

Draft Minutes of 15 March 2021  
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING  
Monday, 15 March, 2021 3:15  
The meeting was held by zoom

**Present:** Abir, Ahbel-Rappe (by virtue), Ali, Burzo, Byon, Conway (by virtue), Dal Cin, DiFeo, Dinov, Eyrard, Fabilli, Finlayson (by virtue), Friese, Garner, Gnedin, Guzdial, Hertz, Hyde, Huang, Junghans, Kahn, Kattari, Ketefian, Lagisetty, Lahiri, Laurence, Lepri, Liu, Lucas, Manera (by virtue), Maitra, Mansfield, Maxim, Mesa, Modrak, Morgan, Okwudire, Pal, Papaleontiou, Partridge, Passey, Pinto, Potter, Sales, Singer, Spencer (by virtue), Toyama (by virtue), Van Berkel, Banasik, Devlin

**Alternate Requested:** MacLatchy, Laura

**Alternates Present:** Kingston, John

**Absent:** Andrias, Barzilai, Bawardi, Bridwell-Rabb, Butt, Castilho, Caulfield, Conjeevaram, Dolins, Fontana, Gallo (by virtue), Hughes, Jenkins, Kazerooni, Kessentini, Knoblauch, Kolmanovsky, Lampe, Liang, Madathilparambil, Mendlow, Nelson, Ostling, Ramaswamy, Snyder, Subramanian, Trumpey, Wang, Wright

3:16 Call to Order/ Welcome/Agenda/Minutes 11/16/20/ 1/25/21/ 2/15/21/Announcements

Chair Conway called the meeting to order, and invited Senate Assembly members experiencing access issues to contact Ms. Devlin.

Chair Conway indicated that Senate Assembly members wishing to address the meeting should indicate this through the “Raise Hand” function” in Zoom, and asked the Assembly to test access to the Simply Voting software through the link provided in the chat.

The minutes for November 16, January 25 and February 15 were approved.

3:20 Faculty Senate Office Updates

Dr. Banasik reminded the Senate Assembly that volunteers are being sought to serve on Senate Assembly Committees in the 2021/2022 academic year.

3:25 SACUA updates

Chair Conway said the consultants from Guidepost Solutions have been meeting with the Senate Assembly’s Committee on Oversight of Administrative Action (COAA), the Academic Affairs Advisory Committee (AAAC) as well as with the WilmerHale Task Force, which had submitted a report that Guidepost Solutions is reviewing. She indicated that there will be further meetings between faculty groups and the Guidepost Solutions consultants in addition to the meetings the consultants will be having with the faculty ombuds and SACUA on April 5, 2021. Chair Conway said she will have an update on these discussions at the April 19, 2021 Senate Assembly meeting. Guests at that meeting will include Vice President for Research Cunningham, UM-Flint Vice Chancellor Hague (<https://www.umflint.edu/article/um-flint-announces-appointment-new-vice-chancellor-business-and-finance>) and UM-Dearborn Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs Dadey (<https://umdearborn.edu/about/leadership/office-chancellor/speeches->

[commentary-and-messages/new-vice-chancellor-business-affairs-bryan-dadey-december-22-2020](#)). Senate Assembly members wishing to provide questions for these guests are urged to submit them through the chat function in Zoom. Senate Assembly committees will present their reports at the meeting on May 10, 2021. Chair Conway said voting for the SACUA election will commence at the conclusion of the meeting.

Chair Conway said she would like to enhance communication between Senate Assembly members and the units from which they are elected. She said President Schlissel and Provost Collins are increasingly keen to learn what the faculty are thinking, and that it is important for SACUA to represent the view of the faculty as a whole. She would like the next SACUA chair to be able to say to the President that they are representing the whole faculty.

Chair Conway said Provost Collins will speak for fifteen minutes about Fall 2021 planning and initiatives from her office on anti-racism. She will take questions about any topic after 3:45, and Senate Assembly members wishing to pose questions should do so through Zoom's "Raise Hand" function or through the chat.

3:30: Provost Collins

Provost Collins joined the meeting. Provost Collins said that there has been work underway with respect to the Fall 2021 Semester, but there is more work to be done. She invited faculty to participate in the process. She indicated that the 2021/2022 academic year will be a transition year, that the University will not simply go back to the way things used to be, but stressed that the return to in-person teaching will be innovative and responsible, with increased in-person engagement throughout the year. She believes the University can accomplish this goal with minimal health risks to Graduate Student (GSIs) instructors and faculty.

Provost Collins drew attention to the positive news about vaccination, and to the expansion of opportunities for community members to receive vaccine. She noted that the vaccine mitigates the chance of serious disease, and that there is growing evidence that it reduces the chance of disease transmission from people who are vaccinated, something that is especially important for people who have children under 16 in their households. In addition to the vaccines, improved therapeutics enhance the treatment of the disease.

Provost Collins said there is no definitive timeline for the resumption of in-person teaching, and if the assumptions upon which the current plan are based prove to be wrong as the Fall Term grows closer, the administration will change its plan while retaining its commitment to the highest quality teaching possible in a given context.

Provost Collins said that, at its core, the University is a residential institution, and expressed concern about the impact of the remote experience on the emotional and psychological well-being and the sense of community and connection across campus. She noted that the research enterprise is back to 75% capacity and will return to 100% in the Fall Semester. She further noted that as the University transitions to the residential model, more of the decision making will be at the school and college level because programs are so different across units that only individual units can decide how their different course modalities will operate. She stressed the need to work together to get as many course modalities ready so students will understand the choices they are making when they begin registering for courses in April.

Provost Collins said the portfolio of the anti-racism initiative announced in October 2020 is connected with existing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives on anti-racism in teaching and research. She said the program has two primary focal points, one is the "cluster hire initiative," which is the only exception to the hiring freeze. She said that the administration recognizes there are already many faculty on campus who work on anti-racism. Hence a key part of the portfolio is to build out an infrastructure supporting those who are already at the University to work on anti-racism, and drawing attention to LSA's National Center for Institutional Diversity and its anti-racism collaboratory (<https://lsa.umich.edu/ncid>). In her view the University should become a leader for the study of environmental justice and educational inequality. Provost Collins noted that faculty have had difficulty working across units, hence points of emphasis for the anti-racism initiative are enabling people to meet each other in seminars and symposia on relevant topics, and providing new funding for anti-racism efforts on the

part of faculty and students. She hopes to bring small interdisciplinary groups to work on these projects, and said that there is a selection committee working through cluster hires of two or more faculty. There have been submissions for these hires from fifteen schools and colleges. The first of three rounds of selections will occur before the end of March, 2021. The goal is to make up to twenty hires across the main campus and medical school, with four more possible through the University of Michigan Biosciences Initiative (<https://biosciences.umich.edu>), over three years.

Provost Collins said that the Advancing Public Safety at the University of Michigan Task Force (<https://record.umich.edu/articles/task-force-selected-to-examine-campus-public-safety-practices/>) was launched in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd and other African Americans in the summer of 2020. She said she appreciated the work students had done in calling attention to the issue. The task force is focused on the Ann Arbor campus. It will explore the way the Division of Public Safety and Security (DPSS) responds to and interacts with members of the community, looking to understand what is going well, and what can be improved. The Task Force, assembled in an inclusive way, which consists of faculty, staff, graduate students and undergraduates (<http://www.provost.umich.edu/anti-racism/taskforcemembers.html>), held a public forum in February (<https://events.umich.edu/event/81617>) and received 432 responses to a survey. It held a second public forum on March 10 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmU8uRTA8VA>).

Provost Collins invited questions from Senate Assembly members. Professor Pal asked if there was a goal for the diversity initiative, and about plans for helping faculty deal with the impact of the pandemic on their prospects for promotion. Provost Collins replied that the antiracism initiative had many goals that are aligned with the University's DEI goals, meaning that it was difficult to identify one specific goal. The goal of the Advancing Public Safety at the University of Michigan Task Force is to work together with DPSS to recognize, as best it can, the wide range of perspectives on what works well and what does not. The faculty initiative has multiple goals given that anti-racism is one of the areas in which there is much work to be done to understand what is and is not happening in this country. In her view, experiences over the past year show the country needs to come together to make things better; the University can play a role through research and public engagement, which will also help with teaching, learning, retention and recruitment. In terms of promotion, many plans are being discussed with a view to offsetting the impact of this year. Her office will announce broader a portfolio to support faculty whose work has been disrupted, noting that there is a tenure clock extension for all junior faculty, all of whom are encouraged to ask for that extension. She added that the process is intended to be easy for faculty. Additionally, some schools and colleges are offering their own policies. She noted that, at both the University and elsewhere, the impact of the pandemic is increasing gender and racial disparities.

Professor Lucas asked about the difference between the Advancing Public Safety at the University of Michigan Task Force and the existing Police Department Oversight Committee (<https://hr.umich.edu/working-u-m/workplace-improvement/police-department-oversight-committee>), and asked if the task force is empowered to make big recommendations about issues that have been controversial (disarming police, changing the budget, background checks for graduate students and other employees). Provost Collins replied that the task force and the oversight committee are quite distinct, that the oversight committee has a specific charge, but that the chair of the oversight committee is serving on the task force. The task force is gathering data from other campuses, looking for what may be widespread issues, and how to build on best practices. The task force was charged in December with making recommendations to Provost Collins and President Schlissel (<http://www.provost.umich.edu/anti-racism/advancingpublicsafety.html>). Special Counsel Gerdes added links concerning the work of the task force to the in the chat (these links are incorporated above).

4:00 Ad hoc Rules Committee

Chair Conway said the Senate Assembly needs to think about rules for future electronic meetings, hence the proposed rules committee which will issue a report on May 10, 2021. She said there will be a further rules committee next year to deal with arising issues.

The charge for the proposed Winter 2021 Rules Committee is as follows:

1. Review current University Senate Rules to identify provisions that are incompatible with electronic meetings.
2. Review existing senate rules from other Big Ten institutions and other available resources to identify examples of senate rules that support electronic meetings.
3. Make a recommendation for the format - whether fully electronic, hybrid or in-person - for University Senate meetings going forward.
4. Prepare proposed University Senate Rules that will cover both in-person and electronic meetings for SACUA review and Senate Assembly approval.

Chair Conway said the timing of the proposal for the rules committee was dependent upon the completion of the work of the Accessibility Task Force. The proposed membership of the committee is: Dr. Banasik, Chair Conway, Professor Liu, Professor Maxim, Professor Thouless, Professor Toyama.

Professor Khattari moved that the committee be established. Professor Pal seconded the motion. Professor Maxim asked if the Office of General Counsel (OGC) would be asked for advice. Chair Conway said the committee will develop the new rules in advance of discussion with OGC.

The motion passed 36-0-0

#### 4:20 SACUA Candidate Statements

Chair Conway said that SACUA had approved the use of electronic voting for this election, and that the extension of the voting period for twenty-four hours will enable fuller participation in the process. She asked Senate Assembly to endorse SACUA's proposal to keep voting open until 11:59 pm on Tuesday, March 16 so all Senate Assembly members could vote after viewing the candidate statements.

Professor Kahn moved approval of SACUA's proposal; Professor van Berkel seconded the motion.

Professor Manera asked how Senate Assembly members who were not at the meeting would learn about candidates who had not published statements through *The Record*. Chair Conway replied that these candidates would have their statements recorded and posted:

([https://www.dropbox.com/s/4ag5qcn0j8icsc6/GMT20210315-202648\\_Senate-Ass\\_1920x1200.mp4?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/4ag5qcn0j8icsc6/GMT20210315-202648_Senate-Ass_1920x1200.mp4?dl=0)).

Professor Sales asked why it was necessary to extend the time for voting. Chair Conway replied that SACUA felt it was more inclusive to allow people who are not in the meeting to vote, and that this is what potential voters will expect because of the way materials were distributed before the meeting. Librarian Kahn said this was also true when candidates were nominated from the floor at meetings prior to the pandemic. Professor Ahbel-Rappe said SACUA felt that it would not harm the democratic process to allow more people to vote and allow a more democratic result—SACUA did not want people to be disenfranchised by factors beyond their control.

Professor Manera asked if, given the exceptional circumstance, it would be preferable to post statements in writing. Chair Conway replied that there was no problem in allowing people to submit written statements. Professor Singer noted that if people cannot watch the video, the closed caption will still be available. Conway said that written statements would be generated through the video recordings of candidate statements.

The motion passed 35-1-1

Chair Conway said there are two ways for candidates to run for SACUA, one is to be nominated by the nomination committee, the other is to be nominated from the floor through a seconded motion from a Senate Assembly member. Chair Conway drew attention to rules stating that there are limitations on membership by unit so that no more than three members of SACUA shall be from the College of Literature, Science and the Arts, two from the College of Engineering, two from the School of Medicine, and one from any other school or college (<https://faculty senate.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Senate-Rules-Rev.-2011.pdf>).

Professor Ali nominated Professor Atzmon from the College of Engineering. Professor Modrak seconded the nomination. The Faculty Senate Office confirmed Professor Atzmon's eligibility.

Statements were issued by the candidates.

Chair Conway said voting would open at the conclusion of the meeting, and remain open on Tuesday, March 16. She reminded Senate Assembly members that they were voting to fill four positions, three of them for three years, one for one year. The top three vote getters would take the three-year positions.

4:43: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted

David Potter  
Senate Secretary

**University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 4.01:**

*The University Senate*

The 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.

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**University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 4.04:**

*The Senate Assembly*

The Senate Assembly shall serve as the legislative arm of the senate.

The assembly shall have power to consider and advice regarding all matters within the jurisdiction of the University Senate which affect the functioning of the university as an institution of higher learning, which concern its obligations to the state and to the community at large, and which relate to its internal organization insofar as such matters of internal organization involve general questions of educational policy.

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**Rules of the University Senate, the Senate Assembly and the Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs:** In all cases not covered by rules adopted by the Senate, the procedure in Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.