

Minutes: March 25, 2024  
Circulated March 29, 2024  
Approved April 2, 2024

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**  
**Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs**

Monday, March 25, 2024, 3:00

The hybrid meeting was held in 1100 Ruthven and remotely via Zoom

**In-person attendance:** Chair Tom Braun, Vice Chair Damani Partridge, Professor Heather O'Malley, Secretary Deirdre Spencer

**Remote attendance:** Professor Lindsay Admon, Professor Simon Cushing, Professor Allen Liu, Professor Vilma Mesa, Professor Rebekah Modrak, Professor Silvia Pedraza, Professor Alex Yi

**Press:** Katie Kelton – *University Record*  
Michelle Liao – *Michigan Daily*

### **Agenda Items**

#### **Time -- Topic -- Action Item**

#### **3:00 -- Come to Order and Minutes Approval**

The meeting was called to order at 3:01. The minutes were approved by consent.

#### **3:05 -- SACUA Chair Update:**

1. The chair issued a reminder of the DMN “China Initiative” panel discussion taking place at 6pm that evening at Weiser Hall.
2. Anyone interested in running for being the Chair or Vice Chair of SACUA should let SACUA know next Monday. The election will take place in 2 weeks.
3. The chair referenced VP for Student Life, Martino Harmon’s email regarding hate messages posted on Instagram.
4. The chair was in attendance at the Honors Convocation the previous Sunday when a protest disrupted the event and ended it prematurely.

#### **3:10 -- Flex Modality Vote**

1. SACUA finished drafting a letter addressing concerns regarding a new “Flex” modality document being required in the School of Management on the Flint campus. After minor edits, the document was unanimously accepted. The chair will send the document to the faculty representatives from Flint, the UM-Flint interim chancellor, and the interim dean of the School of Management.

#### **3:30-- Course Recordings -- Executive Session**

#### **4:15 Matters Arising**

1. Professor Mesa mentioned a consortium of student activity groups where there is

a referendum to vote on issues. This was brought to her attention by a colleague in the Mathematics Department.

2. Professor Francine Dolins of Dearborn is advocating palm oil divestment; Chair Braun mentioned that the Faculty Senate Office and he are aware of her work and will keep this issue in mind for a future committee charge.
3. Professor Alex Yi relayed a situation involving a search committee for a department chair, and issues with the Dean ignoring committee members' input and even speaking against a faculty member for expressing an oppositional viewpoint. Professor Yi also mentioned that the current chair submitted a grievance on violation of by-laws, and Chair Braun asked Professor Yi for details about that grievance.
4. The Chemistry Department on the Ann Arbor campus learned of budget cuts. 18% of GSI positions will be eliminated. It is possible that this is due to the recent LEO contact, which increased support, leading to fewer GSI positions. Chair Braun asked for SACU members to ask their units if this is occurring in units outside of Chemistry.

**4:45 Adjourn** – The meeting adjourned at 5:07.

### **Addendum**

#### SACUA Actions

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

- On March 13 2024, SACUA approved the March Senate Assembly agenda.
- On March 14, 2025, SACUA approved the following nominations for a search advisory committee being formed for a dean search for the Law School:
  - Kayte Spector-Bagdady
  - Gabe Mendlow
  - Sam Erman

Respectfully submitted,

Deirdre D. Spencer  
Secretary

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 polices 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."