



Government Relations Advisory Committee (GRAC) Minutes

Minutes of April 27, 2023, 9:15-10:00 am, regular meeting

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Approved: 10/26/2023

Present: Ruth Person (Chair, presiding), Larry Gant, Chris Kolb (VP for Government Relations), Andrea Lewis (Government Relations Specialist), Ann Marshall (FSO), Teri Rosales, Dana Sitzler, Michael Thompson.

1. Chair Person called the meeting to order and the minutes from the March meeting were approved.

2. Roads Scholar Update by Dana Sitzler: The 2023 [Roads Scholar Tour](#) is about to begin and GRAC members were given a preview of the tour and scholars. The scholars include participants from all three UM campuses, the Institute for Data Sciences, the Library, and a wide variety of schools and colleges. Tour themes and locations include a Habitat for Humanity project, manufacturing (truck and cement factories), rural health care, indigenous issues, and vocational education within a prison facility, as well as a visit to Alpena, MI and dinner with the Provost. GRAC members commented on the potential for UM-faculty, perhaps in collaboration with other public university faculty, to offer online educational opportunities within Michigan prisons.

3. VP Kolb's Update: The MI appropriations process is moving forward, with a recommended 4% increase, \$100 million for higher education, including for financial aid, ITEM funding, and student wellness funding. The House version is out of committee, with 4% ongoing and a 1% increase for one-time funding. The state funds the [Michigan Achievement Scholarship](#). The Senate version has a 6% across the board increase. Every 1% is about a 3.4 million increase for UM, with a 4-6% increase anticipated. A capital outlay budget could offer additional funds. Also, statute of limitations sexual assault legislation is being proposed by MI legislators. VP Kolb thanked GRAC members for their service and invited them to reach out to him individually or collectively.

4. Academic Freedom: GRAC members discussed recent threats to academic freedom at the state-level in Texas and Florida and how this constitutes an attack on higher education. Academic freedom will be a major topic of conversation at national organizations such as the AAU and APU. It is also an issue for GRAC to consider in 2023-2024 and perhaps UM could sponsor a symposium on this topic.

Respectfully submitted, Ann Marshall, FSO, Faculty Governance Coordinator