

Minutes of 22 September 2014 Senate Assembly Meeting  
Circulated 23 September 2014  
Re-circulated 20 October 2014  
Re-circulated 13 November 2014  
Approved 17 November 2014

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
SPECIAL UNIVERSITY SENATE MEETING  
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING  
22 SEPTEMBER 2014

**Present:** Adunbi, Adlerstein-Gonzalez, Atchade, Baker, Biteen, Bradley, Chen, Cervetti, Danziger, Dolins, Ellis, Fagerlin, Fraser, Garcia, Grafe, Grosh, Hayes, Hershovitz, Holland, Jacobsen, Keshamouni, Kileny, Lehman, Lim, Liu, Malek, Masten, Mondro, Oey, Raphael, Rothman, Schaefer, Schloss, Schultz, Silveira, D. Smith, E.L. Smith, Silveria, Szymanski, Veatch, Weineck, Young, Ziff

**Alternate Requested:** Battacharrya, Burrow, Casida, Gocek, Johnson, Katapodi, Nielsen

**Alternates:** Wraight, Csankovszki, Hopkins, Kao

**Absent:** Barolo, Beck, Bertacco, Broglio, Brown, Campbell, Cohn, Cotera, Custer, Fiore, Friesen, Kee, Kirshner, Mitchell, Pandey, Primus, Princen, Ro, Ryan, Swain, Turnley, Wang, Winful

**MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED**

1. Senate Assembly Agenda
2. Minutes of the 21 April 2014 Senate Assembly meeting
3. Remarks of the outgoing Chair, Professor Karen Staller, dated 21 April 2014
4. Senate Assembly Committee nominations
5. Senate Assembly Committee charges

**SENATE ASSEMBLY**

Chair Masten convened the meeting of the Senate Assembly at 3:25 P.M. The proposed agenda was approved.

**MINUTES**

The draft minutes of 21 April 2014 were approved.

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

The next meeting of the Senate Assembly will be on 20 October 2014. The meeting will include a candidates' forum for the Board of Regents election.

**APPROVAL OF SENATE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS AND COMMITTEE CHARGES**

Chair Masten called attention to distributed items 4 and 5; he invited a motion to approve the slate of committee memberships proposed by SACUA as well as the committee charges. Several members moved and seconded the motion.

Vote on the Active Motion: The action was approved unanimously without dissent or abstentions of record.

The meeting of the Senate Assembly adjourned at 3:27 P.M. and a Special Meeting of the University Senate was convened immediately.

### **UNIVERSITY SENATE**

Chair Masten convened a Special Meeting of the University Senate at 3:27 P.M. The proposed agenda was approved.

### **MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED**

1. University Senate agenda.

### **VISIT OF UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT**

Chair Masten introduced President Mark Schlissel and invited him to give his first address as president to the University Senate. The new president told the Senate that he wanted to learn what is most important to them. He said that he wanted to make the UM a place where faculty can fulfill their ambitions as scholars and teachers. He stated that faculty own the academic standards of the institution, including policies for tenure and promotion. He said that ownership is shared with the administration but that faculty have the first and loudest voice on academic matters. On administrative and business matters, he said he thought the university leadership had the first voice, but needs to exercise early and iterative consultation with the faculty so that they work together from the earliest stages, are as transparent as possible, and make the best decisions. The president concluded his introductory remarks at 3:33 P.M. and invited comments and questions from the Senate.

Professor Holland asked the president to share his thoughts about the low number of minorities on campus. The president replied that it was a shared problem with no obvious or immediate solution. He called attention to a report posted recently to the provost's website: ([http://provost.umich.edu/reports/Diversity Equity Inclusion Report.pdf](http://provost.umich.edu/reports/Diversity%20Equity%20Inclusion%20Report.pdf)) He said that the administration has recently hired an enrollment manager who would oversee and coordinate admissions and financial aid. He explained that we need to identify prospective students with the talent and capacity to succeed. We need to encourage every talented rising senior in Michigan to apply to their flagship institution, and then recruit them across the full breadth of society. He said it was important to create a welcoming campus climate as a place to talk about differences and disagreements. He acknowledged that faculty own the process of defining areas for searches, of running the searches and recruitment, and therefore they should be mindful of the fact that new areas of scholarship might be defined where diversity of the applicant pool might expand. He said the administration must keep the dialog on the front burner, hold faculty leadership accountable, and place quality above tradition and area. He added that we should consider the staff as well, and make them feel genuinely valued. He further acknowledged

that we will not fix this challenge in 3 to 5 years, it will require a long-term continuous commitment.

Professor Poe asked the president what have been his biggest surprises, both positive and negative, after arriving at the University of Michigan. President Schlissel replied that he was thrilled to see that despite the economic hardships of the state and nation, the UM is financially strong and the campus physical infrastructure is in great condition. He noted that UC Berkeley dealt with its own financial crisis by furlough and deferred maintenance. He then said that although faculty are individually collaborative and open about their teaching and research, the decentralization of this university impedes cross-unit strategic collaboration at levels higher than individual faculty.

Asked about his opinion of the role of Dearborn and Flint campuses, the president replied that he did not discern a lot of strategic coherence that brings the regional campuses into the thinking of the university as a whole. He said he still needs to learn more about UM-Dearborn and UM-Flint, but that the campuses are very different from Ann Arbor in terms of the populations they serve, the competitiveness of admission, and the trajectories that students take. He said they are fulfilling important regional missions that are at the heart of what the university does. He said a challenge he was going to take up during his first year was how to think strategically about the three campuses as components of the whole university. He said he would need the help of the faculty from the regional campuses in this effort.

Professor Kileny pointed out that undergraduate enrollment has exceeded expectations and is taxing resources. He asked how the president proposed to meet the demands and increase resources without increasing tuition. President Schlissel replied that we need to be thoughtful about the optimal number of students. He said it was wonderful that the UM is proving such an attractive institution to so many students. But, he said, we need better models to achieve the targets that have been set for admissions and to get the offer numbers in line. In the longer term, however, he said we need to consider the carrying capacity of our campus. He said we would need to find a 'sweet spot' that balances tuition and state support within a workable financial model, but he was not yet sure what the optimal student population size should be.

Professor Gingerich asked the president about guns on campus. He said he was surprised over the summer to see what he described as "pallets of assault rifles" moved into the Museums building where he works. He also referenced a recent scare in the Chemistry building involving open display of a mock firearm. The president replied that his best understanding of the recent event was that a Naval ROTC candidate in camouflage fatigues was carrying a model rifle to its locker and that he violated clear procedures for transporting anything that looks like an assault weapon on a college campus. He said he was glad the student was not shot and killed. In reaction, ROTC personnel are reinforcing their procedures. He said at a broader level he is terrified about guns on campus because the UM is a big, open, public place that presents a target for crazy people. He added that the head of the DPS is a professional police officer and that his staff consists of well trained professionals, as well. He said he learned that the purpose of transmitting texts and email warnings is not to communicate with people in the affected building but rather to prevent others from coming to the site of the action. He said the executive leadership of the UM would soon conduct a 'table-top exercise' where they will go through various training scenarios

based on the history of what has happened elsewhere and what our professionals think might happen here.

Professor Riles remarked that he was just beginning his lecture to a class of 200 physics students when the alert about a possible shooter was called. He noted that his classroom could not be locked from the inside, nor could the doors be barricaded because they opened outward. He recalled a taskforce report a few years ago that cited the cost of refurbishing locks campus-wide as several million dollars, but no action was taken because of the expense. He added that the cost of a shooting incident would far exceed that amount. President Schlissel said it was a great point and that he would discuss it with security professionals. He said he would need to be convinced that having lockable doors would make a significant difference, but if it would, the cost is not a big issue for this university in the area of student and faculty safety.

Professor Merlin from Physics pointed out that about half of their students come from overseas. He said many universities have established branches in Asia or South America, which provide opportunities for faculty to teach abroad. In the long run, however, this may limit the number of students who come here. The president replied that he was not a huge believer in building brick and mortar outposts around the world. He does favor selected collaborations and broad spectrum engagements with important universities in other parts of the world. He said the U.S. remains a magnet for talented students and faculty scholars from around the world. He said we need to make it easier to allow them to come here and to emigrate here if that is their desire because it increases the wealth of the nation.

Professor Michalowski from Near Eastern Studies declared that there is a crisis in graduate studies in the humanities in LSA. Units are entirely dependent on internal funds and it is hard to raise money for graduate programs. He said the underfunding is causing graduate studies to become extinct. He added that regulations imposed by the Rackham School of Graduate Studies are killing their program. He said his department could not compete with institutions like Yale and Harvard because those private universities offer five years of fellowship support rather than GSI support. The president replied that those points were common nation-wide, and they highlight the need for imaginative thinking as well as money. He said there is a common set of issues across the country affecting areas that cannot tap into government support. He suggested the faculty must ask what we are training people to be. Is it to create faculty scholars or is an education in the Classics, for example, a public good? He said graduate education is enormously expensive per student. There is a pot of money that runs the university. We could decide to guarantee five year stipends to all students, but then the faculty would have to become smaller or building maintenance would have to suffer. He said it is a value judgment that faculty have to make. He acknowledged that it is hard to explain the importance of graduate education to donors who tend to be alumni of professional schools or undergraduate colleges. What he has found is that it is possible to raise money for areas of scholarship and then to apply some of that money to graduate education. He said the faculty need to discuss the value judgments in a forum like the Senate or Senate Assembly. He said he will investigate what has been done up to now.

Professor Smith referenced media accounts of a current glut of postdoctoral scholars who could not find suitable jobs and asked the president for his thoughts on the subject. The president

responded that we need to think about the sustainable size for the careers we are training people for. He noted that our profession is encountering the classic Malthusian problem of a resource base that grows arithmetically while the population grows geometrically. A recent commentary in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* argued that we should be training a cadre of career researchers who don't run labs but do high level science and do not persist in thinking that every lab needs six trainees. He said we need to rethink the sustainable size of advanced training.

Professor Meerkov noted that the UM is always cited as a solid academic institution but never the top one, and asked the president about his ambitions. President Schlissel replied that he is not a strong believer in rankings produced by *U.S. News*, which he said was a commercial enterprise that sells information to make money. He said excellence came down to hiring really good people, having a realistic but very high bar for tenure, providing infrastructure and support that allows the people we hire to be successful, and developing a shared *esprit de corps*. He said he wants the UM to become better every year. He is working with the provost to define academic excellence and what metrics to use to measure it.

Professor Fraser remarked that some university systems like Penn State use a single undergraduate admissions conduit and asked if that model could be applied to increase the enrollments at UM-Flint and UM-Dearborn. The president replied that he was not yet convinced we need to add students to Flint and Dearborn. He said he wanted to get the graduation rate increased to a level we can be proud of. Then he said we can talk about strategies if bigger is what we want to do.

Professor Pedraza commented that she had an opportunity to observe three former UM presidents at close quarters: Presidents Shapiro, Fleming, and Duderstadt. She asked how President Schlissel viewed himself, particularly regarding fundraising. The president replied that from the time he had been an undergraduate at Princeton he had aspired to become like Harold Shapiro. He noted that the UM is unique in possessing 550,000 committed alumni in a global network. He said he views his fundraising efforts in terms of developing relationships with people who can help us achieve our ambitions for the university.

Professor Ziff said that the faculty want academic freedom, support for their research, administrative structures to help their work, support for meetings here and there, and support for assistant professors to succeed. The president replied that his mentor was a top researcher who was also director of small research institute. His mentor told him that he wanted to be the only one in the building who had to worry about anything but science, and Schlissel said that the statement resonated with him. He observed that faculty are actually very conservative and that friction occurs when someone tries to change the milieu in which they operate. When business changes are instituted to try to increase the amount of money available for the mission of the institution, motivations are suspect. It creates a challenge in working together to achieve a common set of goals.

Professor Davis (Law School) inquired about the relationship between the UM and the city of Detroit. The president replied that he took a vacation before he came to the UM and that he went to Detroit for part of the time. While there he received a personal behind the scenes tour

of the city. He learned that the city is fascinating and is representative of issues that challenged urban, manufacturing-oriented cities across the country. He subsequently learned that the UM is doing a lot with Detroit, but there is not optimal coherence of the efforts. He said he has a presidential advisory group consisting of top end donors with whom he will meet next month. He said he has decided to make Detroit the topic of that meeting.

Professor Borer asked how the UM is charting its course in the new world of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). The president replied that we need to continuously innovate; he believes that online modes of delivering content will augment but not replace what we do on campus. Learning is much more than absorbing content. He said he regarded the online modes as a way to help with learning in an engaging way. He suggested they might make it possible for UM students to take some courses remotely while on they are on a semester abroad. He said the UM has a mission to serve society through education, and that online and free course content will enhance the Academy.

In response to a suggestion that the UM buys property in Ann Arbor and taking it off the tax rolls, the president replied that Ann Arbor is a fantastic place, and that the city and the university benefit from each other. He pointed out that the UM is a tremendous source of jobs and that although the UM does not pay taxes, its resident employees surely do. He said the jobs pay above average and campus construction supports a trades industry that tends to be local. He has already reached out to the presumptive mayor and they have plans to meet after the general election. He noted that the UM already possesses tremendous land for expansion if that is what is wanted, and that he does not expect much more acquisition.

The president left the meeting at 4:30 P.M.

Chair Masten asked for a quorum count prior to placing on the table two Action Items proposed by SACUA for vote by the University Senate in accordance with the Senate Rules. Senate Office staff reported that the sign-in sheets recorded only 83 senators, short of the quorum of 100 required to transact business. Professor Lehman asked members to signify by raising their hands if they were members of the Senate who had failed to sign the attendance roll. Only three members raised their hands. Chair Masten declared a lack of quorum.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

John T. Lehman  
Interim Senate Secretary

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**University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 4.01:**

*The University Senate*

The senate is authorized to consider any subject pertaining to the interests of the university, and to make recommendations to the Board of Regents in regard thereto. Decisions of the University

Senate with respect to matters within its jurisdiction shall constitute the binding action of the university faculties.

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**University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 4.04:**

*The Senate Assembly*

The Senate Assembly shall serve as the legislative arm of the senate.

The assembly shall have power to consider and advise regarding all matters within the jurisdiction of the University Senate which affect the functioning of the university as an institution of higher learning, which concern its obligations to the state and to the community at large, and which relate to its internal organization insofar as such matters of internal organization involve general questions of educational policy.

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**Rules of the University Senate, the Senate Assembly and the Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs:** In all cases not covered by rules adopted by the Senate, the procedure in Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.