



Committee on Oversight of Administrative Action (COAA) Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2022 via Zoom
Circulated: October 21, 2022
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Present: Tom Braun (Chair), Hani Bawardi, Naomi Binnie, Adam Burak, Arlo Clark-Foos, Caitlin Finlayson (SACUA Liaison), Gabriela Zolravkova Hristova, Donald Likosky, John Pasquale, Karen Staller, Chuanwu Xi

Absent: Fiorella Luisa Adan (undergraduate student), Massy Mutumba, Charistopher Schemanske (graduate student)

2:33 Chair Braun called the meeting to order.

Chair Braun commented on the upcoming departure of Provost Collins, and on President Mary Sue Coleman's planned selection of an interim provost. He also noted the ongoing search for a new UM President, and that the first listening session was yesterday with the lecturers and that five more groups are scheduled. Chair Braun noted that the provost is unlikely to make any major decisions. He speculated about changes to masking policies given that Michigan schools are taking mask mandates off the table. However, Ann Arbor public schools is keeping the mask mandate.

The committee continued its discussion of the Administration Evaluation Committee (AEC) survey. Chair Braun emailed deans from all three campuses. He received 13 responses from 28 deans. He asked questions about the AEC survey and whether AEC surveys are used for reappointment decisions. Of the responses, 8 responded no, 5 responded yes that they use AEC surveys for reappointment decisions. Chair Braun noted that AEC is being used very little to evaluate chairs.

Chair Braun asked how deans evaluate chairs. The [link to Provost Collins' Dean Review Process document](#) was shared. Of the 13 respondents, 1 knew about the provost's guidelines. One dean (not in Ann Arbor) would like help in this area.

The feedback received is that there isn't enough participation and there are too many questions in the survey. Chair Braun talked about contacting AEC directly.

SACUA Liaison Finlayson noted that faculty are evaluated on course evaluations regardless of the response rate.

It was questioned whether 28 questions on a 5-point scale is too much. It was noted that survey designers haven't been involved with the survey. Chair Braun believes the survey is too long for the purpose it serves.

Committee member Staller noted that the original purpose of the survey was not to evaluate people but to provide feedback to people. So this was originally a feedback mechanism, but it is used for evaluation.



Committee member Xi noted that a 20% response rate still does reflect what is going on, and there is value in this. However, it is disheartening that people do not pay attention to these evaluations.

It was asked whether there a documented way the results will be used. It was also asked how 360 evaluations are done.

It was noted that either happy or angry people could be responding to the survey.

Chair Braun noted that he would go to an AEC meeting to speak with the committee. Chair Braun reached out to SACUA Chair Allen Liu, and to the AEC chairs. He noted that ITS will be managing the survey going forward. Chair Braun wrote to them and noted that written confidential responses should be maintained rather than deleted. Bob Jones, Executive Director of ITS, is setting up a time to meet to discuss this issue. It may be possible for the comments to be saved and to go to a person's supervisor as well as to the person individually.

It was noted that historical data is on the website. With student evaluations, each form is saved. It was questioned whether it is desired to have ITS save individual responses to Likert -scale questions. It was questioned whether there is value in saving the original surveys. Member Hristova noted that individual responses are not visible. There is a summary percentage of other questions.

Comparisons were made to administrator surveys – faculty surveys don't disappear, why do administrator surveys go away?

It was asked whether evaluations are subject to FOIA. Chair Braun indicated that he would follow up.

It was noted that biases may be reported in the qualitative portion of the survey, and this permits these issues to get ignored. However, it would be helpful to include positive trends also.

It was noted that comments about Martin Philbert were shared but not read.

It was asked who distributes the comments, and how are responses delivered. Chair Braun agreed to update the group about this.

Comments were purged in the past, and then they were not subject to FOIA.

Chair Braun asked if there is anything else committee members would like him to ask AEC. Member Burak asked whether the committee is open to redesigning the survey. SACUA Liaison Finlayson asked whether the survey can be streamlined to reduce questions.

It was noted that many faculty do not have enough information to evaluate the provost. It was suggested to consider editing the process for review of deans for a new provost to consider.



Chair Braun agreed to go to the provost with the statistics he has. Chair Braun created a [google doc](#). Pages 2-3 include ideal qualities for the provost. He would like the committee to come up with some metrics and to provide this to the provost to provide for better evaluation of the deans. He asked committee members to provide some ideas about how a dean should be evaluated.

Member Staller noted that nothing is present about honoring faculty governance. The committee took some time to review the google doc.

There was a discussion about executive committees. It is unknown how deans interact with executive committees. Sometimes decisions are made first and the executive committee is more or less a rubber stamp.

The committee discussed the composition of the search committee for the president. There was a resolution passed by Senate Assembly asking that the search committee have two additional members. The make-up of the search committee has more emphasis on scientists and medicine.

Member Hristova asked whether there is anyone from the humanities. It was noted that Professor Tabbye Chavous is a psychologist, and Professor Colleen Conway is from the School of Music, Theatre & Dance. It was noted that the search committee was selected by Regent Acker.

Chair Braun encouraged committee members to think about the google doc. Action items include to meet with AEC, and with the executive director of ITS, and to share information with the provost.

Member Clark-Foos expressed appreciation for Chair Braun's leadership. Member Bawardi expressed appreciation for information learned in the group. He noted that they do in Dearborn what happens in Ann Arbor – comments from the AEC survey are discarded. He noted that an actionable pathway is not very clear.

It was noted that this issue could be taken to Senate Assembly so faculty will can provide some feedback. With no faculty input, policies allow appointment of chairs from one department to the next, unchecked, and sometimes unnoticed. Major policy changes and restructuring are needed. The hope is that the committee will have input in redesigning the survey.

Respectfully submitted,

MaryJo Banasik
Director, Faculty Senate Office

Next Meeting:
Friday, March 18, 2022
10:30am-12noon EST
Via Zoom