

Minutes of the Senate Assembly Meeting of 9 December 1996
Approved 27 January 1997

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING
MINUTES OF 9 DECEMBER 1996

Chair Dunn convened the meeting at 3:20 P.M.

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Agenda for 9 December 1997
2. SACUA and Senate Assembly Skeletal Agendas
3. Minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 18 November 1996
4. SACUA eligibility
5. SACUA Nominating Committee ballot
6. Health Affairs Advisory Committee

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF 18 NOVEMBER 1996

The minutes of 18 November 1996 were approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Dunn announced that a postal ballot would be distributed to the full Senate in order to elect a representative to the Department of Public Safety oversight committee. Chair Dunn also announced that the Regents' Bylaws stipulate that there be an advisory committee for each Vice-President of the University. He explained that with the institution of a Vice-President for Medical Affairs there was a need to construct a committee for such an advisory function.

Professor Ensminger moved that the name of the Health Affairs Advisory Committee be changed to "Medical Affairs Advisory Committee" and that the committee be advisory to the Executive Vice-President for Medical Affairs (Professor Bryant seconded).

Professor Steneck asked if the name of the vice-president position had in fact been changed from "Health" to "Medical", adding that the potential change had been controversial. Chair Dunn replied that the change had in fact been made by Regental action. Professor Feld asked if there was a new charge to the committee. Chair Dunn said that a new charge would await the appointment of the vice-president.

The active motion was approved unanimously and without abstention of record by voice vote.

SENATE ASSEMBLY AGENDA FOR 1997

Chair Dunn pointed out that formal discussions by the faculty on the subjects of race and gender will open on Martin Luther King Day, with presentations by Dennis Hioshi and Ted Shaw in Room 100 of the Law School. Dunn said that the presentations would highlight legal issues stemming from recent court decisions and would offer an opportunity for faculty to upgrade their understanding.

Dunn said that a report about the Department of Public Safety was expected early in the new year from a committee chaired by Dean Boylan. He explained that the committee is mainly a reconstitution of the original committee that was charged with designing the structure of the unit 5 years ago.

Dunn said that there is a need for continuous oversight of VCM by the faculty. He said that he served on the existing oversight committee, and he invited faculty to relate any experiences with VCM to that committee.

Dunn pointed out that recent experience at the University of Minnesota should warn faculty to keep their attention focused on tenure rules. He said that a report from the Tenure Committee will be coming forward in the next term. Dunn added that the provisional tenure rules for the University of Minnesota were available from the SACUA office.

Chair Dunn said that he hoped to induce future President Lee Bollinger to address the February meeting of the Senate Assembly, because the new president would take up his duties on 1 February 1997.

Chair Dunn urged Senate Assembly members to contact SACUA if they wished to have a discussion of recent matters and events involving the University Hospital.

Dunn announced that a committee of visitors for NCAA re-accreditation would visit the campus early in the new year, and that he hoped to have the committee appear before the Senate Assembly for a question and answer session. He added that a self-study report from the Department of Athletics was available in the SACUA office.

Dunn said that a report from the Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty would be available in March, and that the report would deal with faculty salaries. He asked that if Senate Assembly members had comments or queries that they direct them to the committee chair or to SACUA members.

SACUA NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Ballots were distributed for election of a Nominating Committee for SACUA membership. After several minutes they were collected and Senate Assembly staff members served as tellers. Election results were as follows:

Membership from outgoing SACUA members: Professor Sam Gross and Professor Ronald Lomax. Membership from outgoing Senate Assembly members: Professors Sheila Feld, Pat Maloy, William Hosford, and Jose Alvarez (Professors John Volakis and John Gobetti were elected to alternate status).

VISIT FROM DEAN NANCY CANTOR

Chair Dunn introduced Dean Cantor, Vice-Provost for Graduate Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School, at 3:20 P.M. Dean Cantor announced that the University of Michigan accepts change and innovation, and that graduate students are important agents of change. She said that her goal was to make Rackham a vetting agent for change.

Dean Cantor said that graduate students play a role in consideration of values. She characterized them as new faces on campus who represent a pipeline or conduit to future diversity. She also called them a conduit to non-academic sectors and new academic realities. She said they were partners in interdisciplinary ventures and role models for undergraduates. Cantor quoted Mary Good as saying that the private sector might increasingly want to contribute to training of graduate students as the federal agencies stepped back.

Dean Cantor pursued a theme of "value" for the institution of Rackham. She said that the Graduate School brought new faces to the university, that it represented an institutional record of commitment to diversity, and that it fostered recruitment networks. She said it was an organized community that pursued joint recruiting opportunities with other universities. She said it seeded scholarship about diversity and contributed to understanding the diversity of underrepresentation.

Dean Cantor said that the traditional career patterns for many students in many fields may change in the future, and she called for more institutional research on careers.

Cantor said that she viewed Rackham as a means to seed new ideas. She explained that with the expansion of north and south self-sufficient campuses there was ever more isolation at this university. She said Rackham could build community by making connections between different constituencies. Concrete examples included the program of "Evenings at Rackham", fellows dinners, and study halls; indirect mechanisms included seminars and faculty grants or fellowships. She said that she was trying to reserve some budget capability for seeding new ventures, particularly for fostering interdisciplinary communities. She said that her goal was to achieve a seamlessness between graduate training and the research enterprise.

Cantor characterized Rackham's approach as being one of bottom-up collaborative seeding, with appropriate ceding of direct involvement as programs fledged. She said the School sought pilot programs for multi-year and merit funding, which increase access to professionalizing experiences. She said the School was planning for new realities in non-academic careers through a breadth of training that leads to opportunities in the private sector. She said the programs would be smaller but better funded. She concluded that in the ever present drama of institutional change at the UM, with cost containment on everyone's mind, Rackham was pursuing a unifying and collaborative role.

Dean Cantor concluded her prepared remarks at 4:13 P.M., and Chair Dunn opened the discussion period with a question of his own. He noted that VCM and the growth of professional schools could have a destabilizing effect, and he asked if Rackham was doing anything to stabilize the university and make it cohesive. Dean Cantor replied that she hoped to collect programs together, rather than have everyone go their own way. She noted the existence of 26 official degree-granting programs and many unofficial ones. She said that they have inched their way toward the professional degrees, trying to understand how to bring them together.

Professor Volakis said that he liked the attention given to Interdisciplinary Degree Programs, but he noted that even so, in Engineering IDP students have less assurance that they can stay with the same program for 4 to 5 years in order to get their degree. He said that a more substantial pool of funding was needed for the best students. Dean Cantor replied that arrangements with Engineering in particular had been struck to provide guarantees from the Graduate School for first year funding together with matching funds from the home unit.

Professor Lucente asked about the levels of support available for graduate students in the humanities, and particularly whether the funding trend had been upward or downward in constant dollars. He noted that there seemed to be lots of rhetorical support but little finance, with the result that faculty were positive but students were strongly negative. Dean Cantor responded that funding provided from the Mellon Foundation to the Graduate School included a component of data collection. She said that the data show a change in the mix of support for students in the humanities, with more support at present that is not career-building. She added that the cruel irony is that most students receive funding, but they don't know that they are going to receive it well in advance. She said that Rackham has by necessity always engaged in year to year funding, although it would be desirable to offer multi-year packages. She said that Rackham support packages were individually small, but that the mixed package of support was important.

Professor Volakis noted that students seemed to be organized in their thinking about the stability of support over a five year period, and that ironically the growth areas for the future are short of funds at present. Cantor replied that students vote with their feet and will not enter programs that seem unstable in terms of resources. She said that Rackham is trying to protect emerging programs, but requests for funds to the Provost produce the response that there is no money.

Professor Assanis observed that in Engineering there has been the growth of different kinds of degrees, such as the Masters of Engineering, or the M.E.-M.B.A. He said that the proliferation creates unnecessary confusion about the unit domain versus Rackham's domain. Dean Cantor replied that there is one faculty, and that it would be necessary to address the fact that professional degrees are often feeders to the Ph.D. program.

Chair Dunn thanked Dean Cantor for her remarks.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was presented.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was presented.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John T. Lehman
Senate Secretary