

Minutes 4 May 2020
Circulated 8 May 2020
Approved 18 May 2020

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA)

Monday, May 4, 2020 3:15 pm

The meeting was held via Bluejeans because of the COVID-19 Shutdown

Present: Ahbel-Rappe, Beatty, Conway (chair), Dinov, Finlayson, Gallo, Liu, Manera, Marsh, Potter, Spencer, Toyama, Banasik, Snyder

Absent:

Guests: Members of the Press

3:16: Call to Order/ Approval of Minutes

Chair Conway called the meeting to order. The Agenda was approved; the minutes from April 6 and April 13 2020 were approved.

3:20 Announcements from Faculty Senate Office Director

Dr. Banasik said that the new Faculty Senate Office website (<https://facultysenate.umich.edu>) was now operational, and that a small quantity of print materials concerning the operations of the Faculty Senate Office are being prepared. She added that recognition letters are being sent to all Senate Assembly members, as well as to their deans and department chairs to raise awareness of what Senate Assembly members do.

Dr. Banasik said that the Office of the General Council (OGC) has provided guidance about electronic meetings, and the Faculty Senate Office will be preparing guidelines in consultation with OGC. There will be no need for a change in Bylaws to accommodate electronic meetings.

3:25 Announcements from SACUA Chair

Chair Conway said the Faculty Senate Office was gathering information concerning committee chairs appointments for next year. Professor Potter said the terms had typically been three years because of the importance of strong relationships between Vice Presidents and committee chairs in promoting efficient activity. Professor Marsh said chairs may serve for more than a year for the reasons that Professor Potter gave, but that the term length is flexible to give the chair and SACUA the ability to recommend appointments as needed. Professor Beatty said the Faculty Senate Office could not find any written rules governing these appointments, which SACUA needs to develop. She identified further issues as being the way committee chairs worked with the Faculty Senate Office and the desire of committees to select their own chairs. Professor Toyama said more formal guidance for defining the role of a committee chair is necessary, but agreed that longer terms are helpful, noting that he had been chair of the Academic Affairs Advisory Committee (AAAC) for three years and only recently felt that he was functioning as efficiently as he might in that role.

3:30 Executive Session

[5.09 Revisions]
[Provost Committees]

4:35 Promotion Timeline Extension Policy and Faculty Activity Reports

Professor Toyama said the AAAC had met with Interim Provost Collins and discussed automatic one-year extensions in the tenure clock for junior faculty impacted by COVID-19. Professor Toyama indicated that Interim Provost Collins replied that the university already had a way of providing for extensions of the tenure clock, and that the current process, through which faculty could petition for an extension, meant there is a record of the reason why a person requested an extension. AAAC members had replied that the petition process placed extra pressure on the most vulnerable faculty members, and that there was potential of stigma attaching to the faculty member as a result of the request. It was for this reason that the AAAC favored the provision of a blanket extension from which faculty who wished to come up for promotion could request an exemption. Professor Toyama said that Interim Provost Collins expressed concern that faculty who might be denied tenure would receive tenure as a result of the extension. The AAAC felt that this would not involve a large number of cases, and noted that the faculty who received tenure after an extension would in fact have earned tenure.

Chair Conway asked if the AAAC wished SACUA to support its initiative with respect to the time-line extension. Professor Gallo replied that the issue was not clear-cut, and that while she favored the extension, she could understand the rationale behind the current policy. She noted, however, the existence of anecdotal cases, especially in connection with women who had already extended the tenure clock for childcare reasons, in which chairs had conveyed a message that it would be unwise to ask for an additional extension. These are not messages that come from the university leadership, but they are not infrequent at the departmental level. Professor Gallo said she agreed that it was unlikely that an extra year would make a weak file strong, but noted that an extension could make a great deal of difference for people who were dealing with the closure of their labs. She drew attention to the automatic extension of the tenure clock on the UM-Dearborn campus.

Chair Conway and Professor Manera proposed tabling the discussion for a week develop a proposal on this topic. Chair Conway drew attention to the peculiarity of annual reports which faculty are preparing in which they are effectively describing effort put into activities such as performances that did not occur because of the COVID-19 crisis.

4:45 Matters Arising

Professor Liu drew attention to concerns about academic integrity that had arisen in the context of examinations for the Winter Term. He observed that additional work was necessary to ensure academic integrity if classes are again to be virtual in the fall. Professor Beatty noted that this was also an issue for the College of Business at UM-Dearborn, where newly written test questions had quickly appeared online during a 48-hour testing period. Professor Manera said that enforcing a strict time for an exam limited the potential for cheating, which is easier with open-ended forms of assessment. Professor Gallo agreed that this will be an important issue for the future.

4:53: Faculty Governance Consortium Meeting

Chair Conway and Dr. Banasik attended the event from 11am-6 pm on May 1, 2020. Topics for discussion included the handling of emergencies, including requirements for

consultation with faculty senates and more generally for communicating with a campus community, philanthropy (and rules connected with the receipt of gifts); the evolution of Title IX policies; managing conflicts of interest; the management of institutional growth
Conflicts of Interest \Managing Institutional Growth—how student population, program growth managed. Particular issues of shared concern with SACUA included the role of faculty governance in the decision-making process with reference to budgetary issues, especially with reference to pay and benefits as well as program realignment. Another area of concern is the “culture of lawyers” as faculty governance leaders feel they need their own lawyers to deal with those employed by the administration.

Chair Conway said that SACUA should consider asking the Academic Evaluation Committee (AEC) to consider adding questions connected with the University’s response to the COVID-19 crisis in its survey.

Dr. Banasik said that there will be a further meeting of the Faculty Governance Consortium on May 15 and that agenda items were being solicited from participants.

The slides that were presented are available [here](#).

4:59 Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,
David S. Potter
Senate Secretary

University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 5.02:

Governing Bodies in Schools and Colleges

Sec. 4.01 The University Senate

"...[t]he Senate is authorized to consider any subject pertaining to the interests of the university, and to make recommendations to the Board of Regents in regard thereto. Decisions of the University Senate with respect to matters within its jurisdiction shall constitute the binding action of the university faculties. Jurisdiction over academic policies shall reside in the faculties of the various schools and colleges, but insofar as actions by the several faculties affect university policy as a whole, or schools and colleges other than the one in which they originate, they shall be brought before the University Senate."

Rules of the University Senate, the Senate Assembly and the Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs:

Senate: “In all cases not covered by rules adopted by the Senate, the procedure in Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.”

Assembly: “The Assembly may adopt rules for the transaction of its business. In appropriate cases not covered by rules of the Assembly, the rules of the University Senate shall apply.”

SACUA: “The committee may adopt rules for the transaction of its business.”