

## **The University Senate of Michigan Technological University**

Date: 9/15/2021

Subject: Minutes for University Senate Meeting #661

Video recording of the meeting can be found here:

<https://huskycast.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=ac9db165-3b00-491e-8103-ada500e175ba>

Format: In-person/online

Senate Officers: Sam Sweitz (President), Steve Knudstrup (Vice-President), Kette Thomas (Secretary), Ashley Buchanan (Senate Assistant)

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Sam Sweitz called meeting 661 to order at 5:30pm.

Kette Thomas performed roll call and recognized visitors. A quorum was reached.

Motion to approve the agenda for meeting 661.

Representative for the Ad hoc Committee on Textbook Affordability and Accessibility requested that the committee be added to the agenda. Context made for the committee. Motion moved for adding it. Passed.

Motion to approve the agenda was approved.

There are no meetings to approve.

### **Special Guest Report: President Rick Koubek**

Three items:

First, thank you for the “remarkable job” done last year. All the hard work and effort paid off.

Second, recap on how we ended the year and how we entered the new year.

Third, ask for help on 6 areas.

“First item of business” recognizes the sheer number of proposals that passed was impactful. “Heads down charge forward” attitude. “You could’ve grounded to a halt but you didn’t.” Characterized as “incredible.”

Budget: we ended up net -\$11.6m. The original budget presented to the board already had -\$11.5m, so that what we planned for materialized. There was \$24 million from Federal Emergency Funding, \$10 million went to the students. We are building the reserves and addressing resources. “We are okay.”

We had the largest freshman class since 1982. You are the reason for that bump.

Alumni friends have been generous. They trust you and invest in you.

Six areas where your help is needed:

Help to continue to support Tech Forward, especially as it relates to Gen Ed and First Year Experience. You’ll see more of that. You will see PhDs coming out Tech Forward. DEI is maturing. We know there is a campus culture that needs to evolve but Dr. Gersie is helping us get there. We need assistance to develop plans and curriculum.

We need help with our focus on the Master Plan. What will the campus look like in 30 or 40 years? Where will our priorities be? Where are they now? What are the core, secondary and tertiary areas of focus?

We are entering a “springtime” phase. We are making decisions on investments. We have to build back from deep cuts. Example, Benefits Committee will start to see improvements.

Help support the growth of our online program. Case: put our foot forward, part of it will be about revenue. However, how do we protect the quality of MTU name?

Help with strategic growth. Units have to make some disciplined decisions. Pick what you do best. Compromise.

Go for the best. Be excellent. Maintain high standards. As long as that is what you’re doing, we will support you.

Question from the audience: Are there any initiatives to support excellence?

Response: Tech Forward was designed to do that. The faculty control the resources rather than the administration. Also, faculty salary will be more in line with the market for the top people.

**Presentation from the Provost’s Office Regarding COVID Impact Statements:**

COVID has had a variable on people’s lives. Some people have benefitted from it and others have been devastated by it. We are looking for an accurate record of how it has impacted you and your work. Please use it to reflect on how COVID has impacted your work. Personal information should not come into the report. These lead to bias. There will be HELP sessions for submitting these reports. This information will go into Digital Measures under the Narrative section. See the ADVANCE site for more information:

<https://blogs.mtu.edu/advance/2021/06/advance-weekly-roundup-documenting-the-extent-of-covid-career-disruptions/>

Concern raised from the audience:

Point of order. There are two “Minutes” reports missing. Sam explains this is due to the transitional period between secretaries and Kette assures the delivery of these reports for the next meeting.

**President’s Report:**

Welcomes back all returning senators and alternates, as well as those newly elected. Thanks everyone who worked on the proposals and contributed to the previous year’s discussions.

Reminds the audience that there are technological considerations in the room. Creating a hybrid meeting space that will allow for both remote and in-person meetings.

Theme for the year: communication. We are not “top down” but rather from the units up to the Senate. How can we communicate better with the units? Asks Senators to be a “conduit”. Also, how do we communicate? What is thoughtful communication? Invites people to listen and talk but consider different perspectives. Be aware of how our conversation may be perceived.

Standing Committees: Working on filling positions. Goal is to approve committee list by next meeting.

**Committee Reports:**

Academic and Instructional Policy Committee:

Administrative Policy Committee:

Curricular Policy Committee: Has selected a chair. Trying to recover the last two years of records and meeting minutes. Will meet for the first time next week. There are proposals left from the previous year.

Committee for Promoting and Facilitating Equity and Understanding (CPFEU): Will proceed with co-chairs. Met to establish what will be pursued next year. Would like to encourage more volunteers to become members. Invites any business related to their charge.

Elections Committee: Working on updating procedures on handling misconduct.

Finance and Institutional Planning Committee:

Fringe Benefits Committee: This committee will have co-chairs. A lot of activity regarding University benefits. A nomination to fill a position in the Advisory Committee (Bonnie). Bonnie accepted the nomination. Motion made in kind. Passed.

Information Technology Committee:

Professional Staff Policy Committee:

Research Policy Committee:

Ad hoc Committee to Draft a Senate Handbook: Thanks members for hard work over the summer. Has settled on a chair for the committee.

Ad hoc Committee on Textbook Affordability: Committee is looking for a faculty member to join. A brief history of the committee and its goals was given. Looking for submitting proposals and recommendations. A motion was made to approve the committee. Passed.

### **Unfinished Business:**

84-21 – Evaluation of Department Chairs – Sam provides background summary. Point of order called to have Sam step out of the role of Senate President for . Steve approves. Provides options. It is a tabled proposal, so it can stay on the table and die there, or someone can take it off the table, which might mean it can be postponed again. Audience member suggests it has been 7 months since it was introduced and needs a refresher. Sam suggests the proposal dies and it all goes to the new committee to be reintroduced.

85-21 - Proposal to Create University Teaching-Facilitators Group for Support of Teaching Effectiveness to Resolve Student – similar situation as 84-21. Proposal 222 will be addressed shortly and addresses some of the concerns in this proposal. Suggestion is the same: don't take it off the table, let it die and let it be taken up by its respective committee.

Invitation to take up proposal 84-21 receives no volunteers. Proposal is "dead." To go back to APC.

Invitation to take up proposal 85-21 receives no volunteers. Proposal is "dead." To go back to AIPC.

Proposals will go to committees to be reintroduces if they see fit.

86-21 – Sam is recognized as representative of Social Sciences. Presents the Senate Budget. Motion made to accept the Senate budget. Budget approved.

### **New business:**

Ad hoc Committee to Draft a Senate Handbook: A chair has been elected. This is the first time anything like this has ever been done. It is written in an informal tone. It will cover a number of items concerning the Senate. Invites comments and suggestions. The committee is currently focused on editing.

Proposal 2-22 – Revisions to Procedure 504.1.1 Teaching Effectiveness Evaluations

Presentation by Provost Huntoon – This came about because students wanted their evaluations to go to both the instructor and the department chair. This is so that student’s concerns can be addressed more effectively. Results might signal that faculty should be referred to the CTL or they might need to be assigned a mentor. Alternatively, comments that praise the instructors can also be shared and benefit other instructors. In Feb 2020, the Board asked the Senate President to modify the policy to address the students’ concerns. Provost Huntoon edited the current policy to reflect changes. Provost Huntoon’s edited page on 504.1.1 is displayed.

Question from audience regarding the protocol in bringing this up without the standing committee, APIC. Clarification is made that the presentation without benefit of the committee is permissible with approval from the Executive Committee. Provost Huntoon clarifies the history of the proposal and the charge from the Board. Sam explains that proposal 85-21 was an attempt to remedy or compromise but it did not resolve. Sam explains that the Senate has only two weeks to discuss this matter with its constituents before the Board meets again to decide next steps.

Concerns raised about the Board’s role in this matter. Clarification made about the Board’s place in governing the institution. Concerns that there are consequences that should be addressed by the appropriate committee and vote should be postponed. Clarification made that the timeline relative to the Board request is fixed. Feedback on the edits should be sent to the APC.

**Public Comments:**

**Adjournment:**

Adjourned.