

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
STUDENT RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**Friday, December 13, 2019  
11:30 AM-1:00 PM**

**Michigan League – Henderson Room - 3rd Floor**

**Present:** Gina Cervetti, Simone Himbeault Taylor, Harish Ganesh, Helen Look, Jeannie Moody-Novak, Judith Beck, Mariah Fiumara, Olga Virakhovskaya, Amy Chavasse, David Potter, Charlie Koopman, Cindy Leung, Katie Van Zanen

**Absent:** Royster Harper, Yaacov Ritov, Jill Esau, Evelyn Winter, Nida Syed, Chitra Subramanian, Kyriaki Marti, Jairam Menon

**Guest(s):** Ann Hower, Director of the Office of New Student Programs  
Tiffany Marra, Director of CEW+  
Will Sherry, Director of the Spectrum Center, Project Lead Manager, Student Life

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Cervetti called the meeting to order. She congratulated Sr. AVP Simone Himbeault Taylor on her interim appointment as VP of Student Life upon the impending retirement of VP Royster Harper on January 17, 2020.

Announcements included the change in the 2020 committee meeting schedule. Beginning with the January 24, 2020 meeting through April, 2020 the committee will meet from 11:15 am – 12:45 pm to accommodate the Chair’s teaching schedule.

The Chair is working with the staff from the Ginsberg Center to update the Political Climate survey so that it can be used by faculty and other staff members that have student-facing positions. It will be distributed when complete. In addition, a resource kit is being developed.

Chair Cervetti is on the Senate Assembly agenda in February to discuss campus civic engagement.

There has been ongoing conversations with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) staff to identify and update services for students that request their services.

**2. Changing Demographics Data**

Will Sherry began by discussing the U-M populations of interest data that was collected and compiled by Steven Lonn, PhD, Director of Enrollment Research and Data Management in the Office of Enrollment Management. This data focuses on underrepresented student populations from Fall 2015 – Fall 2019 and was used as a guide to the Student Support Task Force that was convened by Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, Kendra Ishop on February 28, 2019. The committee submitted its recommendations on July 3, 2019.

Will went on to explain in order to respond the increasing student socioeconomic diversity on campus, the task force charge was to review centralized support programs and services

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
STUDENT RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

and identify gaps and opportunities to better meet the needs of students that have been identified as low-income/first generation.

**3. Overview of Task Force Report Recommendations by Theme**

Tiffany Marra continued to discuss the gaps identified. Many students are struggling to meet their basic needs. The newly instituted Maize and Blue Cupboard (MBC) not only allows for students to “shop” for food, but also has a kitchen for cooking demonstrations, recipe sharing and tasting. MBC has counted 11,000 visits with 6,000 unique students, however, stigma surrounding visiting MBC and asking for help when it is needed is still very prevalent. Some students ask for off-campus resources to avoid the stigma. Are there shortfalls? There is a plan to survey students with the intention to improve programming.

Tiffany when on to say that emergency funds applications are per department. There is work going on for a central resource for requesting assistance for basic needs. It was also explained that many faculty have assumptions of students that are from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, that they have laptops, reliable transportation, etc.

It was also discussed that students don’t know what resources available, don’t want to use them or don’t know how to use them. There is a need of role models that use resources and encouragement for students to practice using resources. Tiffany added that she believes this lack of knowledge of available resources also extends to faculty/staff. How does one make a good referral? It has been found that the message is best when it is localized, for example, a referral is made by someone the student knows. We need to empower staff/faculty to have confidence to refer students to the correct resource. CEW+ has a COUNTS toolkit that will enable staff/faculty become a “trusted messenger” about the availability of resources. Any staff/faculty can access COUNTS in CANVAS to complete modules to enhance their knowledge.

Some questions arose about what is the responsibility of the student to seek resources for themselves? What are we teaching? Discussion included that Michigan (the University) rewards innovation. It rewards students that ask for assistance to solve their problems and request resources. Tiffany stated that students need to be pro-active but, most requests or inquiries for resources required 4 touches (staff/faculty/departments) prior to getting emergency funding or other needed assistance.

Gaps in financial literacy and lack understanding of financial aid have also been identified. Students need further support and peer-to-peer education about finances.

It was found that there is insufficient outreach to parents of first generation and low-income students. Parents lack education to support their students. Departments need to share data to better understand students on campus. There are 32 mentoring programs identified on campus, but there is no reliable data on where students are engaging.

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
STUDENT RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**4. Innovative Approaches to Student Support**

Ann Hower continued by stating that ‘Populations of Interest’ representing students have grown over the last 5 years per Steven Lonn’s data from Enrollment Management and there has been a recent university effort to report underreported ethnicities. A request was issued by the University asking staff/faculty/students to report additional ethnicities. So far, there has been about 500 individuals that have updated their records.

The Go Blue Guarantee has increased socioeconomic diversity on campus.

Populations of First Generation students, defined as parents without a degree, are increasing as well as veterans and students that have been in Foster Care.

Also increasing are populations of students with dependents, whether the dependents are children or adult dependents, it is a common assumption that students do not have children, but there are statistics indicating otherwise.

In looking at the slide referring to urbanicity/rurality of students’ hometowns there was a question to define town – presenters will get back to committee on a definition from Steve Lonn.

It was also commented by a committee member that asking students not only are they from rural areas, but are they comfortable here? Ann remarked that there is a student driven survey currently going on that indicated that rural students felt fine once they got here, but found difficult getting here because of lack of counselors in their schools and lack of recruiting from UM.

Will added that sense of belonging questions have been added to the Student Life program surveys.

**5. Conversation and Questions**

It was mentioned that offering additional funding to students can sometimes be difficult due to adverse financial aid impacts. Responses indicated that if there is a need affecting academic success, requests can be made to Financial Aid and they will open their package to add the aid. For example, with the laptop ‘loaner’ program – financial aid allows for laptop repair and other expenses for upkeep are not to impact financial aid.

It was commented that it feels confusing and embarrassing when students go to faculty for assistance requests and faculty don’t know how or where to refer.

The needs of transfer students were also discussed such as transportation and childcare for events. How to have family-friendly events in order to relieve tension between school and family.

**6. Remarks from Sr. AVP Taylor**

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
STUDENT RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

She thanked guests for their information sharing. She thanked the committee for Royster's resolution and let them know it really mattered. Royster was touched. She assured the committee that with her new interim role she will strive to provide stability and move things forward. She encouraged all faculty and staff to leverage the Presidential Debate as a highly important activity for students and their civic engagement/education. She continued that we can't wait for new VP to continue work in Student Life, we must keep going.

Chair Cervetti asked the committee to continue think about the committee's subjects going forward. One of the first meetings confirmed the committee's interest in looking at less-visible populations of students. Please advise if you have a strong interest or can recommend additional guests.

She thanked committee for the resolution for Royster and their quick attention to the virtual vote.

**7. Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes for November were reviewed. Chair Cervetti called for revisions. None were offered. Minutes were approved

**8. Adjournment**

David Potter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Charlie Koopmann seconded. All in favor.