

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

Friday, January 24, 2020

11:15 AM-12:45 PM

Michigan Union – Wolverine Room - 3rd Floor

Present: Gina Cervetti, Simone Himbeault Taylor, Nida Syed, Harish Ganesh, Helen Look, Jeannie Moody-Novak, Judith Beck, Mariah Fiumara, Olga Virakhovskaya, Kyriaki Marti, David Potter, Charlie Koopmann, Mariah Fiumara, David Potter, Cindy Leung, Katie Van Zanen, Jill Esau, Chitra Subramanian, Kyriaki Marti

Absent: Amy Chavasse, Jairam Menon, Yaacov Ritov, Chitra Subramanian, Evelyn Winter

Guest(s):

- *Susan Pile, Sr. Director University Unions & Auxiliary Services*
 - *MaryJo Banasik, Director of Faculty Senate Office*
-

1. Tour of the Union

Susan Pile, Sr. Director of University Unions and Auxiliary Services led a tour around the newly renovated Michigan Union.

2. Lunch/Call to Order/Review/Approval of Minutes

Chair Gina Cervetti called the meeting to order. The minutes for December were reviewed. No adjustments were made.

3. Presentation of Revised Survey and Committee Feedback of Toolkit

Chair Cervetti transitioned to the next portion of the meeting. She described the goals of her colleagues at Ginsberg. Preparations for the election year -- and the 2020 debate -- have begun. They want to capitalize on this opportunity for increased civic engagement. The Office of Academic Innovation has taken up the task of gathering resources related to engaging in healthy conversations and debates. The Commission on Presidential Debates is also planning to have events on campus. The Ginsberg Center will link to these lines of work as they have recently been focused on voting and civic participation. Ginsberg is asking for feedback regarding the Faculty Toolkit and what else can be done for the time being. Faculty Senate Assembly aims to help faculty be more aware of what they can bring to the table with their work and are also trying to help faculty feel less isolated and more connected to campus overall.

Katie Van Zanen invited everyone to pull up Ginsberg's new website. The pathway was: Academic Partnerships → Faculty Toolkits → Civic Engagement. She directed people towards the 4 categories at the bottom. The goal is to inform students of upcoming primary dates and assist them with logistics. These resources also help faculty incorporate civic engagement information (e.g. voting registration) into their syllabi using non-partisan language. Other examples of teaching resources include links to Canvas announcements, premade slides, etc. Chair Cervetti says it is incumbent upon the group to spread the word since the pathway is a bit convoluted. Ginsberg has incorporated SRAC's previous

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

advice, but they are seeking more feedback. Chair Cervetti suggests a bit of reflection time for people to analyze the website and think of any suggestions.

In addition to providing these resources for the faculty it was suggested to send the link of the information out to students as well and further suggested compiling all of the information on a Canvas page. It was also mentioned that faculty are interested in something to put at the end of their presentations that is eye-catching and colorful. That way, people who want to learn more can do so by following the links. Mariah Fiumara added that the College of Engineering are creating registration kiosks in their “student life offices” and want some help publicizing this. Chair Cervetti suggests that they write a blurb and send it to her so that Ginsberg could add that information to their website. Mariah agrees and volunteers to attach pictures as well.

Helen Look suggests creating a slide that they could push out with other building communications so that students could more directly access the information. She also cites the fake news class, and Chair Cervetti asks if they would be willing to share some of that information with Ginsberg. Chair Cervetti clarifies that this survey is just one version of it then gives everyone a minute to quietly reflect on the survey.

It was asked if there is a deadline for when people can submit their feedback on everything. Chair Cervetti will inquire and report back to the committee. Chair Cervetti states that this is a resource-rich campus, but it can be difficult to obtain information at times, so the goal is to connect people with these valuable files.

Chair Cervetti explains the possibility of presenting to the Senate Assembly. Mary Jo Banasik provided background information for those who are not as familiar with the Senate Assembly format; she says there are 74 representatives elected through a formula for how many representatives each school or college is awarded. This formula determines representation across campus. Although only about half of the elected officials participate in these meetings, the representatives distribute the information to their units. Senate Assembly represents the general faculty, therefore many believe it is a helpful avenue for distributing information.

David Potter remarks that the best exposure comes from the news coverage of the Senate Assembly meetings and he suggests providing links to the Ginsberg website. He states that Senate Assembly is one of the most important vehicles for centralized communication across campus and they have had success in the past (e.g. getting other matters of health on syllabi). Mary Jo Banasik states that there is a regular staff reporter who comes to these meetings and they can reach out to her ahead of time to make sure specific topics are covered.

It was suggested to increase the quantity of mail blasts that include this type of information since this is a special circumstance and extraordinary opportunity for us on campus. Chair Cervetti says peer educators at Ginsberg will be visiting classrooms, but perhaps they should consider faculty outreach as well. Mary Jo Banasik confirms that the Faculty Senate is working on a newsletter project for faculty and a blurb might be helpful. Jill Esau says that many people go to the Rackham Chairs and Directors meetings, so that may be a successful avenue for disseminating this information. David Potter and Gina Cervetti expressed interest in this idea as well. Helen Look references her work with the MLK Symposium Planning Committee; she says that all of the speakers reflected on the importance of voting and she thinks this repetition probably reached a wider scope of students and reinforced the

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

idea. I was stated that faculty should draw from this model joking that faculty should walk around with matching voting T-shirts (or tattoos) or even matching sweatshirts. Chair Cervetti concludes this portion of the meeting by reminding committee members to notify her if they have additional ideas.

Chair Cervetti then provides a brief overview of next month's meeting; it will cover Services for Students with Disabilities and creating more visibility for those who need it.

4. Remarks from Interim VP Simone Himbeault Taylor

Interim VP Taylor reinforces Chair Cervetti's remarks and explains that SSD combines with many other departments of Student Life (e.g. CAPS, Wolverine Wellness, etc.). She says the Services for Students with Disabilities Director position is open, and they want to have a conversation about how the position has morphed as well as how it will manifest in the future.

She goes on to say that she appreciates the time and energy dedicated to the democratic engagement agenda. She states that the debate is important, and they want to get it right reflecting that there is going to be media chaos and infiltration of Ann Arbor that will make the Obama visit look like a test run, therefore, we need to prepare ourselves for the event. She also wants to take this opportunity to clarify to students that the debate is only one tool of democracy (there is also: activism, voting, etc.) She wants to make sure the event has context and that we are helping students develop the skills for getting involved in democratic engagement so that it is sustainable moving forward. Many believe that it is UM's role to help students learn how to be the citizens they need to be nationally and globally.

Interim VP Taylor then addresses the elephant in the room regarding Provost Martin A. Philbert's suspension. We are reminded that UM has a set of values and policies in place and we can control how we follow them (i.e. in a fair and timely way). She states that the policies apply to everyone, and this situation embodies that. She concludes by explaining that the due process means nobody will be aware of what is going on until the investigation is complete.

Wrap-up and Adjournment

Chair Cervetti acknowledges that the meeting was shorter than usual due to the Union tour and thanks everyone for coming.