

Minutes of 20 February 2006  
Circulated 21 February 2006  
Re-Circulated: 19 March 2006  
Approved 20 March 2006

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING  
20 FEBRUARY 2006**

**Present:** Abdo, Albers, Aller, Benamou, Brown, Burant, Carter, Cebulski, Chang, Combi, Garton, Giordani, Gull, Hollar, Hutchinson, Kim, Koopmann, Lange, Lehman, Lemos, Li, Luera, Maddock, Meerkov, Neuman, Ohye, Peters, Pohl, Quint, Sabel, Seabury, Severance, Smith, Stark, Younker, Ziff, Zorn

**Alternates Attending:** Cowdery (Flint - for Prygoski), Dowling (Engineering - for Roe), Durfee (Engineering - for Schultz), Erickson (Dearborn - for Moran), Kimball (LSA-Soc Sci - for Mitani), Mengozzi (Music - for Matjias), Pedraza (LSA-Soc Sci - for Smock), Riles (LSA-Nat Sci - for Becker)

**Requested Alternate, none available:** Farmer (Flint), Fraser (Dearborn), Graham-Bermann (LSA-Soc Sci), Jackson (LSA-Nat Sci), Lachance (Dearborn), Thouless (Engineering)

**Absent:** Agrawal, Annich, Ben-Shahar, Bhavnani, Brock, Brophy (late notice of meeting due to recent election to S.A.), Carson, Fricke, Frost, Green, Hu, Ismail, Liu, Ludlow, Potter, Powell, Pritchard, Sahiner, Sellers, Senkevitch, Stoolman, Streetman, Volling, Watkins, Younger

**MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED**

1. Senate Assembly agenda
2. Draft minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 23 January 2006
3. SACUA Election Procedures Guidelines, approved by Senate Assembly 16 February 2004
4. U-M Senate Assembly Resolution on unit executive committee election and operation, approved 23 January 2006
5. Distributed item 5 from SACUA meeting of 9 January 2006 regarding alternative models for unit executive committee election and operation
6. Benefits update: 2006 results and future strategies.
7. Michigan Healthy Community Initiative
8. Proposed motion for Senate Assembly regarding student excused absences from class, endorsed by SACUA on 13 February 2006
9. Request for Guidance from Senate Assembly and proposed Action Item regarding a petition from School of Dentistry clinical faculty
10. Request for Guidance from Senate Assembly and proposed Action Item regarding eligibility of Assembly alternates for election to SACUA
11. SACUA/Senate Assembly Planning Schedule, updated 16 February 2006

The meeting was convened by the chair at 3:22 P.M. The draft agenda was approved with a change in order of business.

### **VISIT OF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER LAURITA THOMAS**

The chair introduced the guest at 3:23. Ms. Thomas delivered a presentation that directly paralleled distributed item 6. When her remarks concluded, Professor Seabury asked for clarification about "pill cutting". Ms. Thomas explained that it is possible in the case of some medications for benefit recipients to obtain pills at twice the prescribed dose for the same price as lower doses. In these cases, an individual can use a pill cutter to break each pill into halves. Chair Giordani added that some pharmacies would do the pill cutting for the consumer.

Professor Abdo remarked that it is hard to recycle excess medications if patients are moved to new medications by their physicians. She asked whether a solution could be found. Ms. Eichstadt from the benefits office responded that she would bring the matter to the pharmacy benefits committee.

Chair Giordani asked Ms. Thomas to clarify why some retirees have no incentive to change from an existing Blue Cross Blue Shield health plan. Ms. Thomas replied that certain retirees were grandfathered in with benefits paid entirely by the U-M, and hence they had no financial incentive to switch to a cheaper plan.

Professor Lehman asked whether there was any difference between the financial incentives being used to encourage faculty to switch health plans and the concept of "steerage" that had been rejected by faculty governance several years ago. Mr. Thomas replied that the current system is based on recommendations from the CHipD committee whereby the U-M institutional contribution to health care is 85% of the cost of the two least expensive benefits plans. She said that this fixed contribution is applied to any plan that a person selects.

### **WELL-BEING INITIATIVE**

At 3:42 P.M. Ms. Thomas turned the podium over to Ms. LaVaughn Palmer-Davis, senior director for health and well-being. She delivered an abbreviated presentation and directed the audience to more extensive presentation materials in distributed item 7. She described the initiative as a long term strategy announced by President Coleman in speech to the Regents in April 2004.

When her prepared remarks concluded, a member of the Assembly and Chair Giordani suggested that it would be more helpful if faculty were issued vouchers to use the North Campus recreation facility one day per week rather than reserve a single day for use gratis. Ms. Palmer-Davis declared the idea to be an excellent one.

### **CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF JANUARY SENATE ASSEMBLY**

The minutes of 23 January 2006 were approved with 3 abstentions of record.

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**ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY 022006-1**

Chair Giordani called attention to distributed item 8. He explained that SACUA recommends that the Assembly endorse a cover letter to university faculty asking them to honor student requests for excused absence from class if the students must travel to represent the university in official activities. He declared SACUA's recommendation to be an Active Motion before the Assembly.

A member of the Assembly asked whether there was any overview group looking at the amount of commitment students are expected to make to activities outside the classroom. Chair Giordani replied that the Academic Performance Committee of Advisory Board on Intercollegiate Athletics assumes that function for student athletes. Professor Koopmann added that students are expected to provide ample notice to their professors, and added further that the athletics program would provide assistance to faculty in mitigating disruptions of academic progress.

Vote on the Active Motion:

Number approving- 32

Number disapproving- 0

Abstentions of record- 3

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Chair Giordani called attention to distributed item 9. He said that SACUA was placing the following request for guidance and proposed action item before the Assembly.

**Request for guidance from Senate Assembly**

**Background:** Clinical faculty from the School of Dentistry have presented the Assembly Secretary with a petition stating the following:

*We the undersigned, being non-tenure-track clinical faculty at the University of Michigan, believe that all clinical faculty should have the opportunity to participate in the on-line evaluation of academic administrators that has been developed by the University Senate. Accordingly, we petition the U-M Senate Assembly and the Administration Evaluation Committee to extend this courtesy to ourselves and our peers. (37 signatures)*

**Question:** If a roster of clinical faculty, their affiliations, and uniqnames can be obtained from the Michigan Administration Information System (MAIS) does the Assembly want to empower the AEC to conduct on-line evaluations on behalf of the clinical faculty?

The AEC evaluation system is considered open and available to any governance group on this campus or elsewhere. It has already been provided to LEO so that they may conduct their own evaluations of academic administrators. One alternative is that the AEC could

provide the system software to a recognized working group of clinical faculty so as to facilitate their own evaluations.

**PROPOSED ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY**

The Assembly authorizes the Administration Evaluation Committee (AEC) to facilitate on-line evaluation of academic administrators by clinical faculty in a manner that is effective and acceptable to the clinical faculty.

Discussion- Members of the Assembly asked about the status of previous inquiries about assistant librarian and LEO participation in on-line evaluations. Chair Giordani replied that several Assembly committees are studying the first issue. Professor Lehman added that the evaluation system software has been shared with LEO and that LEO leadership has expressed the intention of conducting evaluations on the AEC model this year.

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**ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY 022006-2**

Professor Kimball proposed a substitute motion to the proposed action offered by SACUA. He moved that Senate Assembly delegates to SACUA authority to respond to requests from additional bodies for inclusion in the on-line evaluation process. Professor Lehman expressed acceptance of the substitute motion on behalf of SACUA.

Vote on the Active Motion-

The action was approved by unanimous vote (39) with none opposing and no abstentions of record.

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**VISIT OF PROVOST GRAMLICH**

The provost joined the meeting at 4:13 P.M. and Chair Giordani invited him to address the Assembly. The provost called attention to distributed item 5 and reviewed alternative models for selection of executive committee members. He cited Regents' Bylaw Section 11 as stating that unit executive committee members are appointed by the Board of Regents on recommendation of the university president. He said that he would not agree with Assembly Action 012306-2 which reads "The name of the eligible candidate with the largest number of votes is to be submitted to the Provost for subsequent Regental approval." He said that he could foresee cases where the administration would want to go to the second vote getter. He said that he would have to prepare a memorandum of understanding, but that he would be willing to go along with the spirit of model "F2" whereby the names of the two top candidates are submitted and one is selected.

Professor Abdo asked the provost to provide examples of cases whereby the top candidate would be passed over. Provost Gramlich replied that his office might act so if there was no diversity on the executive committee and if a slight difference in votes

would have remedied the situation. He said that diversity could be thought of in terms of gender or minority status, or even disciplinary perspective. He said that his office has almost always recommended the top vote getter. He said that flexibility would be helpful. He said his office would detail its reasoning but in a way that protects anonymity.

Professor Koopmann asked the provost to respond to a different likelihood: that a dean does not want to work with the person elected by the faculty. Koopmann said that he thought that would be a bad reason to select a second candidate. Provost Gramlich replied that he liked to think that he would not consider that rationale to be as worthy as the others. He noted, however, that he would remain provost for only two more months and that it was likely he would not face such a decision.

Professor Lange asked whether the provost was saying that he or his successor would act independently of the vote of Senate Assembly. The provost replied that the Bylaws are what they are, and that executive committee procedures rest with the units. He added again that deviation from election results have been relatively rare. Various Assembly members asked for clarification of current process in the provost's office. The provost replied that details vary by school and that it seems the Assembly is proposing a change to the schools.

Abdoo- clarification of process

Professor Kimball said that it seemed as though information flow is an issue, and he wondered whether model F2 would address the issue. Professor Riles pointed out that he had served on the Unit Shared Governance Task Force, and that the provost's representative had made it absolutely clear that specific details involving individual units would not be disclosed; summary statistics only would be provided. He said that faculty would not even learn for sure who had won the election. He expressed his opinion that faculty ought to learn when the Regents reject their elected representative. Professor Abdoo stated that it would be helpful to share with the units the reasons for rejecting their elected representatives.

Professor Younker stated that under the model adopted by the Assembly, if a name is rejected and the unit has to re-vote, she is not sure why this provides more transparency than model F2. Professor Seabury commented that in his meeting with SACUA on 13 February 2006 the provost had characterized faculty governance as a "limited democracy". Seabury said that he had been unable to find a definition for "limited democracy" but that he was concerned about the situation in which hierarchy trumps democracy. The provost replied that he understood the concern and added that one option was for the Assembly to ask the Regents to change the Bylaws governing executive committee appointments.

Professor Meerkov pointed out that the so-called "Rule of Two" (i.e., at least two names are submitted for each open seat) is not present in the Regents' Bylaws but rather seems to have been invented by fiat of a past provost. The provost replied that there is a long tradition whereby the proposal to the Regents comes from the president. A

member of the Assembly declared that the Assembly's model F1 well within the Regents Bylaws. He said it imposes a high cost on a provost who rejects the will of the faculty. He said the faculty want it to be a big deal when the provost turns down the vote of the faculty.

Professor Riles described a recent case in which the person elected by a 30% margin was passed over, though both he and the selected individuals were both white males. Provost Gramlich responded that he did not know any of the individuals involved in that case and that he could not comment further, adding that he did not wish to criticize his predecessor. He acknowledged that model F1 adopted by the Assembly has the advantage of being quite clear, and that he understood the argument.

A member of the Assembly noted that the provost had expressed support only for the spirit of model F2, and that it appeared there would be no guarantees that the provost would adhere to it. He added that model F1, in contrast, has some substance and consequences. Provost Gramlich replied that he would be wary about binding his successors by agreeing to particulars. Professor Riles asked the provost to confirm explicitly whether enough details, including names of rejected candidates, would be provided so that faculty would know if their representatives were being passed over. The provost replied that his office would not supply specific names.

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**ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY 022006-3**

Professor Kimball moved that the Senate Assembly reaffirms its vote on model F1 whereby the name of the eligible candidate with the largest number of votes is to be submitted to the Provost for subsequent Regental approval (multiple seconds).

Vote on the Active Motion:

Number approving- 26

Number disapproving- 6

Number abstaining- 5

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**SACUA NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Chair Giordani reported that of 13 nominees proposed by the Nominating Committee, only 3 have accepted; most have declined citing insufficient time for service or other conflicts. He called attention to distributed item 10, requesting guidance from Senate Assembly:

**Request for guidance from Senate Assembly**

**Background:** Four seats on SACUA are up for election this March. The nominating committee is experiencing a low acceptance rate. Furthermore, no one from the Medical School or Engineering is eligible this year owing to apportionment limits.

**Question:** Can people who have served as alternates to the Senate Assembly be deemed eligible to stand for election to SACUA?

The Rules of the University Senate, the Senate Assembly and the Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs state: (Article II.3) "Such alternate may vote and participate in the meeting to the same extent as any regular member."

The Rules further state (Article III,4(1)): "Eligibility for membership on SACUA shall be limited to voting members of the University Senate who are current members of the Senate Assembly, or who have served on Senate Assembly during the previous five years, or who have served as chairs of standing Senate Assembly Committees during the previous five years if they have served on Senate Assembly at any time."

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**ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY 022006-4**

Chair Giordani announced that SACUA has endorsed the following Action Item and offers it to the Assembly for clarification of the eligibility of Assembly alternates:

The Assembly declares that eligibility for membership on SACUA shall include voting members of the University Senate who have been elected as alternates on Senate Assembly during any of the previous five years.

Discussion- One member said that there was no controversy about the action, particularly under the current situation. Professor Maddock said that it would be nice if an alternate had actually served at an Assembly meeting. Professor Lange said that she supported the idea of saying that all alternates are eligible, and that it makes sense to open up eligibility.

Vote on the Active Motion:

Number approving- 34  
Number disapproving- 2  
Number abstaining- 3

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**OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

There was no additional business.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

John T. Lehman  
Senate Secretary

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**University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 5.02:**  
*Governing Bodies in Schools and Colleges*

In each school, college, or degree granting division of the University, including those at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and at the University of Michigan-Flint, the governing faculty shall be in charge of the affairs of the school, college, or division, except as delegated to the executive committee, if any, and except that in the School of Graduate Studies the governing board shall be the executive board, and in the Medical School shall be the executive faculty.

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