

Motions Received for the September 16, 2020 Faculty Senate Meeting

MOTION 1: SACUA Motion on Electronic Meetings for Faculty Senate, 9-16-20

Except as otherwise provided in rules of the Faculty Senate, meetings of the Faculty Senate may be conducted through use of Internet meeting services designated by the SACUA Chair that support anonymous voting and support visible displays identifying those participating, identifying those seeking recognition to speak, and showing (or permitting the retrieval of) the text of pending motions. These electronic meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be subject to all rules adopted by the Faculty Senate to govern them, which may include any reasonable limitations on, and requirements for, Senate members' participation. An anonymous vote conducted through the designated Internet-based service shall be deemed a ballot vote, fulfilling any requirement in the bylaws or rules that a vote be conducted by ballot.

Motion submitted by:

Colleen Conway, Chair, SACUA
Annalisa Manera, Vice Chair, SACUA
David Potter, Senate Secretary, SACUA (non-voting)
Sara Ahbel-Rappe, Member, SACUA
Ivo Dinov, Member, SACUA
Caitlin Finlayson, Member, SACUA
Elena Gallo, Member, SACUA
Allen Liu, Member, SACUA
Deirdre Spencer, Member, SACUA
Kentaro Toyama, Member SACUA
Neil Marsh, Past Chair, SACUA (non-voting)

MOTION 2: Weineck, Manera, Szymanski 9-16-20

WHEREAS, public health experts have widely condemned the University's re-opening plan;
WHEREAS, the Ethics and Privacy Committee appointed by the UM President has declared that it does not meet "the reasonable standard for safety recommended by our report";
WHEREAS, staff, graduate students, undergraduate students, and faculty have expressed that they do not feel safe;
WHEREAS, vulnerable populations in Ann Arbor and beyond will bear the biggest burden should infection spread widely,
WHEREAS, the faculty of the University of Michigan has lost trust in the administration's handling of the COVID-19 crisis,
BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of the University of Michigan has no confidence in the administration's re-opening plan

Motion submitted by:

Silke-Maria Weineck, Professor, German Studies and Comparative Literature, LSA
Supported: Annalisa Manera, Professor, Nuclear Engineering and Radiological Sciences, College of Engineering
Supported: Stefan Szymanski, Stephen J. Galetti Professor of Sport Management and Professor Kinesiology, School of Kinesiology

MOTION 3: Toyama, Merlin, Gilbert 9-16-20

WHEREAS the University of Michigan leadership has consistently refused to be moved by countless concerns expressed by faculty, staff, students, and local residents through formal communications, petitions, and protests with respect to its Fall 2020 re-opening plans,

WHEREAS the Regents of the University of Michigan pushed through revisions to University Bylaws 5.09 and 5.10 that opposed the [recommendations of a Faculty Working Group](#) appointed by the Provosts of the university, as well as [the majority of faculty](#) who responded to a survey conducted by the Working Group,

WHEREAS President Schlissel rejected a request by SACUA to nominate a seat on the search committee that nominated Martin Philbert, the Provost who was dismissed for sexual misconduct that was known to members of the university community for decades,

WHEREAS President Schlissel installed Provost Susan Collins without prior consultation with SACUA,

WHEREAS the [case of Martin Philbert](#) and [others](#) demonstrates that the University of Michigan administration has made no substantive changes to ensure that the Office of Institutional Equity seek truth and justice, despite many years of formal complaints and requests by multiple student and faculty governance bodies on campus, including SACUA,

WHEREAS the faculty implement the core mission of the university with respect to research and teaching, and collectively have great expertise in all matters relevant to university policy,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Faculty Senate demands that the University of Michigan implement a permanent policy requiring the administration to engage in substantive consultation on all matters relevant to faculty (including lecturers) with existing bodies of faculty governance at the programmatic, departmental, unit, and university levels, including but not limited to the faculty's representative bodies, SACUA, LEO, and the Senate Assembly.

Motion submitted by:

Kentaro Toyama, W.K. Kellogg Professor of Community Information, Professor of Information, School of Information

Supported: Roberto Merlin, Peter A. Franklin Collegiate Professor of Physics, Professor of Physics, LSA

Supported: Eric Gilbert, John Derby Evans Endowed Professor of Information, Associate Professor of Information, School of Information

MOTION 4: Marsh, Gallo, Spencer, Liu, Potter, Finlayson

Whereas the covid-19 pandemic has raised unprecedented challenges for the delivery of the University's educational and research missions.

Whereas the current climate creates conditions in which fear and disinformation are spreading freely and which threaten the academic mission of the University.

Whereas the actions of the University should be based on facts and reason, not fears and rumor.

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate of the University of Michigan calls upon all members of the, Faculty, Staff, Student Body and University Administration to engage constructively together to overcome these challenges and work together to deliver the educational mission of the University to the fullest extent possible.

Motion submitted by:

Neil Marsh, Dow Distinguished Faculty Fellow in Sustainability, Professor of Chemistry and Biological Chemistry, LSA

Supported: Elena Gallo, Associate Professor, Astronomy, LSA

Supported: Deirdre Spencer, Librarian for History of Art

Supported: Allen Liu, Associate Professor, Mechanical Engineering, College of Engineering

Supported: David Potter, Francis W. Kelsey Collegiate Professor of Greek and Roman History, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, Classical Studies, LSA

Supported: Caitlin Finlayson, Associate Professor, English, University of Michigan - Dearborn

MOTION 5: Railton, Amidei, Barald 9-16-20

Resolved:

(1) That the members of the Faculty Senate call upon the University administration, and specifically upon President Mark S. Schlissel and Provost Susan M. Collins, to release details about the models and assumptions that have guided University planning for the current “in-residence Fall Term”, including the justification for the testing protocols adopted, the evidentiary “circuit-breakers” that would cause the administration to discontinue current plans, and the arrangements the University will make to reduce the risk of spreading infection beyond the University community in such an eventuality or at the projected end of term.

(2) That accurate information about day-to-day levels and trends in testing, results, and the location and magnitude of outbreaks be provided through the UM COVID-19 Dashboard.

Background:

More than 1,400 members of the University community endorsed a letter sent to the University of Michigan Regents and Executive Officers on July 27, 2020. That letter called for a “full and transparent disclosure” of:

(1) The UM plan for screening, tracing, and isolation.

(2) A critical analysis of this plan that shows it will keep the community safe.

(3) The degree of resilience of the plan to the failure of critical assumptions.

(4) The contingency plans for what will be done if an outbreak exceeds control.

As of today (September 2, 2020), the University has furnished considerable information regarding (1), and we understand that the University has plans for random surveillance testing of asymptomatic students, faculty, and staff, and has recently announced the intention to increase testing capacity from 3,000 per week to a more appropriate 3,000 per day (*University Record*, September 1, 2020). We welcome these plans, though we note with concern that the random testing registration and regime are still not in place, even though we are now in the first week of classes, and that the results of current testing are being presented on the UM COVID-19 Dashboard in a manner insufficiently detailed to allow prompt community identification of, and response to, possible outbreaks. (Other institutions have found that, by specifying a minimum outbreak size, e.g., >5 cases, it is possible to protect individual privacy while reporting more detailed information.)

Moreover, the information the University has furnished since the original letter of inquiry still does not provide clear responses to requests (2)-(4). The University has not disclosed the model, models, or assumptions it is using to guide analysis or policy, or how resilient the model or models would be if these assumptions failed. And it has not indicated what it considers a reasonable level of risk, or of incidence or rate of infection, to permit continuation of on-campus housing and in-person instruction. Crucially, we have not seen University plans to limit infection spread if on-campus housing and in-person instruction are curtailed and students are urged to return home, or for the projected end of term in November. Will students be tested before they leave, and provided quarantine if need be? How will students living off-campus be included? Are adequate testing and quarantining capacity being prepared to accomplish this?

The University might not currently have fully worked-out answers to these questions. That is part of the point of this motion: Answers are needed urgently, and they should have the benefit of open, informed discussion within the University as well as with the surrounding communities. This is not possible without greater transparency.

Motion submitted by:

Peter Railton, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, Gregory S. Kavka Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, LSA

Supported: Dante Amidei, Associate Chair and Professor, Physics, LSA

Supported: Kate Barald, Professor Emerita (Active), Cell and Developmental Biology and Biomedical Engineering, Medical School

MOTION 6: Ward, Modrak, Toyama 9-16-20

WHEREAS President Mark Schlissel has yet to produce a model, analysis, or scientific data predicting the risk levels for the Fall 2020 reopening plans;

WHEREAS the Ethics and Privacy Committee appointed by the President Schlissel has declared that the re-opening plan does not meet “the reasonable standard for safety recommended by our report,” and President Schlissel did not use the Ethics Committee's report to inform plans, did not respond to the committee, and did not make the report public;

WHEREAS staff, graduate students, undergraduate students, and faculty have exhausted all channels of communication to express their grave concerns about the re-opening plans, and President Schlissel has shown little substantial changes in policy in response to expressed concerns;

WHEREAS, by saying that large-scale testing could lead to an increase in risky behavior--“[That happened](#) in the HIV epidemic when people got a negative test and they presented it to their sex partners and spread disease nonetheless, so testing is challenging at the scale you’re talking about”--President Schlissel publicly reinforced negative stereotypes about the gay community, perpetuated the stigma around HIV, dismissed testing as an important tool, and abdicated the university’s responsibility to test in order to contain outbreaks.

WHEREAS President Schlissel failed to properly and effectively address reports of Martin Philbert’s misconduct, despite the university receiving information “various times over the course of more than [15years](#), including during key periods when he was under consideration and later selected for senior positions within the university.”

WHEREAS President Schlissel has explicitly [refused](#) to accept personal responsibility for the consequences of his administration's decisions;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of the University of Michigan has no confidence in President Mark Schlissel's leadership.

Motion submitted by:

Stephen Ward, Associate Professor, Afroamerican and African Studies, LSA

Supported: Rebekah Modrak, Professor, Art and Design, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design

Supported: Kentaro Toyama, W.K. Kellogg Professor of Community Information, Professor of Information, School of Information