

Minutes of 24 March 2008
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MINUTES OF THE SACUA MEETING OF 24 MARCH 2008

Present: Fraser, Friedman, Frier, Potter, Riles, Smith (chair), Stark, Thouless; Lehman; Carr, Schneider

Absent: none

Guests: K. Brown (University Record), Lindy Stevens (Michigan Daily), D. Gershman (Ann Arbor News), G. Poe (SACUA elect), P. Hanlon (vice provost)

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Draft agenda
2. Draft minutes of the SACUA meeting of 17 March 2008
3. Report by the Psychology Department Executive Committee on its investigation of potential academic misconduct involving Professor John Hagen, undated
4. Report by the College of LSA on investigations of allegations against Professor John Hagen, dated 12 December 2007, updated 12 March 2008
5. Article entitled, "[Report: Minority faculty gains stagnant in some areas](#)", by Kevin Brown in the University Record, dated 24 March 2008
6. Article entitled, "[Four elected to SACUA Board](#)", by Kevin Brown in the University Record, dated 24 March 2008
7. [University Benefits & Issues. White Paper by M. Robert Fraser, dated March 2008](#)
8. Multiple electronic mails regarding "Ann Arbor News series on Michigan athletics part IV" dated 19-21 March 2008.
9. [Memorandum from T. Sullivan to deans, regarding "Independent Study Courses"](#), dated 7 August 2006.

Chair Smith convened the meeting at 3:00 P.M. The proposed agenda was approved.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 17 March 2008 were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Smith announced:

1. Election of SACUA chair and vice-chair will be held on Monday, 31 March 2008.
2. The provost has signed off on the version of the *Principles* document approved by the Senate Assembly on 17 March 2008.
3. Chair Smith and vice chair Potter will attend a regularly scheduled meeting with the president next Wednesday.
4. The president will meet with SACUA on 31 March.
5. SACUA members and guests will meet with the executive officers for dinner on Monday, 5 May 2008 at Inglis House.
6. Chair Smith will draft the April Regents Update.
7. The dean of LSA has issued a trespass order against a tenured professor. Additional details are not available.

LIAISON REPORTS

AAAC- Professor Riles reported that the AAAC met on 12 March 2008, and he reviewed the activities reported in the minutes. Topics included:

- Status report on the student academic success study
- Discussion of the retention of written comments from online student evaluations (see tentative recommendations below, to be voted upon this Wednesday)
- Discussion of first draft of report on study abroad programs
- Recommendation to Provost: Do not retain online written comments centrally. Comments should be returned to units, as has been done for hand-written comments in the past.
- Recommendation to SACUA: Conduct a survey of all faculty and units (e.g., deans) concerning the present extent of written comments and their appropriate use

Budget Study- Professor Riles reported that the committee met on Friday, 14 March to discuss a preliminary draft of the annual report which is expected to be ready in time for the May Senate Assembly meeting. A new section of the report will discuss salary ratcheting for department chairs.

Communications- Professor Frier reported that he circulated by e-mail the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Communications Committee.

CESF- Dr. Fraser reported that the U-M has experienced a \$250M increase in liability expenses for retirements owing to a change in reporting requirements.

Multicultural University- Professor Smith reported that Professor Evans presented the committee's report to the Senate Assembly last week, and that accounts of the findings have been carried by the *Ann Arbor News* and the *University Record*. The report will be considered for endorsement vote in April.

Graduate School Enrollment Policy- Professor Poe reported that she attended a meeting at Rackham regarding a proposed new enrollment policy for graduate students, and that students expressed strong opposition to the policy at that meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE ESTABLISHED AND CHARGED; ACTION 032408-1

Chair Smith appointed a subcommittee consisting of Professors Poe, Potter, and Thouless and charged it with evaluating the policy proposed by Rackham for continuous enrollment by graduate students.

VISIT OF VICE PROVOST P. HANLON

The vice provost joined the meeting at 3:35 P.M. Chair Smith invited him to offer commentary on recent articles published in the *Ann Arbor News* that raised questions about academic programs involving student athletes. He said that the provost had initiated a review of independent study programs in August 2006. The deans reported back that appropriate policies were in place.

The vice provost reported that at least two investigations were initiated in response to allegations brought by a faculty member regarding excessive enrollments in independent study courses by one professor of psychology, in particular. He said that the Department of Psychology has a policy of offering independent study courses liberally in lieu of regular classroom courses.

Professor Friedman asked the vice provost if he would consent to meet with the SACUA subcommittee on student athlete academics consisting of Professor Riles and he to discuss any disagreements about facts reported by the *Ann Arbor News*. The vice provost agreed to meet.

Professor Riles asked whether the vice provost was concerned about the high proportion of athletes who enroll in the Bachelor's of General Studies. The vice provost replied that the curriculum is under the control of the faculty, and evidently there have been no complaints about the program. Professor Frier noted that the BGS has been devalued by many undergraduates because of the perception that it is an admission of academic failure.

Professor Friedman suggested that units necessarily have to offer deference to individual instructors regarding the workloads of courses they teach, but that it seemed that some form of peer review and oversight is needed.

Professor Lehman asked whether there were any written responses from the deans to the questions posed by the provost in her memorandum dated 7 August 2006 (distributed item 9). The vice provost said that there were no written responses, but there had been a meeting where the deans reported that they indeed had well articulated policies about independent study courses. Several members of SACUA from LSA expressed keen interest in the supposed existence of such policies because they were unaware of them as faculty.

The vice provost suggested that the SACUA subcommittee interview the LSA academic advisers who deal with the BGS program, and he reiterated his willingness to consult on specific points when articulated by the subcommittee. He said that he would share audit reports about academics in the athletics program with SACUA and its subcommittee.

The guest left the meeting at 4:30 P.M.

BENEFITS

Dr. Fraser reviewed the state of faculty benefits programs with reference to distributed item 7. He pointed out that coverage is becoming compressed, and co-payments are accelerating at a pace that is not sustainable for regular faculty and staff. Professor Frier said that faculty-at-large need to be represented on the committees that design the benefits programs, rather than the administratively hand-picked membership at present.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John 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.
