

Minutes of 19 November 2007
Circulated 20 November 2007
Re-Circulated 17 December 2007
Approved 17 December 2007

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING
19 NOVEMBER 2007

Present: Abdoo, Altschuler, Andjelkovic-Zochowka, Brock, Brown, Currie, Denver, Dey, Eagle, Fitzgerald, Fossum, Fraser, Friedman, Frier, Frost, Garton, Geary, Graham-Bermann, Green, Hirshorn, Jackson, Karni, Ketefian, Lehman, Lomax, MacAdam, Mahalingam, Maher, Mehta, Moore, Navvab, Ottaviani, Patil, Poe, Potter, Powell, Primus, Queen, Riles, Smith (chair), Stark, Thornton, Thouless, Volling, von Buelow, Wakefield, Ziff

Requested Alternate, none available: Peters (Dentistry)

Alternates: Highfil, Lorenzon, Zhang

Absent: Adriens, Anspach, Avi-Yonah, Brophy, Carson, Ensminger, George, Gull, Hesseltine, Kabamba, Maddock, Maybaum, Mueggler, Rahme, Reisch, Roe, Rothman, Sabel, Samson, Sellers, Stoolman, Sweeney, Thompson, Younger

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Senate Assembly agenda
2. Draft minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 22 October 2007
3. Regents' Communication, dated November 2007
4. DRAFT: Principles of Faculty Involvement in Institutional and Academic Unit Governance at the University of Michigan, 2d ed.
5. University of Michigan Other Qualified Adult Resource Guide

The meeting was convened by Chair Smith at 3:15 P.M. The draft agenda was approved.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 22 October 2007 were approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Smith announced:

1. Senate Assembly members will soon receive a letter from the chair asking them to make a pledge or donation to the Faculty Fund for Need-Based Undergraduate Scholarships. Professor Ketefian added that Senate Assembly members should promote the scholarship program within their home units.
2. The annual evaluation of academic administrators commenced 15 November, and will continue to the end of the month.

VISIT OF UNIVERSITY PROVOST TERESA SULLIVAN

The guest arrived at 3:25 P.M. Chair Smith yielded the floor for the provost's annual address to the faculty. The provost gave prepared remarks using a PowerPoint slide presentation (<http://www.provost.umich.edu/speeches/SenateAssembly2007.html>). She concluded those remarks at 3:57 P.M.

Dr. Fraser asked whether the new professorships proposed by the university president would be accompanied by an increase in the undergraduate student population. The provost said it would not, and that she would like to hold the size of the undergraduate populations at its current level. Professor Brown asked whether there has been a decline in teaching loads during recent years. The provost said that she has been asking deans about the matter, and she noted that many factors affect teaching loads, including the market force of competition with peer universities.

Professor Friedman asked whether satisfactory language has been developed for the draft university shared governance document (distributed item 4). The provost said that the office of general counsel has already offered some language and that she would be discussing the matter with the executive officers the following day.

Professor Ketefian asked how the administration has been reacting to the report and procedures voted in place by the Senate Assembly last year regarding reform of faculty grievance procedures. The provost said that Professor Root from Social Work would be chairing a task force to develop a set of principles. She said that she did not see wisdom in moving from one set of procedures that do not work to other set before a firm set of principles is adopted by all parties.

A member of the Assembly asked for more detail about technology transfer. She said that the office seems to show special interest in disclosures about potential patents. Another member expressed concern about the rising cost of tuition, even if some of the tuition money is used for financial aid. The provost answered that she wished there were better alternatives. She reminded the Assembly that the president has been making special appeals to donors for endowment gifts for financial aid.

Dr. Fraser pointed out that the university administration has been shifting more and more to a top-down management style that more closely mimics corporate models than the broadly consultative "collegial" model that had previously characterized the institution. He asked her to comment on this perception and to comment about her own preferences. The provost replied that her preference was for the collegial style, but that universities do much that does not fit that model. She cited the operation of the hospital as one example. She said that faculty have legitimate domains but that competitive pressures create difficulties that ultimately require business decisions. She cited housing as a second example. She said she thought it was incorrect to call the U-M's style corporate; she noted that the U-M has stakeholders, not shareholders.

Professor Currie asked whether there has been any consideration of the research space the new faculty will need. Provost Sullivan replied that guidelines for position requests have not been prepared yet, but that position requests will have to include plans for housing the faculty and for mentoring them. She said that startup packages from her office will include renovation costs but that sponsoring units may have to supply additional equipment, etc. She said her office will cover base salary costs and that the positions would revert to the provost's office when the new hires either retire or leave the university.

Professor Eagle asked whether requests for newly proposed assistant professorships would come from departments or deans? The provost replied that the requests could come from either place. She added, however, that the positions cannot be joint appointments. She said that the tenure success rates for jointly appointed junior faculty are low in her experience, and that it is essential in her view that the new hires have a well defined home department.

Professor Abdo asked whether Fall Study Days are being re-evaluated. She said there seems to be a growing perception that they are vacation days rather than study days. The provost replied that it would not surprise her if perceptions are evolving. She said that institution of the Fall Break was a source of great contention with student groups, and that she would not be anxious to reopen the discussion. She expressed concern about the coming year because Labor Day is so late into September. However, she said, the U-M would not start classes before 1 September because that is an important housing lease date.

The provost concluded her visit at 4:15 P.M.

VISIT OF INTERIM GENERAL COUNSEL GLORIA HAGE

The guest joined the meeting at 4:15 P.M. She reviewed for the Assembly recent developments about same-sex domestic partners benefits and she distributed item 5 to the Assembly members. Then she reported about recent arguments before the Michigan Supreme Court. She said the justices were actively engaged and asked many questions. She said that the U-M's *amicus* brief was passionate in saying that all the university wanted was to be left alone to decide what benefits are in the best interest of employees. She said a decision will not be rendered by the Court before next year.

She invited questions at 4:28 P.M. Professor Frier asked whether the number of domestic partners claiming benefits has declined. GC Hage said that there is no evidence to support a decline. She concluded her remarks at 4:30 P.M.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

There was no other business.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

John T. Lehman

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.
