Synopsis:
The Senate
- Discussed the current situation with Interim Provost Max Seel on the ADVANCE grant.
- Requested accounts of experiences with Aetna, Tech's new health insurer, from constituents.
- Urged constituents to complete the online evaluation of the President.
- Announced that elections of Senate officers for 2009–2010 will take place on April 15.
- Passed Proposal 7-09 Repeat Policy.
- Elected members of the academic integrity, conflict of interest, distance learning, misconduct, public safety, and sabbatical leave committees and the commission for women.
- Tabled a motion calling for the redesign of the CEP portion of the ADVANCE grant.

1. Call to order and roll call.
President Sloan called the University Senate Meeting 473 to order at 5:32 pm on Wednesday, March 18, 2009, in room B45 EERC. Secretary Cooper called roll. Absent were representatives of Civil & Environmental Engineering, Humanities, the Library, Academic Services B, and Academic Services C. Mechanical Engineering–Engineering Mechanics, Academic Services A, and Auxiliary and Cultural Enrollment currently have no elected representatives.

2. Recognition of visitors.
Guests included John Lehman (Enrollment), Les Cook (Student Affairs), Max Seel (Interim Provost), and Troy Cogan (USG).

3. Approval of agenda.
Hamlin moved approval of the agenda; Hoagland seconded the motion; it passed unanimously on a voice vote.

4. Presentation: "Enrollment Outlook," by John Lehman (copies of the slides that were shown are at the end of the minutes)
Total undergraduate applicants for Fall 2009 are down 5 percent from last year; total acceptances are down 8 percent; and total deposits are down 14 percent. As we had an exceptionally good year last year (the year before), these figures are a bit misleading. Looking at the numbers for the past six years, total applications for Fall 2009 are tracking just behind 2008 and ahead of all years 2004–07; total acceptances are tracking behind 2008 but still ahead of years 2004–07; and total deposits are tracking with but behind years 2007 and 2008 but at this point ahead of years 2004–06. Starting in 2007, more applicants began delaying paying deposits until the May 1 deadline. Tracking deposits patterns by week confirms this, with a spike in deposits coming later each year from 2007 to 2009. Acceptance to deposit yield rates (the percentage of students we have admitted who have paid a deposit) show this year tracking about at the mean of the six year period; the difference from last year, thus, is not in the yield rate but in the number of applications we received in 2008.

One of the initiatives we've spent a lot of time on this year is enrolling more women. We experimented with Google ad buys (an ad linking to a page on Women in STEM on the Michigan Tech website); 900 handwritten cards from current undergraduate women students; and 21 coffee houses in regional cities around the area to which we invited prospective students and Senator Kloster suggested that students in future try to text message prospective applicants instead. These efforts are beginning to pay off, as the data on deposits paid by women are tracking ahead of years 2004–07. Deposits from women enrolling in the College of Engineering are also tracking above six-year averages, but nowhere near the numbers we saw last year.

Deposit minority acceptances and deposits are also tracking ahead of years 2004–07 but behind 2008.

Senator Luck asked what is responsible for the sharp upturn in all the graphs. Lehman said it is the effect of the May 1 deadline.

Deposits in the College of Engineering are lower than last year; Mechanical Engineering–Engineering Mechanics is tracking with the overall institution figures; Biomedical Engineering is beating the curve; the hottest is Materials Science and Engineering. Deposits in the College of Sciences and Arts are also lower than last year. Deposits in the School of Forestry, the School of Business, and the School of Technology are about average this year. The decline in deposits for the School of Technology in years 2005–2007 was due to the increase in standards for acceptance.

Preview Day, a Scholars of Excellence event for accepted students, scheduled for March 27 and 28, has 299 students registered to date; last year there were 400 students and the year before 350. At this point only 25 percent of them have paid their deposits, and usually this figure is 25–30 percent. One way to look at that is to realize that these are students who are really interested in coming to Michigan Tech, and so there is still a lot of deposit potential out there.

Students who have paid deposits through March 11 have a Freshman ACT composite average of 25.3. If we can keep the usual summer downturn to 3, we can hit our goal of an average 23.5 ACT composite of 26 for incoming students. Campus visits by prospective students (not including invited or special events) tracked the same in 2008 as in 2007 (though with about 200 fewer students) despite the horrendous gas prices; in July, 2008 tracked ahead of 2007 even though gas prices were at $4 a gallon. Housing contracts are tracking with deposits, but there are 91 additional students with housing contracts who have not paid deposits. Current students have made over 18,000 calls to prospective applicants; the calls resulting in "meaningful" conversations (ones lasting an average of seven minutes). Summer enrollment of currently registered students is up 12 percent, which may be a result of fewer available co-ops or students wanting to finish up sooner.

We have made strong efforts to inform students of financial aid opportunities. President Mroz sent a note to all domestic undergraduate students telling them to contact admissions if they needed help with finances, and we ended up helping about 250 students this year with additional aid. We also put a widget on the home page so that students could click directly to financial aid, and we saw the hits go from about 50 to about 500 a week. Financial aid packages go out within the week and we hope to see a reaction in deposits.

In the state of Michigan all students take ACTS their junior year in high school, and we send smart applications to all those who have filled in our code on their tests because this gives us an opportunity to enroll at a higher rate. The number of students filling in our code has increased over the past couple of years because we have sent out a mailing to all juniors in high school telling them to put our code on the ACT test, and this year we included a pencil with our code on it so when they go to take the test, they have the code.

Dan Greenlee sent information on years when the economy was in recession, and we compared it with the new freshman enrollments for those years and found no pattern.

Comparing our enrollments with our enrollment plan for 2007–2010, we were ahead of the goal by 29 students in 2007 and 221 students in 2008. We project being ahead of our goal by 7 students this year, with a projected enrollment of 6,893.

Frost asked whether as we are trying to recruit more women in engineering and science someone will do a study to ascertain retention rates for the women we recruited. Lehman said that we do, and we have a grid that shows that. Engineering feeds in and many programs get students from transfers. For example, the School of Business gets about half its students from internal transfers.

Luck said that USA Today just had a report showing that Computer Science showed an 8 percent increase of students nationally, and he asked why we are not showing comparable figures. Lehman replied that we are down about 20 percent in deposits in Computer Science.

5. Presentation: "ADVANCE" by Max Seel
There has been a discussion about the ADVANCE grant, and Provost Seel proposed an interactive discussion to help clarify issues. The goal of the ADVANCE grant is noncontroversial: to develop systemic approaches to increase the representation and advancement of women in academic science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers thereby contributing to the development of a more diverse science and engineering workforce. Michigan Tech is one of only a few institutions that received a grant. We received about $500,000, thanks to Leslie Lovett-Doust, who is the Principal Investigator., with Co-PIs Donna Michalek, Peg Gale, Bill Predebon, and Chris Anderson and Sue Bagley as Senior Faculty Personnel.

There are six major goals in the grant, three new activities and three ongoing activities. The new activities are cluster hires (SFHI), online screening tools that support rapid and unbiased evaluation of candidates, and best practices for promoting faculty opportunities at Michigan Tech (how to present Michigan Tech to the outside world so that we get a more diverse pool of applicants). The adapted activities are accountability in the hiring process by building a collegial framework and support for hiring faculty through the use of Colleges of Equity and Procedures (CEPs) and the President's Commission on Procedures and Equity (PCPE), a university-wide mentoring program that assigns mentors for newly hired untenured faculty, and campus-wide training programs to build awareness and knowledge of gender bias and climate issues and solutions and to train faculty for CEP and PCPE positions.

Where's the problem? In accountability: the goal of building a collegial framework and support for hiring faculty through the use of CEPs and the PCPE. There are currently 22 CEPs, and the PCPE consists of Martha Sloan, Miguel Levy, Mark Plichta, M.C. Friedrich, and, recently added, Anita Quinn. The biggest problem is with the CEPs because it's currently written in the grant, the CEP on a hiring committee should be someone not from the hiring department. I have argued that in the College of Sciences and Arts we have had an outside chair on all chair hiring committees and that has worked quite well. I'm not the PI on this grant, but if a grant affects university policy and procedures, as this grant does, then Human Resources and the Provost needs to be involved in the discussion.

Vable said that the problem is that departments have their charters, they have their own way of doing things, now you're bringing someone from outside to be on those search committees. It's a question of jurisdiction and how you handle that. Seel said that part of the problem was that there was not enough discussion before hand. I'm waiting for feedback.
In my opinion, this is not written in stone. We can adjust the details of how the grant is implemented. We want to make this work; we want to build collegial framework and support, that's all.

Givens asked why that point is listed. Seel replied that it's specifically written in the grant. Givens asked whether how it's implemented could change. Seel said yes, we want to make it work.

Seel's final point is that we want STRIDE NOT STRIFE. STRIDE is the acronym of the University of Michigan's ADVANCE implementation (Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence). Strife is defined as a biter, sometimes violent conflict or dissolution; an act of contention; exhortation or contention for superiority. STRIDE is a group who is coming up to Michigan Tech for a training program. Strife is what we have encountered a little bit over the past two weeks, and we shouldn’t be. It's a good program.

Hoagland stated that the Social Sciences department is very exercised about this. The problem with the CEP is that it interferes with internal hiring procedures. The external chair on the chair hiring committee was very useful, but I don't see the parallel for a totally internal appointment. The way this came about was anything but transparent, and I think this is a problem the whole Senate should be concerned about. Seel said the important thing is having someone on the search committee who has undergone further training. It might be someone from the department, which is what we do at the University of Michigan, as long as they are the committee who has had training, additional expertise. So it might not be mandatory to have an external CEP, though some committees might want one. Would that work? Hoagland said yes.

Vogler said that HR normally meets with all search committees to convey this sort of information. Seel said that normally committees might invite the HR person to meet with them once. There are not enough HR staff to have one per committee. HR will be part of this training program and they could serve as a CEP. Vable asked whether the CEP is to be there only for the first couple of meetings of the committee. Seel said no, the CEP is supposed to be on the search committee.

The Senate then moved on to some other items on the agenda. For the public safety committee, there is one nominee: Paul Raymond. There were no other nominations. Sloan declared Raymond elected to that committee.

For the sabbatical leave committee, the Senate is to provide a slate of candidates to the President from which he will pick the committee. The only candidate we have for this is Mary Durfee, who is eligible because she has taken a sabbatical leave. Sloan asked if there are any other nominations for this committee. Seeing no other nominations, Sloan ruled that Durfee is elected to the slate to go to the President.

For the conflict of interest committee, there are two nominees: Greg Granman and Brenda Helminen. There were no other nominations. Helminen was elected to the committee.

For the distance learning committee, there is one nominee: Kedmon Hungwe. There were no other nominations. Sloan declared Hungwe elected to that committee.

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For the distance learning committee, there is one nominee: Kedmon Hungwe. There were no other nominations. Sloan declared Hungwe elected to that committee.
Sloan said that we do not need to send out a ballot, because there is only one or no candidates for the positions that need approval by the faculty (faculty senator at large (2), academic integrity committee, faculty distinguished award committee (2), faculty review committee (4), and the commission on women).

Sloan asked if anyone wants to present a resolution tonight on the subject of the ADVANCE grant. Hoagland moved that it is the sense of the Senate that the CEP portion of the ADVANCE grant be redesigned so that outside members not be assigned to internal search committees. While the overall goals of the ADVANCE grant are laudable, the CEP program does nothing to “build a collegial framework.” Vable seconded the motion.

Miller said that the CEP program was something that came out as a best practice in the research done for the grant. The PIs would be open to input, but I wouldn’t be comfortable saying to them that you must do it another way.

Storer said as a member of a unit that has outside members on our internal search committees I’m not sure about the wording “not be assigned.” If there’s a list of 22 CEPs, couldn’t they be selected. I’d like to hear about an alternative.

Vable asked whether this is a proposal that will need to be decided at the next meeting. Sloan said it is a sense of the senate resolution, so it can be decided at this meeting. Anyone who feels strongly about wanting to go back to their unit to discuss it before voting could make a motion to table it.

Storer moved to table the motion, and Klooster seconded the motion. By a vote of 26 to 3, the motion was tabled. The state of the house resolution will be considered at the next meeting.

11. Adjournment.
President Sloan adjourned the meeting at 6:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted
by Marilyn Cooper
Secretary of the University Senate
Encouraging indicators

Prospective Enrollment/Student Enrollment
March 27/28

- 269 students registered to date
- Only 3% have paid deposits - showing significant interest (deposit potential)

Encouraging indicators

Math SAT Composite Average

- 560
- 575
- 590


Encouraging indicators

Calendar year student composite score by month

- 500
- 400
- 300
- 200
- 100
- 0

- Jan Mar May Jul Sep Nov 1995 - 2000

Additional updates

- News on local initiatives
- Looking ahead to summer enrichment
Fall 2003  
Graduate Student Applications

- Masters applicants: 864  867  1%
  Accept: 1.04  1.04  0
- PhD applicants: 726  636  13.4
  Accept: 1.16  1.16  0

Enrollment Plan  
2007-2010

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Difference: 54  77  27

(Additional notes)