

MEMO

Date: June 7, 2023

To: SACUA

From: Semyon Meerkov, AEC Chair

Subject: Report on AEC activity during AY2022/2023 and recommendations for the members of AY2023/2024 AEC

AY2022/2023 Work Participants and Organization:

AEC members: Yi-Su Chen, Ivo Dinov, Min-Hui Huang, Ioulia Kovelman, Semyon Meerkov, Judith Smith, Wayne Stark, Derek Kim (undergraduate)

SACUA Liaison: Silvia Pedraza

AEC worked in close cooperation with ITS Team consisting of: Robert Jones (team leader), Brian Cors, Chris Gardner, Elizabeth Barrieault, Haripriya Mahadevan, and Michael Hess. Without the ITS team participation, the results obtained by AEC this year would have been impossible.

In addition, SACUA chair Allen Liu actively participated in this work and Ann Marshall skillfully carried out recording secretary duties.

AEC meeting were held on: September 6, September 29, October 27, November 17, December 15, January 26, February 16, February 23, March 30, April 20

ITS/AEC meetings were held on a bi-weekly (at some periods, weekly) basis throughout the year.

Committee Charge

- Develop and jointly with the ITS team implement a method for evaluating impact of AEC surveys on the UM administration operation.
- Develop and jointly with the ITS team implement the steps for increasing response rate of AEC surveys.
- Jointly with the ITS team, continue improving and extending the poll infrastructure (e.g., including the evaluation of associate department chairs and academic associate deans)
- Jointly with the HR personnel, resolve the issue of evaluating department chairs with no regentially approved appointments.
- Jointly with the Office of General Counsel personnel, clarify the issue of AEC surveys with regard to potential FOIA requests.

Committee's activities

All components of the Committee Charge have been carried out. Specifically:

- Members of AEC met with ISR to obtain recommendations on increasing survey participation.
- Members of AEC and ITS team created a plan for improving the functionalities and user experience of the survey.
- Several AEC members and Bob Jones met with Timothy Lynch and Debra Kowich to discuss survey data retention within the context of FOIA requests.
- Bob Jones, Keith Riles and several AEC members met with Sascha Matish about HR data and how to include chairs without regental approval in the survey.
- Members of AEC met with Provost Laurie McCauley to discuss a draft of the IEP survey and to invite the Provost's feedback.
- AEC created three subcommittees: the Impact Subcommittee, the Survey Participation Subcommittee, and the Survey Questionnaire and Infrastructure Committee
- To evaluate the effect of AEC's annual surveys on the UM Administration, AEC and ITS team designed and implemented an Impact Evaluation Poll (IEP), which has been submitted to all 29 UM Deans and 105 Department Chairs. The poll began on Jan 17, 2023 and ended on Feb 7, 2023. The poll reminders were sent on January 31 and February 6. The results of the poll are posted at aec.umich.edu
- On January 17th, a message was sent to President Ono to inform him of the IEP and the upcoming AEC annual survey.
- To increase the response rate of the AEC surveys, the survey questionnaire has been modified. Specifically, all questions have been classified in the two groups, Main and Supplementary, where the former included 2-5 questions (depending on the category of the administrator) and the later comprised up to 25 questions. This was carried out in the hope that the invitees would answer at least the main questions.
- To accommodate suggestions of the administrators obtained from the Impact Evolution Poll, two free-format questions have been included in the survey: what the administrator should do more and what less.
- On March 22, 2023 the AEC Survey was distributed to 6,423 Faculty Senate members and 2250 responses were received (making the response rate 35%).
- Announcements and reminders of the survey included:
 - Heads-up note to Deans/Chairs: March 15
 - Kickoff letter: March 22
 - Reminder 1: (by President Ono): April 5
 - Reminder 2: April 12
 - Request for Deans/Chairs support: April 13
 - Request to Senate Assembly: April 18
 - Reminder 3: April 19
- AEC voted to preserve the open-format answers of the IEP survey for a total of 4 weeks.



- ITS team significantly improved the AEC survey infrastructure, to include non-regental appointed Department Chairs in the survey, and to successfully carry out the IEP and the AEC survey.
- On May 3, AEC held a luncheon honoring the ITS team of Bob Jones, Brian Cors, Chris Gardner, Elizabeth Barrieault, Haripriya Mahadevan, and Michael Hess, with special guest VP Ravi Pendse attending.
- Chair Semyon Meerkov, AEC members Min Hui Huang and Yi-Su Chen, and ITS member Chris Gardner will meet to prepare the report of the 2023 AEC results in preparation for posting the survey results report on the [AEC survey website](#).
- In May-June 2023, ITS team, with participation of AEC, created a new infrastructure for presenting the AEC survey results.
- To present the results of free-format questions, ITS used an IA software to summarize over 1500 submitted responses.
- The numerical results of 2023 survey are being published on an updated by ITS team AEC website (aec.umich.edu) on June 8, 2023.
- The free-form advice and comments are being submitted to the appropriated administrators also on June 8, 2023.

Recommendations

- **The main recommendation:** Develop a document clearly describing to the Faculty Senate members a mechanism put in place to ensure:
 - anonymity of the answers to the quantitative questions of the annual AEC survey;
 - anonymity of the free from advice to the administrators of the survey;
 - confidentiality of the remarks to the administrators included in the survey.

This recommendation is of importance since during the AY2022/2023 survey period a number of Senate members stated that they would not participate in the survey because the mechanism of ensuring anonymity and confidentiality is not clear.

- Add to the questionnaire free-format questions in the Opinion of the Faculty part of the questionnaire, which would allow Senate members to express their opinion about University climate and University services.
- Continue the efforts of incorporating all Department Chairs without regental approval into the list of evaluated administrators.
- Obviously, include the newly elected members of the Faculty Senate in the AEC survey.
- AEC members from UM-Flint and UM-Dearborn suggested enhancing HR data for the 2024 survey for regional campuses:
 - HR data from Flint could be expanded to include all governing faculty at Flint as respondents.
 - At Dearborn, it was recommended that units be consulted, if possible, in gathering HR data since the definition of governing faculty varies by unit.