

Committee Report

To: Joy Beatty, Chair, SACUA, 2019-2020

From: Gina Cervetti, Students Relations Advisory Committee (SRAC)

Subject: Report on Activities of Students Relations Advisory Committee (SRAC) for 2019-2020

Members:

Judith Beck
Gina Cervetti (Chair)
Amy Chavasse
Jill Esau
Harish Ganesh
Charlie Koopman
Cindy Leung
Helen Look
Kyriaki Marti
Jairam Menon
Jeannie Moody-Novak
Mariah Moss
Chitra Subramanian
Olga Virakhovskaya
Yaacov Ritov
David Potter
Nida Syed
Kathryn Van Zanen
Evelyn Winter
SACUA Liaison: David Potter

Meeting Dates:

<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Sept. 27	Jan. 24
Oct. 25	Feb. 14
Nov. 15	Mar. 13
Dec. 13	Apr. 3
	July 24
	July 28

Summary:

The topics of focus for the year included:

2020 Elections: Much of the fall term was devoted to preparing for the 2020 elections. The focus of this work was on considering ways that Student Life can raise awareness of the upcoming national elections, fuel participation by students, and use the election as an opportunity to develop our students' and broader community's ability to engage in civil conversations across different perspectives. We worked with staff from the Ginsberg Center to develop a survey for faculty and staff regarding the upcoming elections and we supported their development of a set of resources to help faculty encourage voting/civic participation and incorporate related topics into their courses.

Addressing the Needs of Underrepresented Students: A continuing theme for this year was considering ways to address the needs of MA students on our campus and shining light on student groups who may have unmet needs, including students with disabilities. In February, Dr. Robert Ernst, Executive Director of University Health Services, updated SRAC on the status search for a director of the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). The SSD director position has been open since January 2019 and Dr. Ernst explained that there had been an intentional pause placed on filling the position due to preparation and gathering of information about SSD by the IDEA Board. The IDEA Board had recently submitted their report to the Provost Office. This report included, among other findings, the needs of the student population that use SSD and the current and predicted case load of the coordinators. UPDATE: An interim director, Dr. Oluwaferanmi Okanlami, has been appointed for a year, beginning in July, 2020.

The issue of food security and related academic and health outcomes has been on SRAC's agenda for the last few years. This year, we received updates from Steve Mangan, Senior Director of Dining, and we visited the new U-M Maize and Blue Pantry. SRAC members also engaged in collections of cookware to be distributed at the Pantry.

Will Sherry, Director of the Spectrum Center, shared data on the experiences of underrepresented student populations that were collected and compiled by Dr. Steven Lonn, Director of Enrollment Research and Data Management in the Office of Enrollment Management. These data focus on underrepresented student populations from fall 2015 – fall 2019 and were used as a guide to the Student Support Task Force that was convened by Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, Kendra Ishop. The task force was charged with reviewing centralized student support programs and services and identifying gaps and opportunities to better meet the needs of low-income and first generation students.

COVID-19: Beginning in March, our existing agendas were supplanted by concerns related to the COVID-19 crisis.

In March, Dr. Robert Ernst spoke to committee about updates regarding the COVID-19 virus, including the then-recent decision to suspend face-to-face classes and move to an online format to satisfy the recommendation of social distancing in order to flatten the curve. Dr. Ernst explained that these measures are necessary as to not overwhelm the medical community as the likelihood of an increased trajectory of the virus. He also described efforts to reduce the density of campus residents and provide services to those who remained on campus.

In April, the committee met with Dr. Todd Sevig, Director of CAPS and Dr. Laura Blake-Jones, Dean of Students, to discuss efforts to support students' academic, financial, and psychological wellbeing through all of the uncertainty and change brought by the COVID-19 crisis.

In June through August, the SRAC considered an addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities sponsored by Central Student Government. The addendum creates temporary regulations regarding COVID-related measures, such as mask-wearing and social distancing. A recommendation was sent to Vice President Harmon and presented to the COVID-19 Lead Team. Following revisions, this addendum was ultimately approved by President Schlissel.