

**The University Senate  
of Michigan Technological University**

Minutes of Meeting 478  
23 September 2009

**Synopsis:**

The Senate:

- Heard presentations on undergraduate and graduate enrollments
- Heard a report from the Sabbatical Leave Committee
- Discussed and tabled Proposal 1-10

**1. Call to order and roll call.** President Rudy Luck called the University Senate Meeting 478 to order at 5:30 pm on Wednesday, September 23, 2009. The Senate Secretary Marilyn Cooper called roll. Absent were Senators Solomon, Vogler, and Koszykowski, and representatives of Army/Air Force ROTC, Civil and Environmental Engineering, and Social Sciences.

**2. Recognition of visitors.** Guests included John Lehman (Enrollment Services), Jackie Huntoon (Graduate School), and Stan Vitton (Civil and Environmental Engineering).

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

**4. Presentation: 2009 Admissions and Enrollment, by John Lehman**

Final preliminary total enrollment after 10 days of classes is 7,132, up from 7,018 from last year; on-campus enrollment is 7,021, up from 6,997 last year. Undergraduate enrollment is 5,937, up from New student enrollment is 1,725, down from 1,824 last year. The difference is attributable to a drop in undergraduate new student enrollment from 1,365 in 2008 to 1,159 in 2009. New transfer students went up by 20 to 236; new masters students went up by 53 to 224; and new doctoral students went up by 36 to 106. Female enrollment is 25 percent of the total, up from 24 percent last year; new female undergraduate enrollment is 26.4 percent, up from 23.1 percent last year. Female student recruitment efforts included hosting coffeehouses, a note card campaign, phone calls from College of Engineering faculty, phone calls from current students, and buying Google ads that linked to a women in STEM landing page on the university website. Retention rates for first to second year students held steady at 81.9 percent; the long-term goal is 84 percent.

Lehman explained the application process, which begins with collecting names of around 30,000 prospective students and receiving inquiries from about 25,000 prospective students. Once anyone starts to fill out an application, whether or not they complete it, they are considered applicants, which normally number around 5,500. Completed applications number around 4,500, and of those about 4,000 are admitted. If they pay the \$100 enrollment deposit they are considered confirmed (about 1,700 per year), and if they show up in classes they are considered enrolled (about 1,400 per year). This process explains why there is a drop in total accepted applications in spring every year. If a student is admitted prior to May 1 and doesn't pay the enrollment deposit or contacts Michigan Tech to say they are enrolling at another institution, they are considered cancelled applicants. Around May, these cancelled applicants are dropped from the system, and at that time current accepted applicants shows a drop. The cancelled applicants are dropped so that the number of seats and sections are not inflated.

Moran asked whether Michigan Tech accepts 80 percent of applicants. Lehman explained that the acceptance rate is acceptances divided by the number of applications, which includes anyone who has started the application process. Over the past five years, the acceptance rate has gone from 84.7 percent to 73.2 percent in 2009. But the reject rate, the percentage of completed applications rejected, is about 11 percent.

Wood commented that we have a very high acceptance rate according to *US News & World Report*. Lehman agreed, but said our applicants also have high ACT scores. Hamlin asked where the 91 percent acceptance rate published in *US News & World Report* comes from; Lehman replied that he doesn't know, and agreed with Moran who noted that it doesn't come from Institutional Analysis.

Rudiger asked whether there is an application fee. Lehman said there is no application fee, and that is one of the reasons the acceptance rate has gone down. Many institutions no longer require an application fee, and as a consequence students apply to many more institutions.

Moran asked about the size of the change in the acceptance rate: did it go from 91 percent to around 90 percent, or 91 percent to around 75 percent? Lehman said that in 2005 using the reject rate, we accepted 93 percent; last year, using the reject rate, we accepted 88.9 percent; this year, using the reject rate, we accepted 88.7 percent of the completed applications.

Lehman also reported that the difference between acceptance rates for male and female students was negligible. Composite ACT scores of entering first-year students have risen from 25.1 in 2005 to 26 in 2009, the goal set as a strategic metric. He noted too that the English ACT score has also risen, from 23.7 in 2005 to 24.8 in 2009. He compared the actual enrollments for 2006-2009 with the goals set in 2006, showing that in all years the actual has exceeded the goal. ([See attached slides.](#)) The tentative enrollment plans for 2010-2013 set a goal of 7,500 total enrollment by 2013, of which graduate students make up 1,280 and undergraduates, 6,220.

Hamlin asked whether there are plans for additional housing and so forth. Lehman introduced Travis Pierce to report on the new residential apartment building under construction. ([See attached slides.](#)) Pierce reported that the residence halls currently are 97.5 percent occupied, and that additional students have also been housed at the Best Western Franklin Square Inn for last year and this year. Occupancy of the 343 apartments in Daniell Heights is 100 percent and there is a waiting list for 196 apartments from students alone. The new residence apartments will house 192 students. Expansion of student housing at Michigan Tech has been discussed since 2000. We did a market study and students told us they want apartment style housing:

private rooms, fitness centers, swimming pools, saunas, lobbies, fireplaces. The new residence does not have a swimming pool, but does have a lot of what they want: the residence is designed in four-bedroom units with a common living room and kitchen and two bathrooms. The residence will open in fall 2010, and online updates of progress are available at [www.housing.mtu.edu/newbuilding/](http://www.housing.mtu.edu/newbuilding/). If the enrollment numbers stay the same, the residence will be full.

Smith asked if the residence is air conditioned. Pierce said yes, and that makes it a great place for summer conferences as well. In addition, the new residence will allow housing to open up Daniell Heights to faculty, and visiting faculty again. Luck asked how many faculty are in Daniel Heights right now. Pierce said 4 plus some visiting scholars.

Moran asked if the new residence hall is intended for grad students. Pierce said that it is intended for upper class and grad students, like Daniell Heights. Moran asked if it is envisioned to be cost neutral, profitable, or a loss. Pierce said the plan is to break even in year one and after that it should show a profit.

Lehman then reported on H1N1 flu preparations, which is summarized on the university website.

Wood asked what would the optimal enrollment for this university be if there were no constraints. Lehman said that it's impossible to answer that question without considering constraints. Wood asked if the goal is to continue growing at this rate. Lehman said that the increase will slow down because the high school graduating class peaked last year and three years ago was projected to decline between now and 2017 or 20018. He noted that the planned enrollment for 2013 is not a great increase. We want to increase the graduate enrollment and we want to increase the diversity and the academic talent base of our undergraduate students.

Smith asked about credit hour production or transfer credits over the past five years. Lehman said that credit hour production for all our students from last year to this year is up 503 credit hours, about .5 percent.

Onder asked if there is a relation between retention rate and acceptance rate. Lehman said he doesn't know, but there is a relation between retention rate and the ACT scores, especially in math.

Chard noted that it looks like Promise grants aren't going to happen, and asked what the plans are to deal with this. Lehman said we decided to front \$1000 for the fall semester for any student who got a Promise letter, but a decision has not been made about spring semester. Chard asked how many students are affected, and Lehman said it is somewhere around 1000.

Smith asked if there are plans to quarantine students if there is a large outbreak of H1N1 flu. Pierce said yes, there are plans for quarantine if it is necessary.

## **5. Presentation: Graduate Student Enrollment and Outlook for 2009, by Jackie Huntoon**

For fall, 2,214 applications were received, 1,288 for masters degrees (58%) and 901 for doctoral degrees (41%). When spring applications are included, the total is around 2,500. Factors that influence doctoral students to apply to an institution include the reputation of the faculty and the institution, as well as the support offered. A survey done by the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) reports that 70 percent of doctoral students were offered multi-year support at the time of their application. Huntoon observed that most of the departments at Michigan Tech do not do this.

Current graduate student enrollment is 1,189, 586 masters students (49%), 463 doctoral students (39%) and 140 non-degree-seeking students (12%). Of the latter, 101 are involved with the Mechanical Engineering class taught by Jeff Naber; the long-term plan is to get a certificate program and a masters program in place for them.

The demographics of the graduate student body show 58 percent domestic, 42 percent international, 74 percent male, and 70 percent white non-Hispanic. Domestic students come mostly from the Midwest (Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, and Ohio), while international students dominantly come from India and China. University-wide, women graduate students make up 31 percent; the college with the highest percentage of women students is Forest Resources and Environmental Science (52 percent). Huntoon observed that diversity remains a challenge.

Last year, by the end of summer 226 graduate students received degrees, 169 masters students (75%) and 57 doctoral students (25%). The CGS report showed that factors most relevant in completing doctoral degrees financial support, good mentoring and advising, and support from students' family and support for students' families on campus. The doctoral graduate rate has fluctuated over the years, and the goal is to achieve a sustained rate of over 60 doctoral graduates per year.

The goals for the graduate program for 2012 set by deans and the provost last spring call for a total of 1,280 students, 550 doctoral, 650 masters, and 80 non-degree seeking students. Continued growth is planned for both doctoral and masters programs, and expansion and enhancement of online and professional masters programs are needed, especially programs in which students are self-supported.

A milestone and time-to-degree chart for doctoral students compiled for 2000 to 2008 showed that most of the attrition comes in years two and three. The goal is to decrease the number who are leaving by getting them into a masters program or getting them to leave even earlier so that they don't waste three years of their life if it's clear they won't make it through.

Mullins asked whether that is not just the result of students' failing the qualifying exam. Huntoon replied that PhD students at Michigan Tech are taking their exams late, up to 4 years into their work. Mullins commented that you expect attrition as a result of the qualifying exam. Huntoon agreed, but said that we have not been giving the qualifying exam early enough, and we need to. Snyder asked whether some institutions have a requirement that qualifying exams be taken by the end of the second year. Huntoon said we have that requirement, but we haven't enforced it, and we are also enforcing the 8-year time limit for a doctoral degree.

Wood commented that for the last 10 years, the number of graduate students has been relatively consistent, and he asked if there has been a lot of attrition. Huntoon said that we have a long median time to degree, but it is short compared to the national average. There are students completing only after 14 or 15 years. But there is also a lot of attrition: we're at 60 percent completion for doctoral students; nationally, the completion rate for doctoral students is 50 percent.

Cooper asked if the time-to-degree chart figured included part-time students, observing that doctoral students who had full-time jobs would take more time. Huntoon said that part-time students were included. She also said that the numbers they compiled for Michigan Tech started counting progress when the student enrolled in the doctoral program, while the Survey of Earned Doctorates started counting when the student took their first graduate class. If a student started in a masters program before going on to a doctoral program, thus, the time-to-degree would be longer, and so the numbers from the two sources are not strictly comparable.

Smith asked if there has been any progress in the stipends and health benefits we offer our students. He noted that at the University of Wisconsin, graduate students get the same health care benefits as the faculty. Huntoon said that our stipends went up this year, but they did not go up as much as the tuition went up. The tuition and stipend changes we made are helping the doctoral students some at the higher levels. We're not at the bottom of the pack of our peers, but we're also not at the top. She emphasized that when you support a student on an external grant or a contract, you don't have to be stick to the minimum stipend. She said that she and Renee Hiller met with the president of Graduate Student Council about health care benefits and they are starting to talk with graduate students about what they would like given the money that's available. Mullins said that you should look at the Michigan State plan because they have an Aetna student health plan for grad students and their spouses and children, and they pay \$4000 annually of the premium. One issue is maternity care, because My Care (??) used to take care of the international graduate students' wives and now they cut it out as of July 1, so there is a reason to push this issue forward. Huntoon said that's the kind of question they're looking at: would students prefer to have help with the premium or have it in increased stipend. Mullins said the stipend wouldn't cover maternity care. Moran asked what would it cost to give graduate students the same HSA and preventive care as faculty have. Huntoon said a calculation has been done, and apparently it was out of reach. She said that's a question for Renee Hiller, but that getting the graduate students into Aetna might lower the cost.

## **6. Presentation: Annual Report of Sabbatical Leave Committee, by Stan Vitton**

The number of faculty who take sabbaticals keeps dropping: 26 in 2006-07, 14 in 2007-08, and 11 in 2008-09. Basically all proposals for sabbaticals are approved, though applications are often not complete and need revision. Sometimes an application is submitted after the deadline. Mullins commented that the March 15 deadline is before Fulbright makes their decisions. Vitton replied that it's not a strict deadline; mostly it's to allow the administration to get the paperwork in. The streamlining of the process of approval last year has made it more efficient. There is still a problem of faculty turning in post-sabbatical reports on time. They should be sent to the chair of the Sabbatical Leave Committee and be attached to the annual vita update. It is also good to send one to the Provost's office, who will post it on the website on a page open to Michigan Tech employees but not to the public. He also recommends sending a copy to the department chair and the dean. Last year, there were more year-long sabbaticals (7) than one semester (4). In 2008-09, ten units submitted sabbatical requests, and ten units did not.

Wood asked whether the number of sabbatical requests is exceptionally low. Vitton said yes.

**7. Approval of Minutes from Meeting 477.** LeMay **moved** to approve the minutes; Smith seconded the motion; and it was **approved** on a voice vote with no dissent.

## **8. Old Business**

### **a. Proposal 1-10: Proposed Revisions to the Academic Integrity Policy, presented by the Instructional Policy Committee**

Snyder reported that the proposal was introduced last week, no feedback has been received since then, and the committee recommends its adoption. Wood **moved** that Proposal 1-10 be adopted, and Boschetto-Sandoval seconded the motion.

Yarroch asked whether someone other than the instructor can assign an F\*. Snyder said that if the evaluating officer or board decides there have been egregious violations of the integrity policy that officer or board can award the F\*. Yarroch asked if this policy takes faculty responsibility and gives it to the administration. Snyder said no, this provision was in the current policy before. Gotshalk said that the F\* is the one potential grading sanction that's retained from the past policy; the F\* indicates on the transcript failure by reason of academic dishonesty. Yarroch stated that faculty should have the responsibility to assign grades, not the administration. Snyder explained that the F\* is the only grade that can be assigned by the administrative officer. The officer can recommend a grade reduction, but that decision in the new policy is left up to the faculty. So this policy allows more faculty input on grading than the previous version of the policy. Snyder stated that the reason for the F\* is that we have a university policy about integrity, not a faculty policy on integrity. Gotshalk said one reason for the F\* is that, for example, if it's a second offense, the faculty member wouldn't necessarily know that, but the academic integrity committee, which includes faculty, would and can rule it a pattern of dishonesty and thus egregious. Yarroch indicated that he still disagreed with giving up faculty responsibility for grading.

Ambardar asked what happens when a student/hacker electronically changes grades. Gotshalk said that that's definitely an academic integrity violation as well as a criminal case, and that most likely it would result in suspension or expulsion. It would also violate our computer use policy. Ambardar said so that's not a faculty responsibility.

Storer asked what other options to the F\* were considered, whether other grades with a \* were considered. Snyder stated that we need standards that all students are held to across the university. Storer stated that we're not questioning whether it should be a university policy; what we're questioning is whether an administrator should give an F grade and whether there are alternatives if the faculty member is not in agreement with the F grade. Allen said that the problem is that you're applying a university sanction to a particular course. Yarroch asked whether putting a comment in the transcript independent of the grade might be considered. Fernandez said that would be the same as putting a \* next to the grade; the reporting mechanism only supports a grade designation. Gotshalk commented that some faculty don't want to be the one who gives the F grade, and giving the administrative officer the discretion to award the F\* grade takes the heat off the faculty. Storer suggested that the F\* could be awarded with the concurrence of the faculty member involved. Gotshalk suggested that that could be offered as a friendly amendment. Snyder said that the revisions to the policy made by this proposal give more discretion to the faculty, as the administrative board can no longer reduce grades without the concurrence of the faculty member. Onder stated that the F\* is not a grade; it is a penalty, so that he has no problem with the administrative board assigning an F\*. Storer **moved** that the Senate discuss a friendly amendment; Allen seconded the motion. Snyder asked someone to state the friendly amendment. Yarroch suggested adding "with the consent of the instructor" to the section on the F\*. Snyder said that he would not accept that as a friendly amendment, that the Instructional Policy Committee would have to discuss it. It is clearly stated in the proposal that the F\* is a sanction, not a grade. This amendment would strongly limit the ability of the administration

to strictly enforce the academic integrity policy. Gotshalk suggested that the Senate not vote on the proposal at this meeting. Pierce **moved** to table the proposal, and B. Davis seconded the motion; the proposal was **tabled**.

## 9. President's Report.

Provost Seel is not at the Senate meeting this week because he is at a conference in Budapest. The provost search is moving forward, with about 20 completed applications at this point. We are working to ensure that all Senate committees have chairs.

Luck will address the next Board of Control meeting about charters. He outlined the presentation he will be giving. Charters were first mentioned at a Board of Control meeting on March 18, 1994. At that meeting, Ruth Reck stated that for departmental governance to be functional and work well, each department must "buy in" to charters, and Glenn Mroz, then Dean of SFES, pointed out that the approval of the president is key in that regard because it does shift some of the responsibility to President Tompkins and Provost Dobney, as they must make sure that the charters are in harmony with the mission statement of the University. Some of the problems with charters include: charters varying in length (ranging from 2 pages to 60 pages); certain items are not covered in enough depth in some charters, charter revisions have not been approved in a timely manner, some departments have been without a charter for years, there is no mechanism to appeal charters, out-of-date departmental tenure and promotion policies or departmental tenure and promotion policies that conflict with university policy open the university to potential lawsuits, and there is no means of enforcing charters. Luck concluded that the process of creating charters, as a consequence, seems to have been a huge waste of time. He asked, is this shared governance or stupid governance? For example, Senate Proposal 11-06 was introduced in the Senate on January 18, 2006, and a revised version was presented on February 1, 2006, and was adopted by the Senate. The administration requested eleven revisions; they were addressed and the proposal was resubmitted to the Senate on April 5, 2006; and the revised proposal was adopted by the Senate on April 19, 2006. The administration rejected the proposal on November 27, 2006, after having been sent out to the department chairs and school deans, who found other problems, and a committee of chairs and deans and members of the Senate Administrative Policy Committee was appointed to resolve the outstanding issues. The issues have not yet been resolved.

On the Senate website, we have posted a Charter Index which lists the required contents of charters as specified in various Senate proposals. <http://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/charterindex.htm> All have been approved by the Senate and the administration except for three items listed in Senate Proposal 22-08, which has been rejected by the administration: procedure and responsibility for updating the charter and keeping it in compliance, definition of voting members of the unit and procedure for changing eligibility, and role of professional staff and other non-tenure track members in unit governance. What Luck will suggest to the Board of Control is that the Charter Index be placed on the Board of Control's Board Policy Manual in the slot entitled "For Future Use," in Chapter 16 Educational Staff, and that unit charters be placed on the Board of Control website so that official records are maintained.

Wood asked Luck what he hoped to accomplish with this suggestion. Luck replied that if the required items are listed on the Board of Control's website, that frees the Senate from endless debate over what constitutes a charter, and it will place it in the hands of the administration to see that the charters are compliant with university policy.

Storer said that Proposal 22-08 was rejected by the administration, so why are they listed on that page? Luck said that the Senate officers are in discussion with the provost on those three, and the provost is very interested in getting something accomplished on charters.

## 10. Report of Senate Committees

Mullins, Chair of the Finance Committee reported that the committee is looking into dependent health care for graduate students and is especially concerned about maternity care for graduate student spouses, which is covered by all other universities in the state. He said that we need to examine the figures more carefully before we say that the cost is prohibitive.

Onder, Chair of the Elections Committee, reported that elections of a member of the Committee on Academic Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment and of a Secretary of the Senate for spring semester are moving forward.

Caneba, Chair of the Administrative Policy Committee, asked for suggestions for improving the response rate to president's evaluation and for suggestions for items to add to the evaluation form.

Zanello, Chair of the Research Policy Committee, reported on Provost Seel's response to questions about the success of the SFHI. Seel provided data for 2008-09: seven people were hired; they advised three doctoral students and taught three graduate and five undergraduate courses; they submitted as of this month, 50 grant proposals, 32 as PIs and 18 as co-Pis; as of this month they had \$580,000 of proposals funded; they had eight publications in print and seven more accepted for publication. Provost Seel concluded that given the short time span that the program has been in effect, the goals are being attained. Mullins asked how that record compares to that of an average hire. Zanello said he didn't know. Mullins asked whether strategic hires should be better than plain ordinary vanilla hires. Zanello agreed that they should.

Rudiger, chair of the Institutional Planning Committee, said that the committee intends to look at the impact on faculty, staff, and students of the changes in space on campus, and at the admissions policies.

**10. Adjournment.** Malette **moved** that the meeting be adjourned; Onder seconded the motion; it **passed** on a voice vote with no dissent, and President Luck adjourned the meeting at 7:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted  
by Marilyn Cooper  
Secretary of the University Senate