

Minutes October 2, 2023  
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs  
Monday, October 2, 2023, Time 3:00  
The virtual meeting was held in 1100 Ruthven and via Zoom

**In Person Attendance:** Chair Tom Braun, Vice Chair Damani Partridge, Coordinator Ann Marshall, Director Luke McCarthy, Secretary Deirdre Spencer

**Remote Attendance:** Professor Simon Cushing, Professor Rebekah Modrak, Professor Heather O'Malley, Professor Silvia Pedraza, Professor Alex Yi.

**Absent:** Professor Allen Liu, Professor Vilma Mesa, Professor Lindsay Admon (on leave)

**Remote Guests – Press:** Katie Kelton – *The University Record*  
Matthew Shanbom – *The Michigan Daily*

**3:00 -- Call to Order / Minutes / Announcements --** The meeting was called to order at 3:04pm. The minutes from the September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved by consent. There was no 'Executive Session', so the meeting was entirely open to the press. In advance of the meeting, SACUA received the written report of the FSO Director.

**3:05 – SACUA Chair Update /** This past Friday the chair had lunch with Senate Assembly committee chairs. The event allowed for an opportunity to interact with the chair and the FSO Office. The issue of whether the university should sell alcohol at sporting events was discussed. There was an article in *The Record* regarding the sale of alcohol which included a survey that we were encouraged to take. By filling out the survey, the Regents will be informed. The question was asked where the money collected from the sale of alcohol at sporting events would be applied?

**3:10 – ECRT Report Planning Committee / ECRT planning update.** Last year CFEI and CAR engaged on several issues which included collecting data on reports of racial discrimination. The two committees are now pushing for this data and want faculty input. The chairs of CFEI (Caitlin Finlayson) and CAR (Mark Allison) along with SACUA Vice Chair Damani Partridge, Chair Tom Braun, and FSO Director Luke McCarthy will be meeting with Tanesia White, Director of Civil Rights, from ECRT about what this report might look like. What should and should not be included in the report? How might we ensure privacy as well as explanatory information on how the data is collected? What should the report be named?

The question was asked where does caste fit within this project? Caste-based discrimination would be covered as falling, within the ECRT's understanding of applicable law, as being within the race, color and national origin prohibitions on discrimination.

**3:20 – Nominations Committee Resolution Discussion /** At the retreat we decided to

engage Senate Assembly committee members who are in their third year, to help us with recruitment by serving on a nomination committee. Next week we will vote on a nomination committee draft resolution that we are discussing today.

There was a detailed discussion of what the committee would look like. Under consideration was a proposed schedule of committee activities such as selecting a chair. Also under consideration was the role of non-voting members, the equitable representation of departments, partial terms of service and possible review of the eighteen-committee structure. There are approximately twenty-five third year members.

We are to look at the Google doc and revise it for the next Senate Assembly meeting, however it may have to be postponed until the November meeting if SACUA needs to work on the resolution beyond next week.

**3:40 – Tenure Definition** / We reviewed “Toward a Definition of Tenure” (1994), from the SACUA Standing Subcommittee on Tenure, and then documented our thoughts using IdeaBoardz. Under discussion were salary ranges for each level of professorship, which are also affected by the school, discipline, or college.

Some of the definitions in the report were vague, for example the requirement of an “adequate salary” with no clarification of what “adequate salary” means. There was discussion about salary inequities among faculty ranks, and tenure being primarily about academic achievement (publications, etc.) and not salary.

There was discussion regarding punitive measures associated with salary such as merit and cost of living increases (which are not guaranteed).

Questions under consideration include the decrease of salary having nothing to do with tenure. (If a person makes less than the previous year did a demotion occur?) There are qualifiers for the regional campuses.

What are the requirements for demotion if there are no clear criteria?

A discussion ensued regarding summer teaching opportunities (or lack thereof) and what it means regarding pay and tenure. On the one hand, not teaching in the summer can be perceived as punitive, yet desirable on the other. Some faculty (such as LSA) teach less in the summer and engage in research using their research funding instead.

If a student complains about a grade and the faculty member is being forced to change a grade by the administration, is it a violation of academic freedom? It favors students over faculty.

The chair noted that SACUA needs documented evidence, not anecdotal evidence regarding these issues if we want to engage with administration.

**4:30 – Finding Assistant Faculty Grievance Monitor Nominees** / The FSO Director reported on the process. The office shared a Google doc regarding the qualities we are looking for in the nominees.

He asked if about our next steps, such as posting a link to a nomination form in the Faculty Senate newsletter, or have the chair send a letter to the membership

encouraging them to self-nominate.

We don't know yet what an assistant FGM job would look like. There is not a list of people to choose from. Finding people will be difficult considering confidentiality which is important. Self-nominations will help provide a pool and then we can decide if they are appropriate. Other ideas are welcome.

According to FSO Director, the newsletter has about a 60% readership, but the Faculty Senate expansion emails were even more popular, judging by how many people opened those emails.

We will place a link and article in the newsletter to recruit candidates for assistant grievance monitor. They can later speak to their experience without divulging information about specific cases, with SACUA then reviewing the statements. Members had no suggestions at the time and will think about it more.

**4:40 – Matters Arising** / – A question was asked regarding how easily faculty can access student transcripts. Faculty members, it was answered, are not generally free to look up transcripts, although they can be for advising and potential funding. There are protections for students regarding who can access transcripts and for what purpose.

**4:45 – Adjourn** – The meeting adjourned five minutes early at 4:40pm

Respectfully submitted,

Deirdre D. Spencer,  
Secretary

## **ADDENDUM**

### SACUA Actions

Between meetings, SACUA has performed the following actions that should be included in the SACUA minutes:

- After receiving a request from the Provost's Office for three nominations for an LSA Dean Search Advisory Committee, SACUA voted electronically on September 27, 2023, in approval of the following three nominations, which have now been submitted to the Provost's Office:
  - Robin Queen, Sarah G Thomason Collegiate Professor of Linguistics, Arthur F Thurnau Professor, Chair, Department of Communication and Media, Professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures, Professor of Linguistics and Professor of English Language and Literature, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts
  - John Carson, Associate Professor of History, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts
  - Gillian White, Associate Professor of English Language and Literature, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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."