
M | **FACULTY SENATE** UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Faculty Senate Newsletter

March 2024

Tom Braun, Faculty Senate Chair



SACUA Update

On December 4, 2023, SACUA began with a conversation over the cancellation of the Central Student Government (CSG) vote on two resolutions. Chair Braun provided some background information that was not yet widely known by faculty. SACUA then discussed and finalized their decision to overturn a decision made by a Grievance Hearing Board (GHB); this decision was in response to an appeal filed by a faculty member who had filed the grievance. SACUA then discussed concerns raised by faculty members at UM-Flint who

question recent administrative decisions that may pose a threat to tenure.

On December 18, 2023, SACUA discussed ways to improve transparency around agenda formation for SACUA meetings as well as the content for the chair newsletter. Provost McCauley and Special Counsel to the Provost Gerdes joined SACUA to discuss continuing topics, including a proposed study of tenure-track faculty salaries on the Ann Arbor Campus and recommendations from the External Threat Task Force.

On January 8, 2024, SACUA finalized a statement sent to Interim Chancellor Fry in support of the UM-Flint faculty regarding recent statements made by Chancellor Fry that suggest the possibility of removal of tenure-track positions for financial reasons. SACUA then reviewed the hearing process outlined in Regents' Bylaw 5.09 to familiarize all SACUA members with a process that rarely occurs, but to prepare for the possibility of any 5.09 hearings that may occur before the end of the academic year. SACUA concluded the meetings with additional discussions of a draft document SACUA is developing to outline administrative actions that should be formally defined as demotions and therefore by subject to the rules outlined in Regents' Bylaw 5.09.

On January 22, 2024, SACUA continued its conversation from last meeting regarding 5.09 hearings, including plans to update the membership in the Standing Judicial Committee, from which faculty are selected to participate in a 5.09 hearing and provide a summary decision. The list is out-of-date, with some members now retired or having left UM. SACUA then discussed the format of the next Senate Assembly meeting in which two resolutions would be debated and voted upon. The meeting concluded with continuing development of the document outlining demotions.

On February 5, 2024, SACUA continued its work drafting a document to define faculty sanctions that SACUA feels are demotions, and therefore, should have to be evaluated formally by the process outlined in Regents' Bylaw 5.09. Note that a final draft of this document was later approved unanimously by SACUA via vote outside of our scheduled meetings. This document, outlining demotions as well as a request for further discussion, was then emailed to Provost Laurie McCauley, President Santa Ono, and the Board of Regents, through Vice President and Secretary Sally Churchill, on March 5, 2024. Provost Laurie McCauley and Special Counsel to the Provost Christine Gerdes then joined SACUA for 30 minutes to discuss emerging issues.

On February 12, 2024, SACUA reviewed and edited a proposed resolution forwarded by the Academic Affairs Advisory Committee (AAAC) focused on requests to UM administration regarding Academic Freedom and External Harassment. SACUA then voted unanimously to approve the resolution and bring it forward to the Senate Assembly. SACUA then was visited by faculty members of UM-Flint to discuss two emerging issues on their campus: (i) the implementation of the Flex modality design for courses at the School of Management, and (ii) summary salary determinations for UM-Flint faculty who teach summer courses.

On March 4, 2024, SACUA began developing a statement expressing concerns about the Flex modality design being used at the UM-Flint School of Management. President Santa Ono then joined SACUA for 30 minutes to discuss emerging issues.

Senate Assembly Update

On December 11, 2023, the Senate Assembly was visited by Provost McCauley, who provided the Senate Assembly with the current activities in the Provost's Office. She then addressed questions raised by Senate Assembly members, including the recent cancellation of the Central Student Government (CSG) vote on two resolutions. Chair Braun then presented results from a recent survey given to University Senate members regarding the need for dependent care, which had already been shared with President Ono and Executive Vice President Chatas. Senate Assembly members were also supplied with the results from a previous meeting in which members, in small groups, discussed their experiences and challenges with student accommodation requests. The Senate Assembly then divided into small groups that discussed the current Israel-Gaza conflict and the issues it has raised on our campus. The meeting ended with two resolutions brought to the floor. Both resolutions were moved to the next meeting after the Senate Assembly voted to adjourn the meeting.

On January 29, 2024, the Senate Assembly convened to debate and vote upon two resolutions that were originally proposed on December 11. The first resolution, Resolution #121123-1, regarding the decision to close a recent election held by the Central Student Government (CSG), and Resolution #121123-2, regarding UM divestment from its financial holdings in companies that invest in Israel's ongoing military campaign in Gaza. Discussion of

Resolution #121123-1 was brief, and was passed with 50 members in support, 5 not in support, and 2 abstaining. Discussion of Resolution #121123-2 was much longer, including several amendments proposed and unanimously approved regarding language changes and additions. There was one motion to move this resolution to committee, but that motion was voted down. Resolution #121123-2 was passed with 37 members in support, 16 not in support, and 5 abstentions. It should be noted that the meeting was attended by a vast number of students, mostly who supported the resolution, which caused apprehension in many Senate Assembly members who chose to attend via Zoom or not attend altogether.

On February 19, 2024, the Senate Assembly met with Arthur Lupia, Associate Vice-President for Research, to discuss Bold Challenges. Dr. Lupia presented slides outlining the current and future initiatives planned for Bold Challenges and then addressed questions from Senate Assembly members. Senate Assembly then met with Central Student Government (CSG) President, Meera Herle, and Vice President, Bipasha Ray. Herle and Ray presented slides outlining the structure of CSG, the activities supported by CSG, and the recent resolutions approved by CSG. There was also a discussion of the recently cancelled CSG vote. The meeting concluded with discussion of Resolution #2192024, "Resolution on Academic Freedom and External Harassment."

There was an amendment to modify the language in the resolution and reflect the recent announcement from the UM-Ann Arbor Provost's Office about resources now available to faculty. The Senate Assembly unanimously approved the resolution as amended.

Call for Senate Assembly Committee Volunteers

You are invited to [submit nominations for service](#), starting next academic year, on one of the Faculty Senate's [eighteen standing committees](#), either as a member or a chair. More information can be found in the nomination form [here](#). Self-nominations are welcome. All nominations will be considered by the Senate Assembly's Nominations Committee.

Contact Us

Please contact [Faculty Senate Chair](#) Tom Braun or the [FSO](#) with any issues you would like to discuss. Also, please feel free to reach out to your Senate Assembly representatives if you have any questions, concerns, or feedback!

The Senate Assembly roster can be found [here](#).

Faculty Senate in the News

[Senate Assembly talks Bold Challenges initiative, resolution on academic freedom and external harassment](#), *Michigan Daily*, by Michelle Liao, February 19, 2024

[SACUA talks AAAC resolution on academic freedom and external harassment](#), *Michigan Daily*, by Alexis Spector, February 13, 2024.

[SACUA works to clarify faculty sanctions and process of filing grievances](#), *Michigan Daily*, by Alyssa Tisch, February 5, 2024.

[Senate Assembly passes UMich divestment resolution](#), by Michelle Liao, *Michigan Daily*, January 30, 2024.

[SACUA discusses Senate Assembly meeting agenda, faculty sanctions](#), *Michigan Daily*, by Anna Jerolimov, January 23, 2024.

[Ten faculty members seeking three seats on SACUA](#), *University Record*, compiled by Katie Kelton, March 11, 2024

[Senate Assembly passes resolution on academic freedom, harassment](#), *University Record*, by Katie Kelton, February 21, 2024

[Senate Assembly passes measures on CSG votes, Israel divestment](#), *University Record*, January 30, 2024.

[SACUA states support for UM-Flint tenured faculty](#), *University Record*, by Katie Kelton, January 12, 2024.



A view of the [Ruthven Building](#) rotunda. The Faculty Senate Office is located on the first floor of Ruthven, in suite 1120. The Senate Assembly and University Senate typically meet in Ruthven 2000, University Hall.

Newsletter of the [Chair of SACUA](#) and the [Faculty Senate Office](#).
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