

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 11-15 (Voting Units: Full Senate)

“Amending the Senate’s Bylaws”

I. Background

1. Enhanced Speaking Rights for Nonmembers

Article VII.A of the Constitution of the University Senate reads as follows: “The business of the Senate shall be conducted according to *Robert’s Rules of Order* when these are not in conflict with the Bylaws of the Senate.”

Section I.N of the Senate’s Bylaws “Allowing Nonmembers to Speak” is intended to provide more speaking rights for nonmembers than is provided by *Robert’s Rules of Order*.

Section I.N.3 reads as follows: “Once a motion is on the floor and is being debated by the members, the presiding officer may grant a nonmember speaking privileges only to provide a point of information or clarification.”

Hence, in order to allow the Senate the opportunity to benefit from the comments of nonmembers, it is proposed that when a proposal is first introduced, before a motion to approve is made, if there are no objections, there might be brief but broad discussion of the proposal during which time, nonmembers may participate.

2. More Efficient and Effective Means of Fielding Questions when Introducing Proposals

Generally speaking, the person best prepared to introduce and respond to questions about any given proposal is either the proposal initiator or the chair of the committee that has introduced the proposal. Requiring the presiding officer to serve as an intermediary between this person and the Senate at large can make for a process that is both less efficient and less effective.

Hence, when a Senate proposal is being presented by the chair of the relevant committee, if there are no objections, the presiding officer may delegate some responsibility for fielding questions to that person.

~~3. Selection of Senate Representatives to University-Wide Committees and Groups~~

~~In the past, considerable time and effort has been invested in trying to determine how Senate representatives should be selected for university wide committees or other groups. A uniform policy could make this process more efficient.~~

~~Section 2.0 of Senate Procedures 801.1.1 “Search Procedure for University Administrators” indicates that, “The Senate Executive Committee will decide on the selection method” for Senate representatives on search committees for senior, university administrators. <http://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/policies/p801-1-1.htm>~~

~~In the recent selection of Senate representatives for a Provost Search Committee, this method proved both effective and efficient. Hence, it is proposed that the Senate’s Executive Committee will determine, in any given case, the appropriate procedure for electing or appointing Senate representatives to university wide committees or other groups.~~

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4. Liaison Status of Emeritus/Emerita Association

Senate Policy 703.1 “Emeritus/Emerita Professor Policy” was adopted by the Senate in 1998. Section 3 of this policy grants a set of privileges to Michigan Tech’s emeriti/emerae faculty, including the following:

(p) Provision for the establishment of an association of emeriti/emerae.

(r) Non-voting representation of the emeritus/emera association on the University Senate. <http://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/policies/p703-1.htm>

Consequently, Article II.C of the Senate Bylaws indicates that one of the units having official, non-voting, liaison Senate membership is the Emeritus/Emerita Association. This association does not exist. Therefore, this reference will be removed from the Senate’s Bylaws.

II. Proposals

1. Section I.N of the Senate’s Bylaws will be amended by the addition a new item 3, which will read as follows:

3. When a proposal is first introduced, before a motion to approve is made, if there are no objections, there might be brief but broad discussion of the proposal during which time, nonmembers may participate.

The current item 3 will be renumbered item 4, and the following items will likewise be renumbered.

2. The following sentence shall be added as section I.J.13 of the Senate’s Bylaws:

13. When a proposal is being presented by the chair of the relevant committee, if there are no objections, the presiding officer may delegate some responsibility for fielding questions to that person.

3. The following section will be added to Article I of the Senate’s Bylaws:

O. Selection of Senate Representatives for University-Wide Committees or Groups

The Senate’s Executive Committee will determine, in any given case, the appropriate procedure for electing or appointing Senate representatives to university-wide committees or other groups.

4. The Emeritus/Emerita Association will be removed from Article II.C of the Senate’s Bylaws.