

Minutes of 21 November 2011 Senate Assembly Meeting
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING
21 NOVEMBER 2011

Present: Alderstein-Gonzalez, Barald, Barber, Bayraktar, Bielinska, Booth, Borer, Carson, DiPietro, Dorsey, Folger, Goldman, Gumicio, Hirshorn, Hollingsworth, Jagadish, Johnson, Jones, Kearfott, Koopmann, Larsen, Lehman, Lusmann, Mansfield, Moore, Mora, Odetola, Pipe, Prygoski, Rothman, Schriber, Shore, Soellner, Staller, Szymanski, Von Buelow, Westlake, Williams, Wolfe, Wong, Wright, Zemgulys

Requested Alternate, None Available: Aronoff, Davis, Giordani, Millunchick, Muehlberger, Nevett, Thompson

Alternates: None

Absent: Ahbel-Rappe, Armitage, Atkins, Beck, Christman, Crane, Friese, Hardin, Holland, Jenckes, Koopman, Mars, McCullagh, Miller, Nunoo-Quarcoo, Ortega, Pando Zayas, Poulsen, Shah, Sharma, Sonnega, Sun, Thornton, Unnikrishnan

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Draft Senate Assembly Agenda
2. Draft minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 24 October 2011
3. Health Plan Incentives Task Force Report
4. Strategy Team 2016 - Keeping the Well & At-Risk Healthy Sub-Group document, updated 9 Jun 2011
5. [Budget Study Committee 2010-2011 Report](#)

Chair Barald convened the meeting at 3:23 P.M. The agenda was approved.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 24 October 2011 were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Senate Assembly members should communicate Senate Assembly actions to their respective units, and solicit comments and suggestions from their units.
2. The Senate Assembly meeting of 12 December 2011 will include election of a SACUA nominating committee.

SENATE ASSEMBLY ACTION 112111-1
HEALTH INCENTIVES TASK FORCE REPORT

Chair Barald called attention to distributed item 3. She asked for Senate Assembly approval of the revised report.

Approval was expressed by unanimous vote.

SENATE ASSEMBLY ACTION 112111-2
STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES APPEAL BOARD

Professor Kearfott moved (Rothman seconded) that Senate Assembly approves the appointment of the Chair of the Civil Liberties Board as *ex officio* member of the Student Affairs Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities Appeal Board.

The action was approved by unanimous vote.

VISIT OF VICE PRESIDENT FOR GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The chair introduced vice president Rudgers at 3:29 P.M. The vice president described her personal and professional history as well as the scope of her administrative position. She pointed out the ubiquitous nature of social media and its increasing importance to her office. She said she is searching for the UM's first social media director, who will join the central management team. The vice president said that her office has hired a Mandarin-speaking media director; a Spanish portal already exists. She concluded her prepared remarks at 3:45 P.M.

Professor Boxer asked how developments at the Medical Center are communicated to the public. VP Rudgers said that good communication systems exist within the Medical Center, but that the UM can do a better job of integrating medical developments into the story of the UM at large. The vice president said that the idea for using a child's block M as a logo for Mott's Children's Hospital emerged from the medical school itself. She said that she cooperates with peers at the AAU in articulating communication issues at the national level.

Professor Borer asked how the communications office selects content for its press promotions. The vice president replied that the office has a central news team whose members each have individual beats. That group also makes judgments about newsworthiness. There are also institutional initiatives like sustainability *inter alia* that drive a search for stories. The vice president said that her job is to reflect with vibrancy the image of the university. Doing so requires an understanding of the research mission to communicate effectively. She said that her role is to educate the public about academic issues as well as social issues.

Professor Moore asked whether VP Ruderger's office works with UM-Dearborn. The vice president replied that her office has no directive role there, but that they work with UM-Dearborn's own professionals. Dr. Mansfield asked whether outside media creates a barrier to effective communication by propensity to simplify complex technical matters, such as recent disputes about relativistic physics. The vice president replied that her public relations team has a very good relationship with outside media. She added that challenges remain, nonetheless, and

cited articles about tuition and the cost of attending college. She said that calls for re-evaluation of effective communication and the importance of financial aid. Professor Koopmann remarked that rules regarding tuition and residency status are problematic. The vice president said that her knowledge is outdated but that she would investigate further. She added that a Bloomberg News analysis points to a very high return on investment in a UM education, but that it is not well publicized. Professor Shriver commented that the business school does not report the starting salary of its graduates as a matter of privacy, but that Forbes uses such information in its ranking system. The vice president replied that rankings are a complex issue, and that criteria vary tremendously

The guest left the meeting at 4:20 P.M.

SENATE ASSEMBLY ACTION 112111-3

Chair Barald proposed for action of the Assembly:

Resolved- Senate Assembly hereby 1) affirms the already existing one-year term limitation of the SACUA Chair, and now extends it to the SACUA Vice Chair and 2) affirms the already existing three-year term limits of SACUA and Senate Assembly members, and now extends that to the Senate Secretary.

Discussion-

Secretary Lehman said that he saw merit in the proposal based on recent changes that have extended financial compensation to SACUA members. He pointed out that historical limitation of the SACUA chair's term is linked to the fact that the incumbent receives 50% of their salary directly from the provost's office. Within the last few years, compensation has been extended first to the vice-chair and then to regular SACUA members. Last year compensation started to be extended from the office of the provost to the Secretary, and it amounts to \$5000 per year. Lehman said that over time, the source might be regarded as a reliable stream of revenue and that Assembly members might reasonably start to question where their officers owe their allegiance, particularly when SACUA devotes substantial parts of its meeting in executive session shielded from scrutiny. Nonetheless, he pointed out that there were jurisdictional issues with the motion because the Assembly cannot mandate changes in the Senate Rules, nor can it dictate to individual units. Chair Barald stated that the motion was advisory in nature. SACUA members Goldman, Kearfott, Koopmann and Rothman expressed support for the motion.

Vote on the Active Motion-

Number approving- 31

Number disapproving- 0

Number abstaining- 1

SENATE ASSEMBLY ACTION 112111-4

Chair Barald proposed for action of the Assembly:

Resolved- To expand the range of faculty engagement in central faculty governance and to more fully represent faculty opinions on such matters, Senate Assembly hereby adopts the concept of electronic voting for the action items of the University Senate and the Senate Assembly.

Discussion-

Secretary Lehman said that support for electronic voting would be asked as part of the Administration Evaluation question set this year, and that his sense was that a plebiscite on the issue would garner strong support. He added that the more problematic issues involve the process of governance, rather than the technical issue of voting per se. For example, in the debate last year about extending the tenure probationary period, the action item that prevailed was offered from the Senate floor by Professor Larsen. The action items formally proposed by SACUA in advance of the meeting were defeated. Lehman said that the key issue in electronic voting is determining a democratic and transparent process whereby issues offered for vote are vetted and amended consistent with rules. He added that there were secondary, technical issues, as well, such as whether the electronic votes should be anonymous, or identifiable.

SACUA members Goldman, Kearfott, Koopmann and Rothman expressed support for the motion. Professor Borer asked for increased specificity to define who votes on the substance of the issue proposed for electronic voting, and who is eligible to vote. Several members suggested that the motion could be better phrased. Professor Moore expressed concern that the advent of electronic voting would inadvertently lead to reduced participation in Assembly meetings. Professor Goldman proposed that anonymity should be the default condition of electronic voting. She said that she believed that if faculty had been able to vote electronically about tenure probation, the Regents would not have adopted the administration's proposal. Professor Koopmann responded that he did not think such a vote of the faculty would have influenced the course of events at all. He suggested that the Assembly needs to be very careful about setting the rules and conditions for electronic voting, but that he favored the idea. Professor Shriver said that he was a little concerned that people might vote in haste without proper deliberation. He suggested that any items offered for electronic vote also be accompanied by commentaries from various members about the deeper issues and their implications.

Amended Action Item

The Senate Assembly hereby adopts the concept of electronic voting for selected action items of the University Senate as approved on a case by case basis by the Senate Assembly. All such votes shall be cast anonymously.

Vote on the Active Motion as Amended-

Number approving- 34
Number disapproving- 0
Number abstaining- 0

KEEPING THE WELL & AT-RISK HEALTHY SUB-GROUP MEMBERSHIP

At 4:50 P.M. Chair Barald called attention to distributed item 4. Professor Koopmann pointed out that the administration is once again asking faculty governance to nominate member for a committee on benefits where members are enjoined from talking about committee deliberations. He expressed reservations about supplying nominees for such an exercise, but said that as a downside the administration could claim that faculty governance chose not to participate in discussions. Professor Rothman stated that he served on a similar committee that was charged

with reducing retirement benefits, and that members had to sign an agreement not to disclose anything until decisions were made. Professor Koopmann suggested that Assembly members go back to their units and express dissent to the deans, and ask that the deans communicate the dissatisfaction to Human Resources.

Professor Lusmann said that he served on a committee tasked with health benefits issues and that he was not asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement, but that distributed items were often marked "Draft-not for public distribution." He said although the Senate Assembly represents a constituency it is important for committee members to express their personal opinions and that releasing all information from every meeting could be confusing.

Professor Koopmann expressed frustration about constraints imposed on his disability committee, and the inability to its share deliberations; he pointed out that disability payments are rooted in 1970s and 1980s economics, and have never been adjusted for cost of living. Additional Assembly members expressed opposition to required pre-commitment to nondisclosure.

Professor Moore suggested that the topic be postponed to the December meeting, and called for a quorum check. Mr. Schneider reported that the meeting was below the required quorum of 35.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

John T. Lehman
Senate Secretary

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.

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.