

**The University Senate
of Michigan Technological University**

Minutes of Meeting 565
9 September 2015

Synopsis:

The Senate

- 2015-16 Senate Standing Committee List **approved**
- University Senate Meeting Dates for 2015-2016 **approved**
- Administration Amendment to Proposal 39-15: Amending Senate Policy 602.1: Final Exam Policy; Academic and Instructional Policy Committee **passed**

1. Call to order and roll call. [00:00 – 02:11]

President Brian Barkdoll called the University Senate Meeting 565 to order at 5:30 pm on Wednesday, September 9, 2015. The Senate Secretary Marty Thompson called roll. Absent were Senators Stancher and Cadwell and representatives of Army/Air Force ROTC, Biological Sciences, Engineering Fundamentals, Kinesiology and Integrated Physiology, Mechanical Engineering – Engineering Mechanics, Physics, Administration, Student Affairs & Advancement A, Student Affairs & Advancement C, Undergraduate Student Government and Staff Council.

2. Recognition of visitors. Guests included Ginger Sleeman (Human Resources) and Theresa Coleman-Kaiser (Administration).

3. Approval of agenda. [02:12 – 05:55]

Nooshabadi **moved** to add Proposal 20-15 to new business. Froese **seconded**. Discussion. The IT committee chair said comments made by the administration are under consideration. The amendment **passed** unanimously.

Wheaton **moved** to approve the amended agenda. Plummer **seconded**. The amended agenda **passed** unanimously on a voice vote.

4. Approval of minutes from Meeting 563 and 564. [05:56 – 07:08]

Waddell **moved** to approve. Plummer **seconded**. No discussion. The minutes **passed** unanimously on a voice vote.

5. President's Report [07:07 – 18:20]

Barkdoll encouraged senators to review the constitution and bylaws to familiarize themselves with their duties.

Barkdoll asked new senators to introduce themselves.

The graduate school is revising its procedures for reviewing who is eligible to be considered graduate faculty.

Nooshabadi suggested officers discuss going from unit to unit and speaking with faculty. Oliveira suggested using that opportunity to encourage units with no senator to elect a senator.

Barkdoll said the university presidential evaluation has no response yet from President Mroz. Waddell asked if the senate has reviewed the evaluation results. Survey results and the response will be made available on the senate website.

Graduate Dean search committee needs two members selected by the senate. The internal search is expected to be completed by January. Barkdoll charged the Elections Committee with running an election for two senate appointees to the search committee.

6. Reports from Senate Standing Committees [18:21 – 37:00]

Academic and Instructional Policy Committee.
None.

Administrative Policy Committee. None

Curricular Policy Committee. Oliveira, chair said the committee has met and is working with new staff.

Elections Committee. Clancey said Weir is the chair. The committee will conduct all elections needed to this point.

Finance & Institutional Planning Committee.
DeWinter

said the committee is doing a study comparing salaries at Michigan Tech with other institutions.

Fringe Benefits Committee. Summary of the Four Benefits Proposals Approved by the Senate during Spring 2015.

Proposal 25-15 "Proposal to Equalize the Tuition Waiver Benefit for all Full-time Employees" (unanimously approved by the Senate 2/18/15). Increase the two-class per semester tuition and fee waiver for full-time, exempt employees to a 9 credit per semester tuition and fee waiver.

Proposal 28-15 “Proposal on Opt-Out Retirement Plan”

Joint proposal of the Fringe Benefits Committee and Finance and Institutional Planning Committee. Unanimously approved by the Senate 3/18/15. Currently, employees must opt-in to the Michigan Tech’s defined contribution retirement plan, in which they contribute 3% of their annual salary, which is matched by a 3% contribution by Michigan Tech. Under Senate Proposal 28-15, employees would be automatically enrolled in this retirement plan unless they choose to opt out. The intention of this proposal is to encourage employees to begin saving for retirement early in their careers in order to accrue funds to augment retirement income from other sources, such as Social Security and other personal savings plans. Michigan Tech will continue to match employees’ contributions up to 7.5% of their annual salary.

Proposal 29-15 “Proposal to Reduce Cost of Medical Care to Michigan Tech Employees”

Joint proposal of the Fringe Benefits Committee and Finance and Institutional Planning Committee. Approved by the Senate 3/18/15. The Senate proposes that about \$750,000 in total health care cost relief be given to Michigan Tech employees in such a way to benefit those who need it the most. The proposed relief would begin in the 2016 calendar year. Relief could be done in one of two ways:

Option 1: Tiered Michigan Tech contributions to HSA (for HDHP contracts) and FSA accounts (PPO contracts). Tiering is necessary to generate sufficient relief to the lower salary ranges, while keeping the total cost under control. The 2014 Michigan Tech IBS salary list was used to make the estimates, combined with the 2015 AON-Hewitt report that includes the total number of contracts. Tier construction was based on the number of employees in each tier, and our perception as to which tiers needed the most help. For the full family lowest tier (full) amount we suggest \$1000. This is 2/3 of the amount Michigan Tech contributed at the beginning of the HDHP plan. The total cost of this tiered program is estimated to be \$768,000.

Option 2: A rollback of the deductible limits to those of the 2012 PPO plan. Specifically, to \$1000/\$2000 in-network use and \$2000/4000 for out-of-network use for individuals/family. Based on the AON-Hewitt 2015 report and the 2012 average deductible collected per contract, the estimated increase in cost to Michigan Tech would be about \$670,000. While this is not a tiered approach, it should focus relief on those who have had significant

medical expenses in the calendar year. It is logical to assert that those in the lower salary ranges arguably have the most difficulty in meeting these expenses.

Proposal 41-15 “Modify the University’s Defined Contribution Retirement Benefit”

Approved by the Senate 4/15/15. It is recommended that the University modify the current defined benefits plan as follows: The University will automatically contribute 3% of the employee’s salary/wage into the defined contribution without requiring any matching contribution from the employee. The University would then match any employee contribution at a 1:1 rate, up to an additional 6% of the employee’s salary or wage. This would increase the University’s contribution to 9% (currently 7.5 %). The additional cost to the University would be approximately \$1.2 million if all employees participated to the maximum level allowed.

All Four Proposals Vetoed by the Administration. On June 1, all four of these proposals were returned to the Senate with the following note:

“the Administration (Executive Team) deliberated the proposals and their cost impact.

“With a current estimated increase of \$1.7 million in benefits costs for FY16, the administration cannot approve the proposals in their current form. However, in the fall, BLG will deliberate the ideas proposed in these proposals and possible alternatives and will communicate back to the Senate.”

Option 1: Appeal to the Board of Control/Trustees

One option would be to appeal these vetoes to the Board of Control (now the Board of Trustees). The appeal process is defined in Article III.E.5 of the Senate’s Constitution, which reads as follows:

“If the University President vetoes a proposal passed by the Senate, that veto shall be presented in writing to the Senate President. The Senate President shall report the veto to the Senate at its next meeting. The Senate may appeal the veto to the Board of Control upon a two-thirds majority vote of eligible senators. Written notice of the appeal shall be transmitted immediately to the University President who shall submit a written copy of the veto to the Board of Control. The Senate President shall also submit a written copy of the Senate’s appeal to the Board of Control.”

In his capacity as Senate president, Brian has referred these vetoed proposals back to the committees that initiated them.

Option 2: Revise and Submit as New Proposals

The 2015-2016 FBC members have met and have also conferred with 2015-2016 FIPC Chair Stefaan DeWinter and with Senator John Velat (who initiated Proposal 25-15). Collectively, we've decided to revise and strengthen the three proposals that were introduced by the 2014-2015 FBC (25-15, 28-15, and 29-15) and to submit them to the Senate as new proposals. We hope to collaborate with the 2015-2016 FIPC on this, and Stefaan has indicated his support for such collaboration. It remains to be seen what the rest of the FIPC will decide on this point.

Proposal 41-15 was introduced by the 2014-2015 FIPC, and the 2015-2016 FBC would also like to collaborate with the FIPC on a revised version of this proposal. Again, Stefaan supports such collaboration, but, it remains to be seen what the rest of the FIPC will decide.

(According to Robert's Rules of Order, once a motion has been stated by the presiding officer—such as a motion to approve a proposal—the motion belongs to the entire deliberative body and no loner just to the individual or committee that introduced it. Hence, technically, anyone or any committee could introduce or reintroduce proposals on any of these topics this year.)

The FBC is already reviewing revised drafts of all four proposals. We hope to have something ready to submit on at least one of these proposals in time for the Senate to consider it (or them) during the next Senate meeting. This will probably be a revised version of Proposal 25-15 (on tuition waiver benefits), but we're still waiting on data that we've requested from Director of Benefits Renee Hiller.

If the Administration's response to these proposals is not considered a veto, then Article III.E.6 of the Senate's Constitution applies.

General Education and Assessment Committee.

Hungwe said

the committee is waiting for a report from past chair Tim Scarlett.

Information Technology Committee. Velat, chair said he is meeting with IT governance committee.

Professional Staff Policy Committee. None.

Research Policy Committee. None.

7. Unfinished Business [37:01 – 1:08:29]

a. 2015-16 Senate Standing Committee List

Moran **moved** to approve. Wood **seconded**. No discussion. The proposal **passed** by unanimous vote.

8. New Business

a. Approval of Proposed Meeting Dates for 2015-2016

Will **moved** to approve. Wood **seconded**. No discussion. The proposal **passed** by unanimous vote.

b. Select Graduate School Dean Search Committee Representatives (Procedures 803.1.1)

The Election Committee is preparing to hold an election.

c. Select Graduate Faculty Council Senate Representative

Referred to the Election Committee.

d. Proposal 25-15: Proposal to Equalize the Tuition Waiver Benefit for all Full-time Employees; Rejected by Administration; Fringe Benefits Committee

Hamlin **moved** to send the four proposals (25-15, 28-15, 29-15 and 41-15) back to the Fringe Benefits Committee. Oliveira **seconded**. The proposal **passed** by majority vote.

e. Proposal 28-15: Proposal on Opt-out Pension Design; Rejected by Administration; Fringe Benefits Committee

Referred to the Fringe Benefits Committee.

f. Proposal 29-15: Proposal to Reduce Cost of Medical Care to Michigan Tech Employees; Rejected by Administration; Fringe Benefits Committee

Referred to the Fringe Benefits Committee.

g. Administration Amendment to Proposal 31-15: Amending Senate Policy 210.1, BOC Policy 4.8, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Handbook Section 8.2: Office of the Ombuds; Administrative Policy Committee

Barkdoll stated the administration's amendment centered on removing the reference to represented staff.

h. Administration Amendment to Proposal 32-15: Establishment of a Library Liaisons and a Library Advisory Committee; Library Ad Hoc Committee

Barkdoll stated the administration's amendment sought consistency between undergraduate and graduate members voting status. Froese said the member from the graduate student government (GSG) sought non-voting status, whereas the undergraduate student government (USG) member did not respond. Froese **moved** to send this to

Research Policy Committee. Hamlin **seconded**. The motion **passed** unanimously.

i. Administration Amendment to Proposal 33-15: Academic Calendar for 2016-17 and Provisional Calendar for 2017-18; Academic and Instructional Policy Committee

Barkdoll stated the administration's amendment states moving K-Day to Saturday to offset a day off for Career-Day. Nooshabadi **moved** to send back to the Academic and Instructional Policy Committee. Froese **seconded**. Discussion. Plummer said there was a recommendation to ensure no exams given during the Career Fair. The proposal **passed** by majority vote.

j. Administration Amendment to Proposal 36-15: Definition of 'Affiliated' Faculty Appointments; Curricular Policy Committee

Graduate School has redefined affiliated and adjunct faculty. Barkdoll stated the administration's amendment to include signature authority of the university president.

k. Administration Amendment to Proposal 39-15: Amending Senate Policy 602.1: Final Exam Policy; Academic and Instructional Policy Committee

Barkdoll stated the administration's amendment was editorial and considered minor. Froese **moved** to accept the amended proposal. Wanless **seconded**. Discussion. The proposal **passed** as amended by majority vote.

l. Proposal 41-15: Modify the University's Defined Contribution Retirement Benefit; Rejected by Administration; Fringe Benefits Committee

Referred to the Fringe Benefits Committee.

m. Change the term Board of Control to Board of Trustees in Senate Constitution and Bylaws

The Board of Control changed their name to Board of Trustees. It is requested that the Senate Constitution and Bylaws be changed to reflect this name change. Waddell **moved** to poll the senate executive committee to determine if this is a minor change. Hamlin **seconded**. Discussion. The proposal **passed** by majority vote. The senate executive committee voted in the majority to treat the name change as editorial and avoid treating the issue as a substantial change to the constitution. Waddell noted that the Board of Control is not permitted to change their name, but can refer to themselves however they want.

n. Proposal 1-16: "Amendment to Senate Policy 409.1: Additional Baccalaureate Degrees; Amendment to Senate Policy 409.1"

Oliveira clarified the amendment as stating the first undergraduate degree must be from an accredited program.

o. Proposal 20-16

Velat **moved** to refer this proposal to the IT Committee. DeWinter **seconded**. The proposal **passed** by unanimous vote.

9. Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Hamlin **moved** to adjourn. Froese **seconded**. President Barkdoll adjourned the meeting at 6:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted

by Marty Thompson

Secretary of the University Senate