

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 5-17 (editorial changes: 11-07-16)

(Voting Units: Full Senate)

Proposed Amendment to Senate Procedures 502.1.1, “REVIEW AND REAPPOINTMENT OF DEANS OF COLLEGES”

Proposal

In mid spring of 2016 the Provost initiated the process of evaluation of the Dean of College of Arts and Science. The proposed changes to procedure 502.1.1 results from the report of the review committee.

Proposed Revisions to Senate Procedures 502.1.1

1. Change to Section 2:

The committee shall be appointed by the provost but shall include a representative from each of the College’s departments, a representative from the staff of the college, a representative from the Graduate Student Government, a representative from the Undergraduate Student Government, and a representative from among the College’s department chairs. In addition, the committee shall include a representative from the University Senate who shall be from outside the unit whose dean is being evaluated.

2. Change to Section 6:

Current text: The Student Review subcommittee shall prepare recommendations for the committee on the extent of student input and means of securing it. The students may choose not to conduct a survey but have the dean meet their executive body and provide a written document for inclusion in the final report.

New text: The Student Review subcommittee shall prepare recommendations for the committee on the extent of student input and means of securing it. Instead of an on-line survey, the student evaluation may choose a procedure that elicits feedback and comments from representative students across departments and programs. A suggested method involves appointing a panel of student leaders across undergraduate and graduate programs to represent each department, and conduct an open-ended small-group survey (i.e., a focus group) to solicit specific comments about the consequences and outcomes of the Dean's role. The details of the suggested process, used in the 2016 evaluation, are found in Appendix F.

3. Insert this text as Appendix F:

Appendix F. Suggested Procedure for Student Evaluation Subcommittee

The suggested procedure is to use an open-ended questionnaire conducted as a guided small group discussion with representative students throughout the ~~CSA college~~. ~~Other colleges should adapt questions as appropriate, for example by replacing the college with the college's name, such as College of Sciences and Arts or College of Engineering.~~

Student participants should be submitted to the subcommittee by each department chair, who should be instructed to appoint at least one undergraduate and one graduate student to represent ~~each of their programs~~ ~~their department~~. Student appointees might typically be highly-engaged students who could be department scholars, student government representatives, or other students recognized to be engaged in the university. Students should be provided with electronic copies of the Dean's reappointment statement prior to the discussion, and hard copies of the statement should be provided during the evaluation sessions. Students should be told that their participation will be anonymous, but that their statements may nevertheless identify them or their departments. Sessions may be audio-recorded to permit later transcription, but these recordings should be destroyed following the committee report. Following each session, students should be allowed to redact or revise any specific statements they made, to preserve anonymity.

Upon arriving at the site of the discussion, students should be informed about the purpose of the discussion. The confidentiality of the process should be discussed prior to ~~starting an audio recorder for the session~~. An audio recording of the session should be made if all participants agree to be recorded. Then, because students may be unfamiliar with the dean, the distinct make-up of the ~~CSA college~~, or the purpose of the evaluation, they should be provided with a basic description of the ~~CSA college~~ within the University (distinct from other units, and from the University as a whole) and the role of the Dean (as distinct from other Deans, the Provost, the President, etc.). Following this, the group should be lead through a discussion of a series of open-ended questions, related both to the performance of the Dean, and aspects of the consequence of the Dean's policies and leadership. When appropriate, committee members may provide clarifying responses to questions about the roles and responsibilities of the dean or the role of the evaluation, and student members of the evaluation committee may help guide or contribute to the evaluation. Following the sessions, a report to the committee may include summaries of discussion points on each topic, rather than complete verbatim transcripts.

A suggested set of evaluation questions is included below.

Interview/Question Guide for Student Evaluations

Preliminary Questions Regarding the Dean's Role and Exposure:

1. Do you know who the Dean of the College ~~of Sciences and Arts (CSA)~~ is? Have you ever met him/her or would you recognize who he/she is?
2. Are you aware of how the Dean's role differs from that of other administration?

Identity of ~~CSA~~ College

1. Has the Dean instilled a sense of high morale throughout the ~~CSA~~ college?
2. Has the Dean done enough to encourage and reward effective teaching throughout the College?
3. Has the Dean done enough to encourage and reward academic excellence (among students) within the college?
4. Is there a sense of community within ~~CSA~~ college? Does it seem like there is a sufficient amount of cooperation between the departments?

Community and Environment:

1. Does the ~~CSA~~ college's administration maintain an environment free of discrimination? How do you feel it has handled issues related to discrimination and harassment?
2. Has the Dean given sufficient attention to promoting diversity among students?
3. Has the Dean given sufficient attention to recruiting faculty in under-represented groups?

Policies and Vision:

1. What are some of the ways in which you think you have been impacted by decisions or policies made by the Dean?
2. Do you think the Dean has a coherent vision for ~~CSA~~ the College? Has he effectively communicated his goals for accomplishing this vision?

Interaction between the ~~CSA~~ College and the University:

1. Do you think that ~~CSA~~ the College has a clear and distinct identity within the university?
2. Has the Dean been a strong advocate for ~~CSA~~ the College when dealing with University Administration?
3. How do you feel ~~CSA~~ the College is viewed within the university as a whole? In what ways do you think the dean can help shape this perception?
4. Has the Dean been successful at fulfilling the diverse needs of the various disciplines within ~~CSA~~ the College? Has the Dean allocated resources in an effective, fair, and open manner?

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