

Draft Minutes 1 March 2021

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA)  
Monday, 1 March 2021 3:15 pm  
The meeting was held via Zoom because of the COVID-19 Shutdown

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

Absent: none

Guests: Tabbye Chavous, Associate Vice President for Research-Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts, Director National Center for Institutional Diversity, Ann Zaniewski, Scarlett Bickerton

3:16: Call to Order/Approval of the Minutes/Approval of the Agenda

Chair Conway called the meeting to order. Ann Zaniewski said she is running a “Faculty/Staff Spotlight” column in *The University Record* focusing on the interesting extra-curricular activities of faculty and staff. She is looking for suggestions of people who could be profiled in such an article.

3:18: Faculty Senate Office Updates

Dr. Banasik confirmed the final slate of four candidates for SACUA. The candidates are Professors Donald Freeman, Damani Partridge, Frank Pelosi and Kanakadurga Singer. She noted that Senate Assembly can nominate additional candidates from the floor. There are three slots for three-year terms, and one for one year that will complete Professor Manera’s term (Professor Manera is leaving the University for ETH Zurich [<https://ethz.ch/en.html>]).

Dr. Banasik said new transcriptions have been added to the Davis, Markert, Nickerson Symposium which is available through YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e2GFLT7f5gw&feature=youtu.be>).

Dr. Banasik said that the Faculty Senate Office is beginning to move files to the University server and to Dropbox as MBox is being phased out.

Professor Dinov asked if the numbers are low for the SACUA election. Chair Conway confirmed that is the case, adding that many people who were approached felt they did not have the time to take on additional service. Librarian Spencer said people to whom she had reached out had replied that they were swamped. Professor Manera asked how many people were contacted. Chair Conway said the outreach to the 250 eligible persons had been significant.

3:25: SACUA updates

Chair Conway said she had attended the meeting between the Committee on the Oversight of Administrative Action (COAA) and Guidepost consultants on Friday, February 26. It is her impression that the consultants are getting a consistent message from different committees.

Chair Conway said there will be a temporary rules committee established that will meet until May to develop rules for future electronic meetings.

Chair Conway said that she and Dr. Banasik had a meeting with Provost Collins and Special Counsel Gerdes on February 26, to discuss budget issues and faculty views with respect to fall reopening. She noted that parents and students are talking much more enthusiastically about the prospect of a “more normal” Fall Semester than faculty. They had sent the Provost a message from the Committee on Fairness, Equity and Inclusion (CFEI) in relation to fairness given the differences between units (see appendix). Chair Conway’s message to the Provost was as follows:

While we understand the unique challenges that such a decentralized campus brings to bear on planning decisions, we also believe that some central guidance would go a long way in demonstrating to faculty that the Provost’s office is aware of the uneven impact of decentralized decision-making on faculty. If at all possible, we believe it would be helpful to encourage deans, chairs, and directors to permit faculty to decide the teaching modality they believe will best meet the educational objectives of their courses while balancing their personal comfort level with teaching in person. Encouraging the opportunity for faculty to make these decisions would demonstrate that the Provost’s office trusts the faculty, and respects their point of view. Deans allowing faculty to make these decisions would also demonstrate trust and respect. I think this would go a long way to increase faculty buy-in of decisions that will be made for fall while also contributing to faculty satisfaction.

The CFEI statement has also been sent to Covid-19 Council.

Professor Manera said that Provost Collins had asked about how the faculty felt about returning to in-person teaching in the Fall Semester at the Academic Affairs Advisory Committee (AAAC) meeting and was told that vaccination needed to be guaranteed for faculty members if the return to in-person instruction was to be the University’s policy. Some members of AAAC also recommended that the University make vaccination compulsory, while other members advised against mandates. Dr. Banasik said that vaccines are under emergency use authorization, and mandates would be problematic at this time.

Chair Conway said that if sufficient vaccine is not available for the Fall Semester, faculty should not be forced to teach in person. Professor Gallo asked if the question was about the availability of vaccines for faculty only, or for faculty and students. Chair Conway said the Provost was asking about the faculty.

Chair Conway said the Open Mic program will end because of insufficient take up at the present time. SACUA will look at a new way of enhancing communication with the faculty next year.

3:30: Honorary Degree Committee nominations  
Executive Session

3:39: Administrator Evaluations  
Executive Session

4:15: Professor Tabbye Chavous, Associate Vice President for Research-Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts, Director National Center for Institutional Diversity

Associate Vice President Chavous said she has been in her post as Associate Vice President for Research in the Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts for two years. In this position she works collaboratively with other Associate Vice Presidents, meeting monthly with research associate deans across campus to discuss research grant development, safety protocols, and to learn about the research needs of different disciplines and units so as to enhance partnerships.

Associate Vice President Chavous said there are internal seed grants that benefit arts and humanities units which tend to rely on internal funding. She examines the impact of those funds, and conducts follow-up studies to see how the support is working. She is also the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) lead for the office, which puts her in conversation with people across units about DEI impact on the research enterprise. She said that the COVID pandemic had exacerbated inequities connected with race and gender confronting early career faculty as national issues align with the experience of the University's faculty. She is looking at raising restrictions on research spending, urging greater communication between schools and colleges, and exploring policies with the Provost's office to support the external review process.

Associate Vice President Chavous said the pandemic represents a learning curve because research had to be ramped down which required the Office for Research to learn what it means to ramp down and ramp up different types of research (e.g., human subjects research), and to develop policies and practices to enable the restoration of research that had been interrupted.

Professor Ahbel-Rappe asked Associate Vice President Chavous about her role as Director of the National Center for Institutional Diversity (NCID), and about ways to create metrics that are more supportive of African American students coming to the Ann Arbor campus. Associate Vice President Chavous replied that NCID works to catalyze research focusing on DEI, looking for evidence-based practices to alleviate the current tension between aspirations and reality so as to enhance the critical mass of people working on DEI issues on campus, and improving campus climate. She noted that the Provost's office is concerned with the gap between admission yield and matriculation, which may be connected with the way the financial picture—specifically factors such as financial aid and the cost of living in Ann Arbor—is presented to the public. She believes it would be disingenuous for the University to create a picture of diversity before it exists, that people want to see that they are part of something that exists, and that the University is not asking students to be the diversity experience for others. While Proposition 2 is still a challenge, inhibiting action on diversity recruitment, there is new creativity in recruitment, based on legal parameters, which includes having students connect back to their communities, so people are coming in as cohorts and clusters.

Professor Ahbel-Rappe said that the University should be a place where everyone wants to come, and students do not understand what is hindering the development of diversity. Associate Vice President Chavous replied that, although Michigan is a segregated state, the University is making progress increasing the population of persons from Under Represented Minorities, especially members of the Latinx community.

Professor Ahbel-Rappe asked if Associate Vice President Chavous is involved in cluster hires of underrepresented faculty. Associate Vice President Chavous said she serves on the committee that is reviewing the applications. The Provost's office and NCID are partnering to create programs to support new faculty hires and expand ability to study racial inequality and leverage the expertise that is on campus better, they are coordinating with the University Office of Research to focus on racism and racial inequality, innovation research grants and grants for community engagement. The Office of Research will be issuing a report on these topics to the Research Policies Committee in April.

Librarian Spencer drew attention to the Senate Assembly's Committee on Anti-Racism, which is exploring problems and issues facing faculty of color on campus, and to recent departures, including those of three African American women, for positions at other universities.

She asked Associate Vice President Chavous what she would like to see as topics for the Committee on Anti-Racism. Associate Vice President Chavous says that she had observed a tendency for accomplished scholars to leave the University for leadership roles at other institutions. One solution is to enhance the currently restricted leadership pathways for faculty of color, and that, at the present time, there is a lack of mentoring for faculty of color who are interested in leadership pathways. She also noted that not all faculty of color work on issues connected with communities of color.

Librarian Spencer noted that Ivy League schools have been more welcoming to minority students in STEM fields than has the University of Michigan, that minority students will not come to the University because of lack of support, while Ivy League schools have no barriers to recruiting students of color. She said the University needs to create a critical mass of students of color without crossing the legal line, and that, given its greater size, the University has the potential to have a greater long-term impact for students of color if it can learn from places that have been successful.

Chair Conway said SACUA is looking at the intersections between faculty governance and administration. Professor Liu noted that Research Policies Committee (RPC) has been exploring disparities exacerbated by the pandemic, and that it will find the Office of Research's forthcoming report very useful.

Professor Ahbel-Rappe asked if there have been discussions of the repeal of Proposition 2. Associate Vice President Chavous replied that while there is significant action to support recruitment and retention in the context of Proposition 2, there is no University-wide effort directed to repeal of Proposition 2. She noted that there are faculty and student groups devoted to this end.

4:45: Matters Arising  
Executive session

4:56: Adjourn

#### Appendix: CFEI note on equity and preparation for the Fall 2021 Semester

Hi, Colleen,

I wanted to write to you about an issue I initiated at the end of the CFEI committee meeting today, coming back to our earlier September discussion about Fairness, Equity and Inclusion issues for faculty in the pandemic. We want to get ahead of the administration as we prepare for Fall 2021 teaching and schedule classes.

CFEI raised equity concerns with return to campus plans if there is unit by unit variation without central guidance or resource sharing or transparency about access to options, choices, resources, etc. Contingent faculty might be the worst affected (lack of options/choices). Medical campus has been vaccinating their faculty, students and staff for months, but the rest of faculty, students and staff might not be vaccinated by the beginning of Fall 2021 for no fault of their own but for the simple fact with the lack of vaccine availability and scheduling of it and developing immunity in time for September 2021. And then, we don't know how long the immunity lasts.

When we are assigned classes for Fall2021, there is continuing uncertainty what this university is committed to and what principles will guide choices available to faculty, students and staff.

Even within our committee, divergent unit-level experiences were shared that present a huge potential equity issue across the board: one faculty member from shared their experience that their dean's office officially announced that they would not come back to teach in person in Fall 2021 due to the lack of resources and space to safely socially distance/stack cohorts/disinfect/monitor mask compliance as well as having a plan for contact tracing and isolating on their campus. In other units, this semester some classes were taught in person, but if we consider the same level of "safe" practices they used, we will quickly run out of space/masks/disinfectant/resources to do this safely.

Some units already asked faculty to choose which mode of teaching they want for Fall2021. How many units give their faculty a choice? What do they communicate? What about students who are supposed to be in residence but have pre-existing conditions - how does the university plan to coordinate their accommodations for virtual learning in Fall21, before, as president Biden said yesterday at Town Hall, we would be back to normal only by Christmas? What are the expectations with regards to these students? Where is the university-wide communication about this in the middle of class scheduling?

With best regards,  
Irina Aristarkhova  
Chair, CFEI, Faculty Senate

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."