

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

PROPOSAL 13-14 (revised 12-11-13)

(VOTING UNITS: FULL SENATE)

“Improving Communication with the Board of Control”

Introduction

The Board of Control, the University Administration, and the University Senate of Michigan Technological University all work for the wellbeing of the university from different perspectives. Yet, occasionally, communication among these three entities breaks down, leading to an unhealthy climate that is detrimental to the university. This proposal requests that the Board of Control (BOC) make two changes that will improve communication between itself and the University Senate.

Request 1

In April 1994, the Senate approved a policy on tobacco use on campus that became a university policy for implementation starting September 1, 1994. In July 2010, the BOC, at the request of Administration, ~~gave the authority on tobacco use to the Administration, which~~ **changed the policy and administration** decided to make the campus tobacco free starting September 1, 2013. The Senate, which represents a diversity of perspectives and concerns, was excluded from this decision-making process. This reinforced the view on campus that the BOC and the Administration talk about shared governance but do not believe in it. It also raised the question as to the purpose of creating university policies if such policies can be discarded or changed unilaterally by the Administration. This view was a source of anger and dismay at several Senate meetings, starting in November 2012. Had the Senate been consulted before the decision was made, it almost certainly would have supported the ban, and this needless irritation might have been avoided. A simple mechanism that the Senate uses for decision making, if adopted by the BOC, would prevent future occurrence of such a break in communication; hence,

The Senate requests that the BOC treat any non-emergency change in or creation of university policy as new business that is not voted on at the meeting during which it is introduced. The BOC will direct the Senate to provide its input on such proposals before voting on them during a subsequent meeting.

Request 2

In July 2010, the BOC made changes in the description of the University Ombuds. When the process to find a new University Ombuds started this year, the Administration discovered that the current University policy did not reflect the changes made by the BOC. The Senate will revise the policy to conform to BOC policy. To avoid such discrepancies and to make changes in a more timely manner in the future,

The Senate requests that the BOC send to both the Senate and the Administration a list of changes made to BOC policies so that the Senate and the Administration might implement these changes in a timely fashion.

Introduced to Senate: 11 December 2013

Friendly Amendment: 11 December 2013

Approved by Senate with friendly amendment: 22 January 2014

Presented to Board of Control: 20 February 2014

Board of Control endorsed "[Principles of Communication](#)" in place of Proposal 13-14: 02 May 2014