

# The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

## PROPOSAL 27-06 (Voting Units: Full Senate)

### COMMITMENT TO INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND SERVICE

#### Background

Michigan Act 70 of 1885 as amended in 1963 defines Michigan Tech's mission as follows:

"The institution shall provide the inhabitants of this state with the means of acquiring a thorough knowledge of the mineral industry in its various phases, and of the application of science to industry, as exemplified by the various engineering courses offered at technological institutions, and shall seek to promote the welfare of the industries of the state."

<[http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(ywlk2a55i0gfjaap1bkmyv45\)/mileg.aspx?page=GetMCLDocument&objectname=mcl-Act-70-of-1885](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(ywlk2a55i0gfjaap1bkmyv45)/mileg.aspx?page=GetMCLDocument&objectname=mcl-Act-70-of-1885)>

For an institution that has grown to national and international stature, this mission is both narrow and provincial. Hence, Michigan Tech currently defines its mission as follows: "We prepare students to create the future." And the University's Vision Statement indicates that "Michigan Tech will be a nationally prominent and internationally recognized technological university which bridges technology and business and will meet the needs of a global and technologically rich society through excellence in undergraduate and graduate education, scholarship, and research." <<http://www.mtu.edu/mtuinfo/mission.html>>

Michigan Tech's impressive resources can be applied—and in many cases are being applied—to addressing the needs of the global community, a community in which every year, over 3 million children die due to lack of clean drinking water, and every day, over 30,000 children die of preventable diseases.

Several schools or departments at Michigan Tech are actively working to apply the professional skills of their faculty, staff, and students to sustainable development in less-developed countries. For example, the School of Forest Resources and Environmental Sciences has a Master's International Program through which students do one year of course work in residence at MTU, then serve two years in the Peace Corps, and finally return to MTU to complete their master's degree. The Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering now offers two such programs, the Department of Geological and Mining Engineering and Sciences has added a fourth program, and the Department of Education has added a fifth. <<http://www.admin.mtu.edu/rgs/graduate/ms-PeaceCorps.htm>> These efforts are consistent with the U.N. Millennium Development Goals, goals which all 191 U.N. member states have pledged to meet by 2015 <<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.asp>>.

At the undergraduate level, every first-year student is required to take UN1002 World Cultures; the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering offers an International Senior Design Project <<http://www.cee.mtu.edu/projects/index.htm>> option; and in 2004, students and faculty organized a Michigan Tech Chapter of Engineers Without Borders <<http://ewb.students.mtu.edu/Home.html>>, which has completed a project in Bolivia and is considering another project in Guatemala.

Other relevant research, service, and educational initiatives include the Technological Leadership Institute <<http://www.doe.mtu.edu/news/sep-28-2005.html>>, the Sustainable Futures Institute <<http://www.sfi.mtu.edu/index.html>>, the Center for Water and Society <<http://www.mtcws.mtu.edu/>>, Aqua Terra Tech Enterprise <<http://www.enterprise.mtu.edu/att/index.html>>, and NSF Partnership for International Research and Education Grants <[http://128.150.4.107/news/news\\_summ.jsp?cntn\\_id=105766&org=OISE&from=news](http://128.150.4.107/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=105766&org=OISE&from=news)>.

Michigan Tech also serves the international community by educating international students. We currently have over 600 international students (approximately 10 percent of our student population) from 72 different countries. In these and many other ways, Michigan Tech excels in service to the larger world.

## **Proposal**

In order to acknowledge the international efforts already underway and to encourage more of the same, Michigan Technological University should include in its revised Strategic Plan a commitment to the international community, and this commitment should become part of the new image being developed by Michigan Tech Marketing and Communications. A Presidential Task Force should be established to explore and promote various means by which research, teaching, and service at Michigan Tech might be better applied to addressing the needs of the global community.

**Introduced in Senate: 5 April 2006**

**Adopted to Senate: 19 April 2006**

**Approved by Administration: 27 October 2006**