

Minutes of 17 July 2006
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs
6048 Fleming Administration Building
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1340
Phone: (734) 764-0303
Fax: (734) 764-6564
www.sacua.umich.edu

Approved Minutes: www.sacua.umich.edu/sacua/sacua-minutes.html

MINUTES OF THE SACUA MEETING OF 17 JULY 2006

Present: Combi, Frier, Giordani, MacAdam, Meerkov, Riles, Seabury, Smith (chair); Lehman, Leu, Schneider

Absent: Potter

Guests: L. Graboski, D. Gershman, T. Sullivan, K. Gibbons

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED:

1. Draft Agenda
2. Draft minutes of the SACUA meeting of 10 July 2006
3. [Regents Bylaw 5.09](#)
4. [Senate Assembly Resolution regarding academic unit executive committees](#)
5. "Off the Clock: U. of Michigan may give professors more time to earn tenure, but whom would that really help?," The Chronicle of Higher Education, weekly issue dated 21 July 2006
6. Electronic mail message from Barbara MacAdam to SACUA dated 10 July 2006 regarding proposed draft resolution
7. [Study of Student Academic Success at Michigan](#) (28 April 2006 pdf document)
8. Electronic mail message from Bruce Frier to SACUA dated 3 July 2006 regarding the AAAC Study of Student Academic Success at Michigan
9. Electronic mail message from Keith Riles to SACUA dated 3 July 2006 regarding Bruce's objections
10. Electronic mail message from Semyon Meerkov to Keith Riles dated 20 June 2006 regarding student success at Michigan
11. SACUA/Senate Assembly Planning Schedule, updated 17 July 2006

Chair Smith convened the meeting at 2:00 P.M.; the draft agenda was approved.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 10 July 2006 were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The chair announced:

1. Distributed item 5 is an article from the Chronicle of Higher Education discussing proposed tenure clock changes at the University of Michigan.
2. The chair and Professor Seabury met with the president. They provided accounts of SACUA's meetings with several recent guests, and they conveyed SACUA's interest in enhancing faculty governance communications with the Board of Regents. They also corrected apparent misperceptions on the part of the president regarding SACUA's stance on the MCRI and affirmative action. Professor Seabury raised concerns about the proposed elimination of dial-in access to U-M computing and also with the high cost of tuition and resulting debt for students. Professor Seabury added that the president expressed support for a strategy that provides tuition grants to needy students and thereby effectively redistributes tuition funds.
3. The chair and vice-chair met with the provost. The topics included a pending personnel matter, recent withdrawal of an invitation to the faculty chair to participate in the new student convocation, proposed changes to the tenure probationary period, evaluation of undergraduate performance, and direct election of executive committee members. The provost said she would reinstate the faculty presence at the event. The provost also stated that she saw no reason to change the Regents' Bylaws regarding tenure. She agreed that evaluation of undergraduate performance was essential; and confirmed that she would soon meet with the AAAC subcommittee charged with that task. She said that the proposal that top vote-getters be selected to serve on executive committees seemed logical, but noted that units would have to adopt the policy.

COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

Professor Giordani reported that the Davis-Markert-Nickerson committee met, and that there may be issues for Senate Assembly to resolve regarding membership. There is now a visiting professorship tied to the lecture. Selection committees for the two need to be reconciled. One question is whether the AFL and visiting professorship should remain academic or whether they should have elements of advocacy or political dimensions.

Professor Meerkov reported that little additional has transpired recently regarding unit and central governance initiatives, but that efforts should begin in the Fall to implement the unit governance initiatives. Chair Smith said that he is willing to attend unit faculty meetings to help explain the initiatives.

SEPTEMBER REGENTS' FACULTY GOVERNANCE UPDATE

Professor Meerkov agreed to draft the September update, due 7 September.

FACULTY INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRESIDENT'S CONTRACT RENEWAL

Professor Riles moved adoption of a draft resolution prepared by Professor MacAdam (Seabury seconded). The Committee of the Whole made textual amendments to the draft and a final resolution was developed.

ACTION OF SACUA 071706-1

WHEREAS

- The University of Michigan Board of Regents re-appointed the University President without consulting the elected faculty governance;

- It is customary and desirable to conduct a careful and full evaluation of any administrator's performance before re-appointment, soliciting thorough comment from all affected parties;
- The Board of Regents engaged an external consulting firm, which, according to the Ann Arbor News, interviewed only 22 members of the university community;
- Faculty perceive this limited consultation as inadequate for meaningful faculty input;

Therefore, and in accordance with Regents' Bylaw 4.01,

- SACUA, as a duly elected representative of the University Senate, expresses its serious concern that the process that the Regents used to re-appoint the President has excluded the opportunity to engage the faculty when making this most important decision.
- Wishing then to improve communication between the Regents and elected faculty governance, SACUA proposes a joint task force of members from SACUA, the Regents, and the Office of the President to explore new structural mechanisms to ensure appropriate faculty consultation in future Regental decisions of this nature.

The resolution was adopted by unanimous vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The meeting entered executive session at 3:00 P.M. to discuss personnel matters. The provost and K. Gibbons arrived at 3:04 P.M. Executive session was extended to consider a personnel matter.

VISIT OF PROVOST SULLIVAN

The meeting resumed open session at 3:40 P.M. in the presence of the provost and K. Gibbons. The provost reviewed some of her recent communications with SACUA. She said the search for a new dean of the Medical School will probably not commence until the Fall. She added that director of admissions T. Spencer will join her to participate in the next meeting with the AAAC subcommittee in order to review availability of student data. She said that she is awaiting a final report from the national Spellings Commission on the Future of Higher Education. She explained that it will likely call for universities to do more evaluation than in the past, and that she will seek counsel from SACUA and AAAC regarding next steps. She said that she is interested in a study that discovers whether U-M graduates are adequately prepared, but that she is not pre-judging either the form or the process of the assessment.

Chair Smith asked about the status of the Weiss-MacDonald committee report. The provost replied that the group has collected a lot of feedback. She added that she suggested they reconsider issues and prepare a revised draft. It appears the committee may abandon their recommendations regarding part-time tenure. She noted that there are alternative strategies that can result in increasing representation of minorities within the faculty, and of enhancing existing flexibility that is sometimes denied owing to behavior of department chairs, deans, or senior faculty. She said there is a lot we can do by way of education short of changing regental bylaws.

The provost reported that she believed faculty representation at the new student convocation has been restored.

Professor Meerkov reviewed the history and rationales for the Senate Assembly resolution about unit shared governance. He said that implementation of the recommendations will be a topic for this Fall, and that support from the provost would be helpful. The provost replied that she appreciated the information, but that she has not consulted with the president on the topic. She indicated that it should be possible to send a letter to the units regarding the matter. Professor Meerkov thanked her and explained that the idea behind the initiative is to have consultative and beneficial interactions.

The guests left the meeting at 4:07 P.M.

PREPARATION FOR JULY 24 GUESTS

There was brief discussion regarding topics for visitors scheduled for the next meeting.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

There was no old or new business.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The meeting entered executive session at 4:07 P.M. (1) to hear a complaint from a faculty member with respect to a Grievance Review Board, and (2) to develop nominations for committees.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 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.