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Michigan Technological University

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TO: Maximilian Seel
Provost & VP for Academic Affairs

DATE: February 6, 2014

FROM: Brian Barkdoll
Senate President

SUBJECT: Senate Proposal 15-14

COPIES: Glenn D. Mroz, President
Dale R. Tahtinen, Secretary of the Board of Control

At its meeting on February 5, 2014, the University Senate approved Proposal 15-14, "Request for Change in Board of Control Policy 6.7 on Sabbatical Leave". The Senate looks forward to approval of this proposal by the administration. Please keep me informed about the decision of the administration on this proposal and feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Proposal 15-14

The following amended version of Senate Proposal 15-14 is approved (still subject to Board of Control approval of related Board of Control Policy 6.7 change at its next meeting):

Replace "80% of academic year rate" with
"67% of academic year rate";

Strike the first paragraph on page 2 ("Reducing the compensation penalty.....reinforce the cost penalty.") Outside of academia, the opportunity of taking a sabbatical leave with any kind of compensation is considered a privilege and benefit, not a penalty.

Max J. Seel — 2/27/14
Provost & V.P. for Academic Affairs — Date

Glenn D. Mroz — 3/28/14
President — Date

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 15-14

(Voting Units: Academic)

"Request for Change in Board of Control Policy 6.7 on Sabbatical Leave"

1. Introduction

Sabbatical leaves are recognized by BoC policy as part of furthering professional competence, and are intended for the mutual benefit of the University and the faculty[1]. Leaves are by Senate policy intended to give respite from normal duties with encouragement to explore professional avenues outside of Michigan Tech[2]. Current policy provides, during an approved leave, relief from service and teaching duties and 100% of academic year salary for a one-semester leave, and 50% of academic year salary for a two-semester leave.

Historical data reveal that about 12% of faculty who are eligible for a sabbatical obtain one in a given year. Of these, less than 40% involve international travel, and in the past two years less than 30% of approved leaves have been for two semesters. Under current policy funds are only released back to the unit when a two-semester leave is taken; thus those funds are only available for teaching replacement if a two-semester sabbatical is elected.

The mutual benefits of sabbatical leaves would be increased if incentives for longer leaves and opportunities for greater exploration of opportunities beyond Michigan Tech were available.

2. Proposal

The University Senate recommends the following change in Board of Control Policy 6.7 on Sabbatical Leave:

Replace the text in the table in Section 2 under "Rate of Pay while on Sabbatical Leave" corresponding to a duration of leave of "2 Semesters", which reads:

> "50% of academic year rate"

With the text:

> "80% of academic year rate"

3. Rationale

Increasing compensation for a two-semester sabbatical leave to 80% of academic year salary would provide a significant incentive for faculty to pursue longer leaves. When faculty take such leaves they provide mutual benefits to faculty and to the University.

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[1] http://www.admin.mtu.edu/admin/boc/policy/ch6/ch6p7.htm
[2] http://www.sas.it.mtu.edu/usenate/propose/05/9-05.htm

Reducing the compensation penalty for the longer leave would provide a significant incentive for faculty to select this option. Additionally, reducing this penalty may allow faculty to pursue sabbaticals that are otherwise prohibitively burdensome because logistical challenges reinforce the cost penalty.

When faculty select the longer leave funds are retained within the academic unit, which can be used to pay for teaching replacement. This reduces the burden on academic units where single-semester sabbaticals are elected, and no funds are retained, especially when those sabbaticals are taken during the semester in which a faculty member has the greatest teaching load.

The longer, two-semester sabbatical provides a greater opportunity for transformative benefit, by facilitating or incentivizing longer or more in-depth projects and opportunities for international travel. This contributes directly to Michigan Tech's strategic vision of growing as a premier technological research university of international stature.