 1996, faculty were nominated by a ballot box at registration. Then ODK would canvas students in the person's class. ODK pointed out problems with this system, including nominations for faculty who got terrible evaluations.

The current process involves having the faculty members with the top five scores on question 20 as nominees in each category. The ODK then does the same sort of follow-up canvassing as before. There is also a selection committee composed of someone from Student Affairs, USG, GSC, Senate, Alumni, and CTLFD.

The Fred Williams Instructional Innovation Award is a relatively new award to recognize creative approaches to teaching and learning; nomination and selection are by faculty peers.

Kennedy stressed that the University does not do nearly enough to recognize good teaching. It is hard to meet other expectations if a faculty member spends lots of energy on teaching.

Johnson asked if low-sized sections are included in the top five. Kennedy responded that the evaluations included for selecting the top five must come from sections with at least 20 students and from two sections/courses (these could be from two semesters).

Marco Riollo (graduate student) asked if there was any honorable mention. Kennedy responded that all five faculty in each faculty category are honored as members of the Outstanding Teaching Academy at a special banquet.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING 435

Nordberg MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to approve the minutes of Meeting 435 as presented. The motion PASSED on voice vote with no dissent.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Senators: President Sloan reported that we are still missing Senators and Alternates for next year from some academic departments (Chemical Engineering, Education) and several staff units. We'll be following up individually. There is still just one nomination for the Faculty at-large vacancy.

Committees: There are openings on the *Academic Tenure Committee*: a) 1 tenured faculty elected by academic faculty and b) a slate for Presidential appointment (1 vacancy); *Athletic Council*: two vacancies filled by slate for Presidential appointment; *Faculty Distinguished Service Award Committee*: one elected by Faculty; especially needed - *Ombuds Search Committee*: one member elected by the Academic Faculty (also required is: one person appointed by President - do we need a slate of nominees?) and one person elected **by and from** the Senate. We have only one volunteer at this time for three openings. The Senate Office will send another email.

Proposals: Several proposals are being reworked in committee:

Proposal 13-06: Amendment of Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment Procedures: Automatic Extension of the Tenure Clock

Proposal 20-06: Amendment of Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment Procedures: Early Tenure – Academic Policy

Proposal 21-06: Policy Governing Repeating Courses – Instructional Policy

Proposal 22-06: Policy Governing the Use of the Term "The University"

The Senate Secretary and the Senate President will meet next Monday with the chairs and deans, at the Provost's request, to discuss proposals involving academic units, primarily the charter revision proposal (11-06).

Presidential Evaluation: We will hear a report tonight on the presidential evaluation. President Mroz has sent an e-mail to the committee chair and me saying "Thanks so much to you and the committee for your efforts to conduct my evaluation. I spent yesterday evening reviewing the scaled results and the comments; all are helpful as we move forward and I appreciate the feedback. Again, thank you for your efforts."

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Proposal 23-06, Master of Business Administration Degree

Gorman MOVED and Monson seconded the motion to approve Proposal 23-06. The motion PASSED on voice vote of the Academic Senators with no opposition.

Dean Walck explained that next the proposal would go to the Provost, then the President, the Board of Control, the Presidential Council in Lansing, and back to the Board of Control before it would be official. She anticipates that this will all happen in time to start students in the program fall term.

B. Proposal 24-06, Proposal to Extend Martin Luther King Jr. Day to a Full Day Recess

Waddell MOVED and Williams seconded the motion to approve Proposal 24-06.

President Sloan reported that there had been a request for a secret ballot.

Dennis Taylor Jr. (GSC) stated that the Senate minutes from the last meeting seemed to center around the calendar and not around the greater issue of the reason for the holiday. He had found that three out of five of our peer institutions had a full-day holiday and that ten of the fifteen public institutions in Michigan had a full day. For the African American students, the programs are important, but it is more important to them that they be able to recognize the day on their own. Having only half a day is dis-attracting to minority students. This is his sixth year here and he finds that many students, especially African American students, observe a full-day holiday anyway.

Marco Riollo (graduate student) stated that Martin Luther King Jr. had created great things. He feels ashamed for the school because we do not have more of a celebration. Few faculty participate. He feels it is important to have a full day to celebrate the things that Martin Luther King Jr. stood for.

Iman Blyther (graduate student) stated that a lot has changed with Martin Luther King Jr. Day. It should be something that we all celebrate. If we have only a half day of celebration, classes in the other half day should talk about it, but few do. The students have church service on Sunday, then have five days of programs which end with a banquet. There are more than 100 African American students on campus. Others look at the turnout at activities and say that if all the African American students aren't there, why should they celebrate? Few faculty come to any of the events. Martin Luther King Jr. did things for all walks of life. The BSA makes presentations in the public schools on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. It is the only opportunity they have to do that type of outreach. It is a day of equality for all people.

Pollins MOVED and Sutter seconded the motion to table the Proposal for two weeks, citing the absence of any representative of USG to state the reasons the USG had voted against the proposal.

Senator Milligan stated that their issues had related to scheduling and instructional time. Senator Boersma added that their comments are in the minutes.

Blyther stated that no one from USG has ever been to the MLK speech.

The motion to table FAILED on voice vote of the full Senate.

Senator Nordberg reminded those present that the University is not closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The staff still work. Someone added that faculty also do.

Senator Amato stated that even Idaho recognizes this with a full-day holiday. She was surprised when she came here and found that MTU didn't. We give students a day to go to McLain State Park and two for Winter Carnival. By not recognizing a full-day holiday for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we send a message about the climate at MTU.

Chavis (Dir. Outreach) stated that we have a charge to increase diversity at MTU. This is a recruiting tool. Parents ask if we have a full-day holiday. Her friends ask why she is working on this day, then say "that's right, you are at MTU." She supports the eloquent presentations of the students. The question is how important is this to the University.

Senator Sutter stated that scheduling is not the real question. Rather, we need to ask what is the right thing to honor Dr. King. He doesn't have the answer.

Chavis stated that the University won't spend lots of money or lots of people on campus to celebrate.

Walck stated that she has been working with the recent climate study. Interestingly, the faculty are aware of diversity issues, but the students are less so. This is a way we can do something symbolically. Why do we still do K-Day? Let's take time to do something that honors educational values.

Senator Bruch called the question. There was no opposition. The motion to approve Proposal 24-06 PASSED on secret ballot of Academic Senators only with 22 yes and 3 no.

C. Sense of Senate Resolution on Exams on or Soon After Career Day

Williams MOVED and Bruch seconded the motion to accept the resolution.

Milligan asked what it means to pass this as a resolution. Sloan responded that the Senate has passed resolutions in the past. They can state what we support without making a regulation.

Secretary Glime added that the Registrar and Senate Office are putting together a list of dates that might affect student attendance and scheduling of tests and hope to send a tickler in the late summer and December when faculty are preparing syllabi.

Senator Wagner stated that we could look at corporation reps going longer into the evening and starting later in the morning. Senator Turnquist responded that it would take reps away from the fair, so fewer students would get to talk to them.

The resolution PASSED with opposition on voice vote of the full Senate.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Professional Staff Policy Committee – Joanne Polzien

The Senate Position Statement Regarding the Value of Professional Staff to the University was approved and adopted by the Senate and President in January 2004. It has never appeared in a prominent place on the University web site or in the Staff Personnel Handbook.

The committee has reviewed the Distinguished Service, Distinguished Instruction, and Distinguished Research awards and the Reward/Recognition for Activities Related to Instruction. Although the committee felt that the Task Force had recognition and reward in mind when developing these proposals, they found that several important areas had not been addressed. There was no cost-benefit analysis, no indication of where resources would come from, and no responsible entity named or consideration of time required. The persons who would need to carry out the award process were not consulted and several have indicated they did not have the resources to do it. Therefore, the committee does not support these proposals.

The committee does support the proposal to implement a staff development program. However, they do not feel it is ready to be submitted to the Senate without adequate development, confirmation of needed resources, and a plan in place for implementation.

Polzien next reported on re-organization of representation units. There are twelve units now. These are:

1. Academic Services A (Biology, Chemistry Chemical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, ME-EM, Technology, Museum)
2. Academic Services B (Civil/Environmental, Materials, Geology, LTAP, IMP, College of Engineering)
3. Academic Services C (All other Academic Departments)
4. Auxiliaries
5. Enrollment Management, OSRR, Financial Aid, Career Center
6. Finance, Corporate Services, Administrative Offices, Occupational Safety, Advancement, Government/Alumni Relations
7. Human Resources, University Communications, Mail Services, Printing
8. IT and Education Technology Services
9. Library
10. Physical Education
11. Research, Sponsored Education, Keweenaw Research Center, Graduate School

12. Student Affairs and Educational Opportunity, International Programs

They have tried to put units with common interests and proximity together. The suggested new units are:

1. Academic Services A (Biology, Chemistry Chemical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, ME-EM, Technology, Museum)
2. Academic Services B (Civil/Environmental, Materials, Geology, LTAP, IMP, College of Engineering)
3. Academic Services C (All other Academic Departments)
4. Auxiliaries, **Cultural Enrichment**
5. Enrollment Management, OSRR, Financial Aid, Career Center, **Alumni Association**
6. Finance, ~~Corporate Services~~, Administrative Offices, Occupational Safety, **Institutional Analysis, Internal Audit, Advancement, Government/Alumni Relations, Human Resources**
7. Advancement (includes new MTF group), ~~Human Resources~~, University Communications (Mail Services, Printing now in Communications)
8. IT and Education Technology Services, Facilities group
9. Library
10. Physical Education
11. Research, ~~Sponsored Education~~, Keweenaw Research Center, Graduate School, **Technology and Economic Development**
12. Student Affairs, Educational Opportunity, International Programs, **Residential Services group.**

Wagner asked if suggestions for changes should be sent to Polzien. Polzien indicated yes.

Polzien stated that the next issue is constituents. According to the Constitution, these cannot be directors in positions equivalent to deans; the intent is to avoid including people with direct influence with the top Administration. It is clear that academic deans are not eligible. However, director positions have many meanings. She met with Ellen Horsch (Vice President for Administration) and decided the most appropriate separation was to draw a line under the top level of directors and other top administrators. Thus all others would be constituents except deans and others with equivalent academic appointments (see Appendix).

This left the question of who could be a Senator. The constitution states that people in certain positions could not serve as Senator, as determined by the Executive Committee. It excludes anyone who has significant influence with the Administration.

Senator Monson stated that currently chairs and deans are constituents but cannot be Senators.

Polzien added that this is also true for equivalent directors.

Nordberg stated that titles change. The criterion needs to provide representation for those who have no representation, *i.e.* not represented by the administration, but gives no representation for those in policy-making positions.

Beck stated that to address the professional growth for staff, they should consider teleconferencing. It could be inexpensive.

B. Administrative Policy Committee – Presidential Evaluation – Bruce Mork

Mork reported that only 21% of faculty and 17% of staff participated in the survey. The results of the numerical questions will be posted on the Senate web site in about one week. A printed copy of graphs, questions, and overall means for each question was distributed to Senators. The staff rated the President higher than the faculty on every question. The highest mean was 3.29 for "The President supports quality research activities" and "The President represents the University well to alumni, legislators, the local community, and the citizens of Michigan." The lowest mean was 2.40 for "The President maintains an effective senior administrative team."

Senator Nitz asked if there is anything we could do to get a larger percent of responses. Mork responded that he is open to suggestions. Nitz stated that one way to get participation by faculty would be to make it much shorter and designate 15 minutes of a faculty meeting to do the evaluation.

Mork stated that faculty may be less familiar with web CT than students are. Some are suspicious of online anonymity.

Senator Bruch stated that everything is absolutely confidential on the web CT.

Nordberg added that the process is completely controlled by the Senate committee.

Milligan suggested that 20% participation is not bad and others agreed.

Wagner asked if the report would be on the web and what would be done with the responses to open-ended questions.

Mork responded that the report given to Senators would be on the Senate web page and that the responses to open-ended questions would not be published.

Sutter asked why we used the open-ended questions if nothing was to be reported on them. Mork responded that the committee last year decided not to share the responses to open-ended questions. They will go to the Board of Control and to the President. It is important to protect anonymity of both respondents and persons mentioned in comments. This approach is parallel to that of teaching evaluations.

Beck suggested that the committee look for things in the open-ended responses that would help in choices of questions for the next evaluation form. Mork agreed that was a good idea.

Senator Vitton stated that we should have the same concerns as for the teaching evaluations. We should use the responses in ways that can be helpful.

Mork stated that the Senate Assistant would notify the constituents when the report on the evaluation is available on the web. He thanked committee members Debra Bruch, Brenda Helminen, and Erik Nordberg for an outstanding job and expressed his appreciation for help from Senate Assistant Paige Hackney.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm.

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