

Minutes of 18 December 2006
Circulated 19 December 2006
Re-Circulated 19 January 2007
Approved 22 January 2007

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING
18 DECEMBER 2006**

Present: Abdoo, Ablers, Altschuler, Anspach, Bastedo, Benamou, Boxer, Brock, Brown, Chang, Combi, Eagle, Ensminger, Fitzgerald, Fraser, Frier, Frost, Garton, Giordani, Graham-Bermann, Gull, Hollar, Im, Ketefian, Kim, Koopmann, Lachance, Lange, Lehman, Lomax, Luera, MacAdam, Maddock, Mahalingam, Maybaum, Meerkov, Moore, Navvab, Neuman, Peters, Potter, Powell, Primus, Riles, Rothman, Sabel, Samson, Seabury, Smith (Chair), Thornton, Thouless, Wakefield

Alternates: Durfee (Engineering, for Stark), Franzese (LSA-Social Science, for Sellers), Kileny (Medicine, for Annich), Kimball (LSA-Social Science, for Volling), Mengozzi (Music, for Hahn), Simpson (Medicine, for Stoolman), Tropman (Social Work, for Resich)

Requested Alternate, none available: Agrawal (SNRE), Aller (LSA-Natural Science), Avi-Yonah (Law), Becker (LSA-Natural Science), Rahme (Flint), Schultz (Engineering)

Absent: Adriaens, Carson, Currie, Fricke, George, Green, Hesseltine, Kosch, Li, Ludlow, Roe, Severance, Seyhun, Streetman

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Senate Assembly agenda
2. Draft minutes of the Senate Assembly meeting of 27 November 2006
3. Item for Action: [Resolution on Registration Brackets](#)
4. [LSA Student Government Resolution for Reforming Registration Brackets](#)
5. Item for Action: [Resolution on Faculty Senate Undergraduate Fellowships](#)
6. [Report of the Grievance Procedures Task Force, dated 14 December 2006](#)
7. Central Faculty Ombuds brochure
8. Memorandum to Charles B. Smith from Central Faculty Ombuds Working Group dated 22 November 2006 regarding the [Central Faculty Ombuds Job Description](#) with attachments

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

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 27 November 2006 were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair announced:

1. The Diversity Blueprints Task Force announced by Provost Sullivan has been established, and will hold its first meeting on 19 December. Several of the task force members are also members of Senate Assembly. Preliminary results from the Task Force will be an agenda item for the February meeting of Senate Assembly.
2. The U-M Chief Health Officer will speak in January about planning for response to a possible flu pandemic. He will also report about a new advisory committee on health benefits.

RESOLUTION ON REGISTRATION BRACKETS

ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY 121806-1

Chair Smith reminded the Assembly that SACUA had placed an Action Item about registration brackets before the Assembly at its November meeting. The Chair invited Professor Riles to speak in support of the resolution. Professor Riles reported that the resolution was drafted by AAAC in response to requests from student groups, and that it has been endorsed unanimously by both AAAC and SACUA.

Whereas the existing system and rules for student registration date back to a time when students were required to report in person for registration interviews, and the system has been made obsolete by modern technology, the faculty calls for changes to the antiquated system which:

- (1) remove an existing constraint which prevents students from being granted permission to register according to their credit hour standing if they are registered for a course that meets at that same time, and
- (2) enact provisions of a resolution passed by MSA that calls for implementation of registration brackets that are scaled to 5 credit hour increments.

Vote on the Active Motion: The Action was approved by unanimous vote.

Professor Ketefian suggested that SACUA investigate other antiquated practices that need to be brought up to date.

ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY 121806-2

Chair Smith reminded the Assembly that SACUA had placed an Action Item about undergraduate scholarships before the Assembly at its November meeting. He invited Professor Meerkov to speak in favor of the Action Item. Professor Meerkov pointed out that the action was particularly timely because the president has announced a matching challenge dollar for dollar with donations. Professor Thouless remarked that it was a pity that the president did not establish a matching fund for graduate student scholarships. Professor Meerkov replied that both the President and the Vice President for Development stated to him that there is much greater need for undergraduate

scholarships than for graduate scholarships. Professor Abdoo asked about the criteria for judging financial need. Professor Meerkov replied that there is an existing but complex algorithm that varies by county, etc. He explained that the intention is to use established definitions and rules.

A member of the Assembly suggested that the fund be named for all U-M faculty rather than for the Faculty Senate alone. Chair Smith polled the members of SACUA and then accepted the proposal as a friendly amendment on their behalf. The resolution then read:

Whereas the faculty governance recognizes need based fellowships as an important tool for attracting students from low income families to the University of Michigan;
Whereas the University announced a 50% matching fund program for all donations towards undergraduate need based fellowships;
Therefore, the Senate Assembly resolves to actively support this program by encouraging faculty to contribute to a special account in support of these fellowships. The resulting fellowships will be allocated with the participation of the elected faculty governance and will be referred to as the *UM Faculty Undergraduate Fellowships*.

Vote on the Active Motion: The Action was approved unanimously.

REPORT OF THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES TASK FORCE

The Chair invited Professor Lehman to present the report from the GPTF at 3:45 P.M. Professor Lehman summarized the activities of the Task Force and the recommendations in distributed item 3. He concluded his report at 4:00 P.M.

In response to questions from the floor, Professor Lehman explained that the proposed grievance procedures are intended to apply to all aspects of administrative decision-making processes except decisions shown to be based solely and exclusively on judgments about professional competence, particularly in the tenure decision-making process. He also clarified the fact that the pool of candidates eligible for election to the proposed Faculty Grievance Committee would be the same as the pool eligible for election to SACUA. There was discussion about the merits of excluding faculty from the grievant's unit from the GRB, unless the right was waived by the grievant. Opinion was expressed that in large units like LSA or Medicine the conflicts of interest would be mainly confined to the department level. Professor Lehman said that he thought language could be inserted to make it explicit that the grievant's wishes would be honored in this regard. He noted that the proposal before the Assembly had been endorsed by unanimous vote of SACUA, including one Professor of Law.

Both Professor Lehman and Central Ombuds Bonnie Metzger assured members that letters from external referees are not shared verbatim with grievants; rather, the

letters are integrated and provided in composite form with all identifying information removed.

Professor Lehman returned the floor to Chair Smith at 4:08 P.M. The Chair informed the Assembly that the Task Force report and recommendations would be subject to vote at the January meeting of Senate Assembly.

VISIT OF CENTRAL OMBUDS BONNIE METZGER

Chair Smith invited the Central Ombuds to address the Assembly at 4:10 P.M. Professor Metzger reviewed the creation and operation of the position of Central Faculty Ombuds during its two year history. She stated that because her position has been empowered by the president and the provost she has received excellent cooperation from administration. She added that in her role she has not experienced the sense of unfairness that is evident in the report about grievance procedures.

Professor Brown asked the Ombuds what kinds of cases she sees. She replied that they are of various sorts, and that she is trying to prepare a report that speaks to the question. She cited cases of covert ageism, covert sexism, and collegial harassment that has resulted in multiple cases of “mobbing” behavior. She explained that mobbing is a phenomenon of collective aggression against individuals who are perceived “different” in some way. She added that it is the most difficult situation to deal with because it is a culture. She said that matters that have to do with administration decision making is much easier by comparison. She remarked that the administrators who try to ignore her efforts are typically department chairs or associate deans, but not the deans themselves.

Professor Ketefian asked what percent of cases come to the Central Ombuds rather than local ones. Professor Metzger replied that a lot do. She added that some of the cases that have gone to formal grievances were the result of getting poor advice at the local level. She expressed the opinion that some oversight of local ombuds was needed, because coordination does not happen spontaneously. She said that Lori Pierce from the provost’s office has been working with her to establish training for the local ombuds. She pointed out, further, that there is some reluctance to go to local ombuds when the unit is small owing to concerns about confidentiality. In addition, because the local ombuds system is voluntary, there are variations in ability. She declared that the local ombuds system was not adequate.

Professor Abdoo suggested that the stated qualifications for Ombuds in the new position statement (distributed item 8) should be tightened.

Professor Kimball suggested that it is a good time to put in place improved formal procedures, given that informal procedures at the Central level seem to be achieving success. Professor Metzger expressed agreement, and said that it is important that faculty ombuds be in the procedure early.

Professor Eagle asked whether it is possible for an administrator unit to be at a disadvantage in disputes. Professor Metzger replied yes, sometimes, and one example

she saw was in regard to a LEO negotiation. Professor Eagle observed that the Central Ombuds is in a good position to discover weaknesses in policy and to suggest corrective measures.

Professor Metzger returned the floor to Chair Smith at 4:45 P.M.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

Professor Koopmann reminded that Assembly that the U-M will be designing its own health benefits when it sells MCare to BCBS. He said it is important that faculty and staff have a major role in the design. Chair Smith replied that he suspected the Assembly would find out more about this subject at its January meeting.

Professor Ketefian inquired about the status of surveys by CESF regarding salary comparisons at the U-M and other universities. The chair replied that CESF completed its report last year after the Assembly had stopped meeting for the year, but that the report is posted on the faculty governance website. Dr. Fraser pointed out that the benefits portion of the CESF report was delivered to the Senate Assembly in April.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 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.