

## Dear Members of the Faculty Senate,

I write today as a follow-up to the Wednesday Faculty Senate meeting. Thank you to the over 2,200 members of Faculty Senate who were able to attend the meeting. I am encouraged by our ability to hold an electronic meeting despite the limitations of Zoom and our University Senate Rules that were not created with electronic meetings in mind. It is my hope that this meeting is the start of a new era in which having a quorum of 100 at a Faculty Senate meeting will no longer be a concern. We learned a lot in putting this electronic Faculty Senate meeting together, and it is our goal to take what we have learned and continue to host large gatherings of faculty coming together to discuss important issues.

As you know, we had the opportunity to deliberate and vote on six motions sent in advance as well as motions brought from the floor. I will start with addressing the motion that has held the most interest, and which carries the most significance, Motion 6, a motion of no confidence in the leadership of President Mark Schlissel.

As many of you know, the results of the vote for motion 6 were incredibly close with 957 votes in support of the motion, 953 votes in opposition to the motion, and 184 abstentions. The motion was reported at the meeting to have failed. I as Senate Chair, along with the Senate Secretary, and SACUA have conclusively and unanimously determined that the University Senate Rules on voting using Robert's Rules of Order for interpretation leads all of us to the same conclusion. Abstentions should not have been counted as votes, and Motion 6 should have passed. We ask for your patience and understanding while we not only discussed how abstentions should be handled, but we also discussed in depth our concerns about the lack of accessibility to voting experienced by some of our colleagues.

We are committed to working with the University Information Technology team to identify how we can address such lapses in technology in quick order, while also identifying alternatives when such issues arise to preserve the ability of all participants in our meetings to exercise their right to vote. I think it is important for you to know that during the meeting, those of us on the panel did not have a clear picture of the issues that were being raised concerning accessibility.

Accessibility had been tested in advance of the meeting by University IT team members. However, a software update after the testing was complete led to an unanticipated lapse in accessibility. As announced at the beginning of the meeting, we were not monitoring the chat because we were not equipped to do so. MaryJo Banasik was in touch behind the scenes with the IT team when information was shared in the Q&A, while also monitoring the Q&A for additional motions. We apologize for creating a perception that accessibility concerns were ignored. We are committed to putting protocols in place to ensure that in the event that barriers to accessibility arise in the future, there will be a pause until the University's IT team is able to resolve any issues. We will do better.

I provide below a brief summary of all main motions for which votes were taken at the Faculty Senate Meeting:

Motion	Vote	Pass/Fail
1. SACUA on Electronic Voting	Yes: 1,933 No: 37	Pass
2. Weineck, Manera, Szymanski No Confidence in Re-opening Plan	Yes: 915 No: 991	Fail
3. Toyama, Merlin, Gilbert Implementation of Permanent Policy Requiring Substantive Consultation of the Administration on All Matters Relevant to Faculty With Existing Bodies of Faculty Governance	Yes 1,328 No: 615	Pass
4. Marsh, Gallo, Spencer, Liu, Potter, Finlayson Call for All Members of University Community to Engage Constructively Together to Overcome Challenges and Meet the Educational Mission of the University	Yes: 826 No: 903	Fail
5. Railton, Amidei, Barald Call for University Administration to Release Details About Models and Assumptions that Have Guided University Planning for Fall Term, Including Justification for Testing Protocols, Evidence Required to Change Plans, and Arrangements Made to Limit Community Spread	Yes: 1635 No: 118	Pass

6. Ward, Modrak, Toyama No Confidence in President Mark Schlissel's Leadership	Yes: 957 No: 953	Pass
7. Weineck Resolution to University to Resolve GEO Strike and Withdraw Litigation	Yes: 934 No: 360	Pass

As I communicated previously, we had heard from Faculty Senate members, who due to teaching and other scheduling conflicts, were unavailable to participate in Wednesday's meeting, and who were requesting the opportunity to express their views on the issues. In response, we developed a sentiment ballot that included the seven motions that had been put to a vote during the Faculty Senate meeting. The sentiment ballot was open for twenty-four hours, and 2,143 members of Faculty Senate participated. These results do not impact the voting results from the September 16 meeting. This information is available on the [Faculty Senate Office website](#).

My SACUA colleagues and I are committed to leveraging the strength of your collective voices to pursue meaningful change. We will begin by pursuing the requests approved by you in Motions 3 and 5. Please engage with us through participation on Senate Assembly, or through Senate Assembly committees when the opportunity arises. We are looking forward to meeting with the 74-member Senate Assembly this coming Monday to delve into strategies for accomplishing better connections between faculty and administrators.

Sincerely,

Colleen

Colleen Conway  
University of Michigan  
Professor of Music Education  
Chair, [UM Faculty Senate](#)  
Editor, [Arts Education Policy Review](#)  
Editor, [Conway Publications](#)

