

Minutes of 16 February 1998
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING
MINUTES OF 16 FEBRUARY 1998

ATTENDANCE

Present: Assanis, Baker, Bartlett, Bernal, Bleske, Browder, Burdi, Castle, Christiansen, Cooney, Croxton, DeCamp, Deskins, Ensminger, Freese, Karnopp, Kibbie, Kleinsmith, Kossoudji, Lafortune, Lawson, D. Lee, MacAdam, MacAlpine, Maloy, Marshall, Nolen-Hoeksema, Olson, Perakis, Pintrich, Rahme, Raisler, Rosenberg, Schneider, Schteingart, Sharf, Shotwell, Siebers, Steneck, Teasley, Wagaw, Ward, Wasserman, Yeo, Yeung, Zorn

Alternates: None

Absent: Bryant, Burnham, Burnstein, Colletti, Curley, DeWoskin, E. Feldman, M. Feldman, Flynn, Francis, Freedman, Gull, Hultquist, Jamerson, Jensen, Julius, Kabamba, Keyserling, V. Lee, Lomax, Loveland-Cherry, Malamud, Mann, Martin, Navvab, Rogers, Rush, Shapiro, R. Sharp, W. Sharp, Turcotte

Chair D'Alecy convened the meeting at 3:22 P.M.

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Agenda for 16 February 1998
2. Draft minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 26 January 1998
3. Minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 27 October 1997.
4. Minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 17 November 1997.
5. Minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 15 December 1997
6. SACUA and Senate Assembly Skeletal Agendas
7. Free Speech, Free Press: Free Society. Academic Freedom Lecture announcement
8. Letter to the Editor, from L. D'Alecy, Chair of SACUA on behalf of Senate Assembly
9. Letter to Deans, Directors, Department Heads and Faculty from the Office of the President, dated 6 February 1998, regarding the Office of the Vice-President for Research
10. Senate Assembly 1997-1998 Listing by Academic Unit
11. Senate Assembly 1997-1998 Alphabetical Listing
12. Suggested Motion for Senate Assembly, dated 16 February 1998
13. Committee Volunteer and Nomination Form 1998
14. Post Tenure Review

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF 26 JANUARY 1998

Consideration of the minutes of 26 January 1998 were postponed pending incorporation of amendments to remarks by the guest speaker as requested by the guest speaker.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair D'Alecy announced:

1. The Academic Freedom Lecture will occur on 16 March 1998.
2. Members of the Senate Assembly have been provided with a Committee Volunteer and Nomination Form (item 13).
3. SACUA will follow up on academic computing issues introduced by J. M. Griffiths in her January address to the Senate Assembly. Members who wish to provide input on the subject should contact the SACUA office.
4. A letter written on behalf of the Senate Assembly (item 8) has been communicated to the Michigan Daily and will be published.
5. Candidates for election to SACUA have been invited to provide written statements for publication in the University Record prior to the March election.
6. Remarks from the President and Provost to SACUA on the subject of post-tenure review have been distributed to Senate Assembly members (item 14).

STATEMENTS REGARDING POST-TENURE REVIEW

Professor Lafortune asked if SACUA will transmit the statements by President and Provost to the deans. Professor Deskins responded that the Senate Assembly should ask the president or provost to transmit their remarks to the deans. Professor Lawson asked that the statements be transmitted to the deans at Flint and Dearborn campuses, as well. Chair D'Alecy pointed out that it was appropriate for the provost to communicate directly to the deans through the Academic Programs Group (APG), but that the appropriate communication mechanism to the Flint and Dearborn campuses was through the president.

REPORT FROM THE RESEARCH POLICIES COMMITTEE

At 3:46 P.M., Chair D'Alecy invited Professor House to report from the Research Policies Committee. Professor House said that his committee functions in a cooperative, consultative relationship with the Vice President for Research. He explained that this year the committee had functioned as a conduit for views of faculty and committee members about potential future directions for the Office of the VPR. He said that strong support and appreciation had been expressed for the role of the OVPR in supporting research that cuts across academic units. He described interactions of the RPC with Provost Cantor during the "discovery" process to review the role of the OVPR, and he said that the committee felt that the position should be continued in the future as an Executive Vice President who reports directly to the President. He called attention to distributed item 9, and he noted with the exception of the reporting line, most of the recommendations of the committee appeared to have been represented in the new proposed model for the office. He said that he expected approval by the Regents this week and that a search for a new VPR would follow shortly thereafter.

Professor House said that the RPC has dealt with additional matters, including support for tuition, and issues of environmental safety and health. He said there was discussion about standardizing and improving procedures for hiring and promotion of primary research faculty. He said that the committee would continue to evaluate issues related to research, including academic integrity, health and safety, classified research, and national funding. Professor House concluded his report at 4:05 P.M.

REPORT FROM THE ADMISSIONS STUDY GROUP

Professor Kleinsmith reported that the Admissions Study Group is seeking information about any roles faculty have played in undergraduate admissions in the past, and he invited members with information to contact the committee.

REPORT FROM THE TENURE COMMITTEE

At 4:07 P.M., Chair D'Alecy asked Professor Garvin to provide a report from the Tenure Committee. Professor Garvin said that the Tenure Committee had received a charge from SACUA to examine policies and procedures used by different units in their tenure processes. He said that the committee has collected information and is in the process of analyzing it, with the objective of preparing a report for Fall 1998. Garvin said that issues before the committee include how external reviewers are chosen, how teaching is evaluated, and how important service is judged to be. He said the committee was also examining lines of authority for tenure decisions. He invited comments from faculty, addressed to Tenure.Committee@umich.edu.

Professor Garvin finished his remarks at 4:13 P.M. and Chair D'Alecy invited questions from the floor. Professor Zorn asked if there were problems that precipitated the charge to the Tenure Committee. Professor Garvin replied that he had been informed by SACUA that problems had been reported. Professor Assanis said that the role of the provost should be considered in the tenure process. Professor Garvin expressed agreement. Professor Scheingart asked for additional information about concerns that had been expressed regarding the tenure process. Professor Kossoudji responded that she had knowledge of several grievances filed on procedural grounds that were hampered by the fact that procedures varied excessively. Professor Ward said that faculty are generally unaware of processes and administrative functions related to tenure decisions. He said that it would be a major accomplishment if the processes could be successfully conveyed to the faculty. He recommended that the Tenure Committee work with key representatives of the different units.

Professor Olson said that the Regents' Bylaws delegated to deans full authority in tenure decisions if their units lack executive committees. He said that deans thereby may use any process, but that he did not think the latitude was generally known. He said there were opportunities for abuse in the system and that the best time to correct the potential for abuse is when there is no case pending. Professor MacAdam said that a report from the Tenure Committee that describes sound practices in tenure decisions would be welcome. Professor Deskins said that the Senate Assembly would be on firm ground if it insisted that whatever goes on in the units is applied fairly and uniformly, and in a manner that has been codified.

REPORT FROM THE STUDENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair D'Alecy invited Professor Olving to report from the Student Relations Committee at 4:25 P.M. Professor Olving pointed out that the Senate Assembly had received a written report from his committee within the past year. He said that since the time of the report, his committee has considered issues including living-learning centers, student housing, and matters of alcohol and substance abuse. He said that Vice President Hartford has generally attended meetings of the advisory committee, and that the advice from the committee appears to receive serious attention. He pointed out that in the most recent past meeting, the committee had considered the new residency requirements approved by the Board of Regents and had also discussed Library Hours, as part of a general consideration of apparent changes in student study habits. Professor Olving concluded his report at 4:25 P.M.

OLD BUSINESS

Chair D'Alecy called attention to item 12. He pointed out that Regents' Bylaws require the creation of an advisory committee for the new position of Vice President and General Counsel. Professor Ensminger moved that the proposed resolution (item 12) be adopted (Professor Deskins seconded).

Professor Zorn moved that the size of the advisory committee be reduced to 5 faculty, and multiple members seconded. Chair D'Alecy invited discussion of the proposed amendment. Professor Deskins stated that the advisory committee was an opportunity for faculty to participate in university issues, and membership should not be reduced. Professor Zorn replied that smaller groups work better with the advisee.

Vote on the amendment:

Number approving: 6

Number disapproving: 24

Number abstaining: 2

Chair D'Alecy declared that the meeting had fallen below quorum, and he declared further consideration of the main motion postponed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John T. Lehman
Senate Secretary