

# The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Corrected Minutes of Meeting 517

21 March 2012

## Synopsis:

- Presentation: “SFHI Update” by Provost Max Seel
- Presentation: “Understanding Michigan Tech Finances” by Dr. Michael Mullins (Chair, Senate Finance Committee)

**1. Call to order and roll call.** President Rudy Luck called the University Senate Meeting 517 to order at 5:30 pm on Wednesday, March 21, 2012. The Senate Secretary Brian Barkdoll called roll. Absent were representatives of Physics, Auxiliaries and Cultural Enrich., Information Technology, Undergraduate Student Government, and Staff Council.

**Recognition of visitors.** Guests included Provost Max Seel (Provost Office), Bradley Baltensperger (Cognitive Learning Sciences), Theresa Jacques (Registrar’s Office), Leonard Bohmann (College of Engineering), Paul Nelson (School of Business), Jackie Huntoon (Graduate School), and Dean Bruce Seeley (College of Sciences and Arts).

**2. Approval of agenda.** Luck asked if there were any changes; there being none Luck declared the agenda stood approved.

**3. Approval of minutes from Meetings 516.** Luck asked if there were any changes; there being none Luck declared the minutes stood approved.

### **4. Presentation: “[SFHI Update](#)” by Provost Max Seel**

Provost Seel presented statistics on faculty and SFHI faculty counts. 44 faculty were added in the last 4 years for a total of 136 new faculty. Mullins asked how many tenured faculty numbers there were, but Provost Seel didn’t know. The graduate student population increased 43%, research also increased. The SFHI faculty hired since 2008-09 submitted 229 grant proposals and were successful with 60 proposals representing \$6M in external research.

Mullins asked how the SFHI hires are funded to which Provost Seel replied that they were funded all by general funds.

### **5. Presentation: “[Understanding Michigan Tech Finances](#)” by Dr. Michael Mullins (Chair, Senate Finance Committee)**

The amount of tuition and state appropriations were reviewed revealing that tuition has gone up fast while state funds decreased dramatically. Michigan Tech has the highest tuition in the state and among our peer institutions. Provost Seel stated that those numbers only reflected in-state students who receive financial aid. These figures can be redistributed by universities to make tuition look lower, like some other universities do. Mullins went on to say that our non-resident graduate tuition is among the lowest in the country. Other trends include increasing MSPERS expenditures, relatively steady medical claim payment amounts, and decreasing employment benefits even though faculty and staff numbers are increasing. Total employee compensation has stayed steady despite increasing faculty numbers perhaps due to replacing higher-paid retiring faculty with lesser-paid new faculty. Total long term liabilities of Michigan Tech are about \$80M. We increasingly have to pay for a portion of our own buildings, not just with funds from the state. Academic support is slightly down while institutional support is increasing fast. We have the highest such expenses in the state and one of the highest in the country. Vable mentioned a Detroit Free Press article on this topic and asked how we compare to which Mullins replied that we are in excess of those numbers even. Also pointed out was that external research expenditures are up 70% and internal expenditures are up 300%. In addition, the physical plant is expanding to meet the increased research space. As far as possible paths forward Michigan Tech may not be able to continue to increase tuition since fewer students may be able to afford it. We rank high in terms of student debt already. We could also increase graduate student tuition, since we are among the lowest now. It may increase the cost of our research grants, but we should be able to compete in research even with higher graduate tuition. Other options include limiting salary raises, further cuts in benefits (but we have already had benefits reduced substantially), review MSPERS costs, refinance the debt, redesign academic programs with more cooperation on programs and center structure. Huntoon pointed out that how you compare tuition is important. She stated that we can charge \$2,500 per credit hour and then simply discount that tuition for the same zero result. Bulleit stated that for student debt we are 21<sup>st</sup> nationally and 4<sup>th</sup> among state supported schools. Provost Seel pointed out that debt has increased at other STEM universities also.

## 6. Reports

### a. Senate President

Luck pointed out that he was impressed that after he attended the compulsory AQIP meeting, he rushed to the Executive Committee meeting room to find the members all waiting. He thanked them for their participation and continues to be delighted at their participation and arguments. Luck also stated that the Presidential Survey is completed and results have been sent to President Mroz. The Senate Administrative Policy Committee will summarize them. Regarding the Research Productivity Survey, VP Reed responded to comments and these responses are available on the Senate web site. VP Reed has also posted all the survey comments and his response on the research website at the following sites:

This link gives a summary of how many respondents commented on each item.

[http://www.admin.mtu.edu/hro/survey\\_info/ranked\\_categories\\_for\\_question\\_1and\\_2.xls](http://www.admin.mtu.edu/hro/survey_info/ranked_categories_for_question_1and_2.xls)

This link gives the complete responses of every respondent on what to improve.

[http://www.admin.mtu.edu/hro/survey\\_info/SenateResearchPolicySurveySummary\\_Q1\\_2012.pdf](http://www.admin.mtu.edu/hro/survey_info/SenateResearchPolicySurveySummary_Q1_2012.pdf)

This link gives the complete responses of every respondent on what is going well.

[http://www.admin.mtu.edu/hro/survey\\_ino/SenateResearchPolicySurveySummary\\_Q2\\_2012.pdf](http://www.admin.mtu.edu/hro/survey_ino/SenateResearchPolicySurveySummary_Q2_2012.pdf)

This link gives the responses to the most commonly-mentioned items by the Vice President for Research.

[http://www.admin.mtu.edu/hro/survey\\_info/VP\\_response.pdf](http://www.admin.mtu.edu/hro/survey_info/VP_response.pdf)

In addition, Luck reminded senators that it is their responsibility to verify the constituent list for their unit. Ballots should only be sent to constituents in keeping with Senate Procedure 506.1.1. A unit has to inform the Senate for new members to be added in addition to those decided by criteria listed on the Senate website at [http://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/constituent\\_determination.htm](http://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/constituent_determination.htm)

Units can recommend constituency beyond these requirements and submit additional names to the senate office for approval by the Senate Executive Committee. This also applies to the Professional Staff constituency.

### b. Senate Standing Committees

Onder stated that the Research Policy Committee has reviewed the Conflict Of Interest (COI) [draft](#) policy, sent their [comments](#) to VP Reed, and received his [response](#). The Committee fully supports the proposed changes. However, there are several issues that need to be resolved before the existing document can be put into use. Given the timeline for complying with the Federal regulations, the committee recommended accepting the current document after the necessary revisions and as a second step integrate the proposed changes into the existing COI documents to arrive at a single, unified COI document for the University. This is a significant undertaking that will take time but it is necessary. The committee will be actively working with VP Reed to address these issues. Chair Riehl announced that the Elections Committee has an electronic survey tool available for elections and has been vetted. Benefits include reduced paper, time, and cost. He proposed using the survey tool for the upcoming elections. Onder cautioned that we may want to use paper ballots for contentious elections. Vable asked if the survey is confidential to which Riehl replied that it was. The motion was **approved**.

Luck mentioned that while this procedure was suitable for certain ballots, the paper ballot with two envelopes can also be utilized upon objection by any Senator. No vote is required for this purpose, just one objection.

## 7) Old Business:

### a. Proposal 11-12: “Evaluation Procedure for the University Senate” presented by Senator Madhu Vable

Changes were made stating that the survey should be done every other year and that senate volunteers would be solicited for summarizing results. Confidentiality may not be important for senate evaluation since it's not an individual matter. If no volunteers are available, then the results should be listed in an appendix. In addition, chances to comment will be conditioned on the rating that a respondent gives for a particular question. Demographics info has been added such as staff or faculty, attended a Senate meeting, etc. The title was proposed to be changed to “Procedure for conducting survey of its constituents by the senate.” Luck pointed out that some rude comments should be edited to which Vable agreed. Bulleit expressed concern that the name may not need to be changed. The motion did NOT pass. Vable pointed out that the evaluation can be tried to see if it is helpful. Herbig suggested that the question ask if a respondent had attended or at least viewed a Senate meeting. It was agreed that senators should send the proposal to their constituents and vote on it next meeting.

### b. Proposal 13-12: “Constitution Change” (Voting Units: Full Senate) presented by Senate Executive Committee

Luck handed over the gavel temporarily to Senate VP Luokkanen in order to address Proposal 13-12. Luck presented the proposal stating that the Chair of Kinesiology and Integrative Physiology suggested a change regarding general athletics and that athletic coaches not be mentioned in the Senate constitution but may be represented if so desired. Luck unfortunately forgot that he had handed the gavel over to VP Luokkanen and asked for approval from the Senate body. The proposal was **approved** as amended. Luck stated belatedly that the proposal must now be approved by all constituents and suggested that Riehl and the Elections Committee can do it

by the electronic survey mechanism. A 2/3 majority approval is needed to pass before the amendment can be sent forward to the Board of Control for final approval.

**c. Proposal 14-12: “Minor in Global Business” (Voting Units: Academic) presented by Curricular Policy and Finance Committee**

Nelson stated that this minor replaces a suspended certificate. It will encourage students to go abroad and learn foreign languages. While open to all, there are pre-requisites that may preclude non-business majors from completing it. Mullins suggested that it be made more accessible to other programs to which Nelson replied that the pre-requisite courses are needed. Scarlett pointed out that it is open to social science students more since they may have the background. Mullins stated that the finances were approved by the Finance Committee. The proposal was **approved**.

**8) New Business:**

**Proposal 15-12: “[Proposal to Revise General Education Requirements](#)” (Voting Units: Academic) presented by Dr. Brad Baltensperger, Curricular Policy and Finance Committees**

It was stated that the General Education (GE) Committee has oversight and that the current GE requirements were put in place in 2000, but that Provost Seel asked for review. These GE requirements will still have categories of courses and not use the ‘learning goals’ approach yet. The core of these changes will start in the Fall of 2013. The current and proposed structures were reviewed. One major component is that the units may NOT specify a HASS course under new model. New features also include eliminating 2 core courses: perspectives and institutions and having social and behavioral science courses. Goldman stated that his unit wants EC3400 to count as HASS. The idea was brought out that his unit could require it, but not as a GE course to which there was general discussion. Mullins asked why there was a Phase I and II. Baltensperger replied that this will be phased in steps and that the definition of ‘writing intensive’ will be determined later. Storer stated that the Curricular Policy Committee thought that it was good to see the overall big picture of what Phase II may be. Phase II can change but it calls for the committee structure to be set up to have as senate proposals later. Baltensperger stated that other universities are going to requiring writing intensive courses. Barr asked if capstone or enterprise would meet the writing intensive requirement. Baltensperger thought that they would. Mullins stated that ABET may have changes coming and that these GE requirements should be in harmony with those. Baltensperger thought that it probably is in harmony but that that should be confirmed. Texas AM has a list of courses already, so ABET compliance is probable. Luck stated that units should discuss this and not the GE Counsel. Walck stated that ABET has been considered. Baltensperger went over the transition process to the new system. Luck suggested that only Phase I be voted on now. Dean Seely suggested including Phase II information as a preamble, not a separate phase. Vable stated that, since this will affect everyone, an open forum to educate people was needed. Scarlett was concerned that the Phase II appendix may disappear from the proposal, as has happened in the past, so putting Phase II information in a preamble is justified. Ambardar agreed that just Phase I should be included. Onder also agreed that a proposal should be a self contained unit for which the Senators vote on its merit. Storer thought that Phase II committees should be in another proposal. Luck agreed. Baltensperger suggested having a report explaining the context. Gierke asked if the HASS courses have prerequisites. To which Baltensperger replied that there were not many, if any. Bulleit thought that this GE proposal is better than the current one. Goldman stated that the added cost is worrisome. Baltensperger stated that there was a 1-time transition cost and perhaps some ongoing costs that may increase. Storer expressed a concern that removal of perspectives removes any GE courses in first semester taught by faculty, since graduate students would teach these courses. Baltensperger stated that while they did not look at this, there were some advantages to using graduate students. Walck reminded him that quality will be assessed more rigorously now, so graduate student teaching may not be an issue. Goldman stated that other universities have less GE than we do and his unit is struggling to meet ABET requirements already. The final decision was that Phase II would be removed from the proposal. Proposal 15-12 would just include Phase I and possibly be voted upon in two weeks and a new proposal detailing how and when the committees would be established to possibly investigate aspects of Phase II would be submitted.

**9. Adjournment.**

Storer **moved** to adjourn. President Luck adjourned the meeting at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted  
by Brian Barkdoll  
Secretary of the University Senate