



Student Relations Advisory Committee (SRAC)

Minutes of Meeting: 2/16/24

Circulated: 3/8/24

Approved: 3/15/24

Present: Jessica Pasquale (Chair), Bruno Giordani, Martino Harmon (VP for Student Life), Connie Tingson Gatuz (Associate Vice President for Student Development, Learning, and Social Change Education), India Hayes (Office of Student Life), Joel Scheuher, David Potter, Simon Cushing (SACUA Liaison), Jamie Niehof, Jonathan Brennan, David Mikkola, Marita R. Inglehart

Absent: Marna Clowney-Robinson, Ashley Gearhardt, Cindee Giffen, Anouck Girard, Charlie Koopman, Laura MacLatchy

Guests:

Neeraja Aravamudan, Ginsberg Center for Community Service & Learning

Nadia Bazzy, Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs

Mike Ryan, Office of Student Conflict Resolution

Kyra Shahid, Trotter Multicultural Center

Monita Thompson, InterGroup Relations

Erik Wessel, Office of Student Conflict Resolution

Faculty Senate Office: Eric Vandenberghe

11:35-11:36am: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes, Announcements

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the January SRAC meeting were approved.

11:36am-11:48am: Updates and Current Issues

Summary: VP Harmon provided his updates. He attended the President's Council meeting recently that had a wide array of representation, including faculty.

Faculty facing challenges in the classroom is acknowledged. The recent Faculty Senate votes were discussed. The recent activism on campus is discussed. President Ono has asked a group to convene regarding activism in buildings. Student Life is working on a toolkit and research guide to help facilitate constructive engagement on sensitive topics.

The University adopted [a statement of principles on diversity of thought and free speech](#). This was passed at the Regent's Meeting in January. Feedback came from many stakeholders, including faculty. This was the sole subject of the January Regent's meeting.

The Black Student Union introduced their 4-point plan last year

1. *Increasing Black Student Enrollment*

2. *Explicitly Combating Anti-Blackness*

3. *Rectifying the structural flaws of DEI that systemically neglect Black students*

4. *The University's Social Responsibility to Invest in the Public Good Through K-12*



Education

Several teams have worked on this and work continues. Current enrollment figures are shared.

Well-being for UM students is reviewed. Wolverine Wellness and CRLT are collaborating on an initiative for well-being checks for students. Student Life's website is offered as a resource: <https://wellbeing.studentlife.umich.edu/>.

Action: Updates

11:48am-12:53pm: Responding to Increased Polarization on Campus

Summary: Associate VP Tingson Gatz introduced the guests and introduced the topic. Each of the guests gave brief introductions of their Offices.

[Ginsberg Center for Community Service & Learning](#)

[InterGroup Relations](#)

[Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs](#)

[Office of Student Conflict Resolution](#)

[Trotter Multicultural Center](#)

Polarization on campus is discussed. The best way to get beyond polarization is engaging with others. This is not a new phenomenon. A discussion regarding external actors is held.

A discussion is held regarding alumni relations regarding very polarizing issues. As a public institution, UM has to uphold the principles of free speech.

A question is asked about locating information about each of the offices in this meeting. Is there a single source online where students can find these offices? Navigation to the resources is described. A plug is made for the Resource Navigator. AI is discussed for improving finding resources. It is important to view these resources and related issues from the student perspective, as well as the perspectives of those advising students. A lot of us assume that students know about resources, but they can sometimes require guidance.

The Resource Navigator is explained. This is an initiative born of the pandemic and continue to this day. It is a good landing space.

Whose job is to address polarization on campus? Faculty, Office of Student Life, the Regents, DPSS, etc.? A discussion takes place on this. Faculty often address polarization on a smaller level. Faculty give perspectives. Many topics can get political, differing between subjects taught.

Discussion is held on how different disciplines experience polarization. A point is made that the students need to be engaged with every day. CRLT is plugged as a useful resource.

A reflection is made that in recent years students are more aware of their identities. Figuring out how to deal with in-person confrontation is discussed.

Action: Discussion



12:53pm: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Vandenberghe
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