

# The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

## Proposal 55-21 (Voting Units: Academic)

### Proposed Addition of *Section 2.6 the Role of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* to the Faculty Handbook

Submitted by: The Committee for Promoting and Facilitating Equity and Understanding (CPFEU) and the Academic and Instructional Policy Committee (AIPC), in collaboration with ADVANCE and the University Administration

#### I. Introduction

We measure what we value. Our University [Strategic Plan](#) states that “*Michigan Tech is a globally recognized technological university that educates students, advances knowledge, and innovates to improve the quality of life and to promote mutual respect and equity for all people within the state, the nation, and the global community.*” The MTU Strategic Plan further states that we “*Foster and support an exceptional and diverse community of students, faculty, and staff*” and that we will “*Ensure a supportive environment for all members of the University community,*” so as to “*Promote equity, inclusiveness, and collegiality through openness, engagement, mutual respect, and understanding of diverse perspectives.*”

Many Michigan Tech faculty are involved with activities that involve and support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). However, the [Faculty Handbook](#) does not make it clear that these items are valued faculty contributions. As a result, the work of individuals who do engage in activities that *foster and support an exceptional and diverse community of students, faculty, and staff* through educational, research, scholarly, and service related activities related to DEI may go unrecognized in the tenure, promotion, and review process.

#### II. Rationale

In 1995 (updated in 2016), [Section 2.3 Role of Interdisciplinary Scholarship and Teaching](#) was added to the Faculty Handbook; and subsequently in 2018, [Section 2.5 Role of Innovation and Commercialization](#) was added. These sections are meant to recognize the increasingly diverse ways that faculty engage with and provide value in the educational, research, scholarly, and service-related activities of the University. In a similar manner, many Michigan Tech faculty are increasingly involved with diversity, equity, and inclusion related activities that further the vision and goals of the University.

Faculty who are involved in diversity, equity, and inclusion activities should be recognized for their contributions to teaching, research, and/or service activities. In not officially recognizing these activities, faculty may inadvertently be penalized for the time and effort invested in work that substantially benefits the University, our university community, society, and indeed our world. Moreover, having a clear statement that the University supports DEI efforts will be valuable in recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty members (as well as students and staff) with an interest in developing ideas and approaches that will benefit the future of STEM, and will position Michigan Tech as a leader in integrating innovative research and scholarship with societal needs and development.

In the same way that Sections 2.3 and 2.5 do not require interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching or innovation and commercialization activities, faculty *are not required* in this case to be involved with DEI activities (outside of activities required as part of departmental, sponsored funding requirements, and/or University required DEI activities) and there is no penalty for not engaging in these types of activities.

In summary, we measure - and give credit for - what we value. Given our declared University vision *promoting mutual respect and equity for all people*, Michigan Tech must necessarily prioritize efforts to increase *equity, inclusiveness, and collegiality* in our campus community by actively promoting *openness, engagement, mutual respect, and understanding of diverse perspectives*. This proposal seeks to clearly convey that the University supports and values such professional efforts by adding *Section 2.6 Role of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* to the Faculty Handbook.

### **III. Proposal**

The following language is intended for insertion as a new section in the Faculty Handbook, *Section 2.6 Role of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*. The language proposed here parallels that currently present in *Section 2.3 Role of Interdisciplinary Scholarship and Teaching*, as well as *Section 2.5 Role of Innovation and Commercialization*. Just as Section 2.3 and 2.5 were added to the Faculty Handbook to make clear to new and continuing faculty the value that the University places on interdisciplinary activities and innovation and commercialization; Section 2.6 is intended to make it clear that diversity, equity, and inclusion activities are similarly valued.

The proposed language for inclusion in the Faculty Handbook is as follows:

#### **Section 2.6 Role of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) are consistent with and directly support the education, research, and service goals of Michigan Tech. Diversity refers to recognizing unique identities

that include gender, race, ethnic background, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, socio-economic status, nationality and other non-visible differences. Equity refers to the fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement of all people, achieved by intentional focus on their disparate needs, conditions and abilities. While inclusion is an active set of practices that ensure each member of our campus feels they are welcome and valued for their unique perspectives and experiences.

DEI efforts related to teaching, research, scholarly, and service related activities are recognized as having value within the Michigan Tech community, and include, but are not limited to activities such as curricular development that furthers diversity, equity, and inclusion; pedagogical practices that promote inclusivity; mentoring and advising students, faculty, and staff on diversity, equity, and inclusion related issues; mentoring and advising students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented or underserved groups; and research and scholarship that examines and furthers knowledge and understanding related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The University acknowledges that additional time and effort are required for involvement in such activities and is committed to recognizing these efforts. In particular, promotion, tenure, review, and merit evaluations shall recognize diversity, equity, and inclusion activities as an indication of a commitment to expanding the educational, research, scholarly, and service related activities of Michigan Tech.