



Central Faculty Governance Newsletter

October 2021

Allen Liu, Faculty Senate Chair

SACUA

SACUA News

SACUA Endorses Statement Regarding Professor Bright Sheng:

While we are not in a position to do a full investigation concerning the case of Prof. Bright Sheng and SMTD music composition students, we believe we understand enough to recommend that the university adopt a restorative justice approach to addressing this incident. Restorative justice would involve a professionally mediated discussion with Prof. Sheng, the composition students, representatives of the administration, and possibly members of the larger community. The discussion would seek to arrive at an understanding of each party's perspective, an agreement about what happened, and a course of corrective action. Such an approach would help Prof. Sheng and the university have an opportunity to learn and make amends. It would also provide the affected students a measure of justice

and give them a critical say in how justice is enacted. And, by making selected aspects of the proceeding public, it would help heal the rift that has reverberated across this university.

Individual acts of racism are a symptom of broader systemic racism. Collectively, we still have much work to do to achieve true diversity, equity, and inclusion at the University of Michigan.

(7 votes in support, 1 vote against, 1 abstention)

SACUA update: There were just a couple SACUA meetings over the past month since we had Faculty Senate meeting and Senate Assembly (SA) meeting back-to-back. Vice Chair Caitlin Finlayson met with the Central Student Government (CSG) leadership to learn about students' experience related to COVID and introduced SACUA to the CSG's resolution on COVID policies. SACUA had Provost Collins as a guest in executive session and also discussed grievance matters and the roles and responsibilities of SACUA members in executive session. SACUA has reviewed and provided feedback on the anti-retaliation SPG.

SENATE ASSEMBLY

Senate Assembly News

SA meeting summary: At the October SA meeting, we focused on issues related to handling misconduct on campus. Record keeping at ECRT of cases is an important area to focus on in the future. We had several members from Guidepost Solutions (the consulting firm hired by the

Regents to follow up on the WilmerHale report) visiting SA and gave us an overview of their work up to now. They noted that 98% of their recommendations have been accepted (but not implemented). Two of their main recommendations included the restructuring of Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) to the current ECRT office and the establishment of shared value (through the culture journey). They are continuing to work on ethics and compliance recommendations. We also had Tami Strickman, Director of ECRT, at the SA meeting and she spoke about the restructuring of the office and answered questions from SA members. SA members are keen on learning what plans are in place to evaluate changes to policies and procedures. SA members also would like to see the plans from the administration for the next 6-8 months in terms of areas to work on and how are the policies are going to be implemented.

SA looking ahead: I will continue to engage Tami Strickman from ECRT in SA meeting, potentially inviting investigators from ECRT to meet with SA members for us to learn how gender-based misconduct cases are handled at Michigan and be in a position to better advise on procedures and practices. We will also begin discussing about transparency on decision making and how administrator hiring/reappointment decisions are made.

FACULTY SENATE

Faculty Senate News

Faculty Senate Meeting Q&As: I have prepared Q&A and timeline documents about the logistics of the Faculty Senate meeting and responses from President Schlissel and Provost Collins to unanswered questions posed in the Q&A during the meeting. Please follow these links to access these documents: [Logistics Q&A](#) and [President and Provost Responses to Unanswered Questions](#).

Resolution Updates: With the passing of 5 motions from the faculty senate, I know many faculty are keen on knowing the follow-up plans. Please know that SACUA is following up on these motions and will work as much as we can within our faculty governance structure. I outline below some follow-up plans.

Motion 1. Work Connections: 1) President Schlissel and Provost Collins have suggested a meeting with a small group of faculty and relevant administrators from several units to discuss faculty issues about Work Connections. 2) The Committee on Oversight of Administrative Action (a Senate Assembly committee) will work on developing a set of recommendations. 3) Committee on Fairness, Equity, and Inclusion may also weigh in on this motion. 4) SACUA may form a task force with faculty and staff to look more closely at Work Connections and get more clarity on how they are making their decisions with respect to COVID.

Motion 2. Adequacy of COVID policies: SACUA helped populated a faculty advisory council for COVID and I have asked several members of the COVID council to discuss about motion 2 recommendations with President Schlissel and Provost Collins.

Motion 3. Choice of methods of instruction: 1) I will discuss this at the Academic Program Group meeting with the deans. 2) Academic Affairs Advisory Committee may discuss this further with Provost Collins.

Motion 4. Handling of sexual misconduct: This was one of the opportunities identified at the SACUA retreat and an area that SA also identified an interest in. SACUA and SA will continue to play a role. We will have additional engagement with Equity, Civil Right, and Title IX (ECRT) office and continue to push for remaining recommendations from SACUA's WilmerHale Task force report.

Motion 5. Remote teaching for parents with young children: The Committee on the Economic and Social Well-Being of the Faculty (a Senate Assembly committee) will work on developing a set of recommendations.

We Want to Hear From You

Your input is important to us. If you have questions about Central Faculty Governance, about participating, or if you have questions or concerns about a specific topic, please [contact us](#). The Faculty Senate Office will get back to you within twenty-four business hours.



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