

Minutes of 17 December 2007
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Approved 28 January 2008

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING
17 DECEMBER 2007

Present: Abdo, Altschuler, Andjelkovic-Zochowka, Avi-Yonah, Brock, Brophy, Brown, Eagle, Ensminger, Fitzgerald, Friedman, Frier, Frost, Geary, Gull, Hesseltine, Hirshorn, Jackson, Kabamba, Ketefian, Lehman, Lomax, MacAdam, Maddock, Mahalingam, Maybaum, Mehta, Ottaviani, Patil, Potter, Primus, Riles, Roe, Sabel, Smith (chair), Stark, Thompson, Thornton, Thouless, Volling, Wakefield

Requested Alternate, none available: Becker (LSA-Nat Sci), Fraser (LSA-Soc Sci), Graham-Bermann (LSA-Soc Sci), Powell (Social Work), Samson (Engineering)

Alternates: Fenno (Peters-Dentistry), Highfill (Sweeney-LSA-Humanities), Koopman (Boxer-Medicine),

Absent: Adriaens, Anspach, Carson, Currie, Denver, Dey, Fossum, Garton, George, Green, Karni, Kosch, Li, MacAdam, Maher, Moore, Mueggler, Navvab, Poe, Queen, Rahme, Rothman, Sellers, Stoolman, Tropman, von Buelow, Younger, Ziff

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Draft Senate Assembly Agenda
2. Draft minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 19 November 2007
3. SACUA Nominating Committee Ballot
4. University of Michigan “Committee for a Multicultural University (SACMU) Resolution” passed by the committee on 4 December 2007, and endorsed by SACUA 10 December 2007.
5. [“Five Years Forward: An Address to the University of Michigan Community”, by President Mary Sue Coleman, 15 November 2007.](#)
6. “Five Years Forward” – A précis of the recommendations in President Coleman’s Address in #4 by Bruce Frier.

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 19 November 2007 were approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Smith announced:

1. The next SA meeting will be 28 January 2008. The VP for Financial Affairs will inform the Assembly how the university manages its debt. There may also be a presentation of the Michigan Healthy Community Five Year Plan, and the future of medical benefits.
2. The provost has assembled a task force for revision of grievance procedures. This action is in response to the unanimous vote of the Assembly in its January 2007 meeting.
3. 31 December is the deadline for receipt of funds that will be matched by the president's office for the faculty's need-based undergraduate scholarship fund.

ELECTION OF SACUA NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chair Smith asked Assembly members to complete ballots for the nominating committee. The ballots were tallied by the Senate Office staff, with the outcome that Professors D. Brophy, A. Carson, R. Friedman, M. Navvab, M. Peters, T. Powell, and C. B. Smith were elected to serve as the committee.

ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY 121707-1

Chair Smith read a resolution submitted by SACMU:

Whereas, the President has indicated that 100 new faculty will be hired at the assistant professor level, the SACMU recommends that diversity be an integral component in the recruitment, hiring and retention processes.

Professor Primus expressed concern that owing to its origin from SACMU, the resolution might be construed to indicate that race be used hiring decisions, in contradiction to the Michigan Constitution. Professor Eagle responded that it was not possible to assess the motivations of the proposing committee, and that the resolution speaks for itself.

Vote on the Active Motion

Number approving- 28

Number disapproving- 4

Number abstaining- 2

ADMINISTRATION EVALUATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Professor Lehman reported that the 2007 evaluation has been completed, and that outcomes will be posted to the AEC website within a week (<http://aec.umich.edu>). He said that overall, 30.2 percent of Senate members had participated, with 4664 questionnaires submitted.

FIVE YEARS FORWARD

Professor Frier reviewed the key elements of President Coleman's address to the Board of Regents. A member of the Assembly pointed out that interdisciplinary courses are difficult to coordinate across units, particularly in regard to student enrollment. Professor Potter suggested that the difficulties may be addressed or overcome by proposed changes to the budget model for tuition sharing across units that are being considered in the provost's office.

Professor Ketefian noted that the address does not address internationalization of the university, despite evidence that the university is moving in that direction. She asked that SACUA pursue the issue with the president.

Professor Frier yielded the podium to Professor Thouless at 3:45 P.M. Professor Thouless reviewed draft procedures being developed by the office of the provost that will be applied to hiring of new assistant professor described in the president's plan.

Professor Ketefian pointed out that assistant professors at the beginning of their careers will be difficult to evaluate in regard to interdisciplinary research and how it will develop.

Professor Eagle suggested that application for the positions should include a mix of cluster appointments as well as singular nominations.

Professor Abdo said that there may still be contentious decisions at the time of tenure decisions even if the individual has a zero fraction in one unit, if input is sought from both units. Professor Kabamba asked whether there is a mechanism to assure that faculty hires will continue to work in interdisciplinary areas once they achieve tenure. Professor Frier responded that there was no such mechanism in place. Professor Kabamba asked why the initiative targets assistant professors rather than professors whose interdisciplinary work is already firmly established. Professor Frier said that SACUA could ask that question of the president.

A member of the Assembly expressed concern that the president's initiative does not seem to encompass emerging national issues. Professor Riles pointed out that the elected faculty representatives, or regular faculty in general, were not consulted before the president released her plan. He said that it was refreshing that the provost was seeking advice about policy issues.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

Professor Primus said that he strongly supports diversity, but that he was concerned that Assembly resolution 121707-1 could be seen as disregard for the law.

ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY 121707-2

Professor Freidman moved (Koopmann seconded):

The Assembly rescinds Action 121707-1 and replaces it with:

Whereas, the President has indicated that 100 new faculty will be hired at the assistant professor level, the Senate Assembly recommends that, consistent with governing law, diversity be an integral component in the recruitment, hiring and retention processes.

Vote on the Active Motion

Number approving- 23

Number disapproving- 8

Number abstaining- 1

Professor Eagleton stated that the university relies on federal law in requiring affirmative action. Professor Riles said that he viewed the original motion as a coded message to search committees that they are encouraged to circumvent the law. He said that he supports this alternative. Professor Eagleton spoke against the motion. He said that the university has affirmed its commitment to diversity that is not confined to race. He said that adding the sentence could be interpreted to mean that the Assembly's motion is free of hidden meanings that may exist in other university statements.

Professor Primus stated his conviction that it was important to say that the Assembly intends to follow the law. Professor Koopmann said that he believed the Assembly should acknowledge its respect for the opinions expressed by Michigan voters.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 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.
