

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION
Item for Information**

Subject: Faculty Governance Update

UNIVERSITY SENATE COURSE EVALUATIONS RESOLUTION

On October 26, 2015, at a rare but extremely well attended University Senate meeting, the Senate adopted by a large margin the following resolution on course evaluations:

WHEREAS our current student evaluation of teaching (SET) instrument is not designed to assist students in choosing classes, and

WHEREAS there is no consensus on the general validity of student evaluations of teaching, and

WHEREAS some research suggests that an instructor's race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, or sexual orientation may negatively affect his or her SET ratings, and

WHEREAS publicity of prior course evaluations can affect student responses on current evaluations, undermining the independence of response that is key to having a valid survey, and

WHEREAS prior evaluations do not reliably correspond to later iterations of a course, and

WHEREAS a policy that affects faculty across the University should be endorsed only after broad consultation with the faculty,

THEREFORE the University Senate at UM resolves to request that

- a. the SET instrument be redesigned in accordance with the best available research;
- b. that a policy for publicly releasing data obtained by this instrument be formulated in consultation with student government representatives, faculty government representatives, and UM experts in teaching and learning assessment and in statistical analysis;
- c. that the data obtained with the current instrument not be released under the University's imprimatur.

SENATE ASSEMBLY FRIDAY CLASSES RESOLUTION

Also on October 26, 2015, the Senate Assembly voted by large margin to adopt the following resolution on the use of Friday classes:

WHEREAS the faculty of the University of Michigan is committed to providing the University's students with a world-class education, it recognizes the need to provide that education in a safe and healthy environment. And

WHEREAS the faculty of the University of Michigan recognizes that providing regular instruction for First and Second years students five days a week promotes a better and more secure learning environment, and recognizes that Friday classes, especially Friday morning classes, reduce the incidence of alcohol abuse in university communities,

THEREFORE The Senate Assembly strongly urges the Provost to promote and incentivize the regular teaching of 100 and 200 level large enrollment courses (defined as courses having ten or more sections) with a Friday meeting. It recommends that in cases where such classes have a lecture component, those classes will regularly schedule a lecture on Friday.

Submitted: November 2015

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T E Schneider", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

(T E Schneider on behalf of SACUA)