

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION
Items for Information**

SUBJECT: April 2024 Faculty Governance Update

Overview of items discussed:

1. SACUA
2. Senate Assembly
3. Final Thoughts

1. SACUA:

- On March 11, 2024, SACUA briefly discussed a resolution that would make the Rules, Practices, and Policies (RPP) Committee a standing Senate Assembly committee. The RPP committee was created as an ad-hoc committee and has met for the past two years. Their productivity this year was incredible and there remain numerous issues that RPP needs to address, thereby warranting the RPP committee continuing as long as needed. SACUA later voted on April 5 to approve this resolution to be brought forward to the Senate Assembly.

SACUA then met with Dr. Earl Lewis and Dr. Elizabeth Cole to discuss the current status of the Inclusive History Project (IHP) to better understand the goals of the IHP and where faculty input can be solicited.

- On March 25, 2024, SACUA drafted a letter expressing concerns raised by UM-Flint faculty regarding a Flex modality design being required for courses in the School of Management. Chair Braun forwarded the letter to Interim Chancellor Fry and Interim Provost Kandogan. Although financial considerations are important for UM-Flint's future success, the suggested cost-savings of the Flex design are outweighed by the negative impacts it will have on the ability of faculty to effectively teach and manage these courses.

SACUA then discussed potential benefits and drawbacks of lecture capture and the more general recording of classroom interactions. UM lacks general guidance around course recordings and more discussion and direction is needed with respect to issues such as appropriate and inappropriate use of the recordings, who has access to and permission to use the recordings, and should recording be only audio, or both audio and video? SACUA eventually drafted and approved on April 1 a letter to Interim UM Law School Dean Loge expressing concerns about the approaches being used with course recordings in the Law School.

- On April 1, 2024, SACUA met to develop a letter in response to the draft Disruptive Activities Policy that had been released by UM administration the previous week. SACUA was able to develop and approve the letter which was forwarded to President Ono and UM General

Counsel Tim Lynch. Although there was not complete agreement on whether any new policy should be created, it was unanimously agreed that the current draft should not be adopted given numerous concerns and shortfalls.

- On April 8, 2024, SACUA first ventured outside to view the solar eclipse. SACUA then discussed a resolution developed by the Academic Affairs Advisory Committee (AAAC) entitled “Resolution on Salary Increase Underpayments for Faculty on University Year Appointments.” With edits, the resolution was approved to bring forth to the Senate Assembly.

SACUA then had their final meeting with Provost McCauley for the 2023-2024 academic year to discuss issues currently impacting the academic climate of UM.

The meeting concluded with SACUA elections. Rebekah Modrak was elected as the new chair of SACUA and Heather O’Malley was elected as Vice Chair. Both start their terms on May 1, 2024.

- On April 22, 2024, SACUA met with Regent Denise Illitch to discuss how to strengthen the relationship between the Regents and SACUA and the Senate Assembly. We also discussed the recent letter written by SACUA asking the Regents to address the current Regents’ Bylaw 5.09 to better reflect what demotions are and which administrative sanctions might be viewed as demotions. We concluded with a discussion with ongoing issues at UM-Flint.

SACUA then discussed a series of three Standards of Practice that govern SACUA operations. Two of the resolutions were passed, while the third was tabled for a future SACUA meeting.

- On April 30, 2024, SACUA met to discuss a letter proposed by the Committee for the Economic and Social Well-Being of the Faculty (CESWF) to address recent changes UM made to retiree health benefits and the financial hardships now being experienced by a small proportion of retirees. SACUA had some edits and numerous outstanding questions that could not be addressed by the end of the meeting, so the issue was tabled to a future SACUA meeting.

SACUA also met with Regent Paul Brown to discuss how to strengthen the relationship between the Regents and SACUA and the Senate Assembly. We then discussed the recent campus climate due to the student protests, specific to the UM campus and universities across the US.

SACUA also acknowledged the departure of Damani Partridge and Silvia Pedraza, shared thanks, and celebrated with cupcakes.

2. SENATE ASSEMBLY:

- On March 18, 2024, as a follow-up to the SACUA meeting on March 25, Chair Braun presented a series of four questions via Poll Everywhere to assess Senate Assembly members' views on recording of lectures and classroom activities. The responses to these questions were used to inform the letter SACUA wrote to Interim Law School Dean Loge on April 1. The Senate Assembly then had a broader discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of lecture recordings.

Senate Assembly then heard statements from the candidates who were running to fill the three openings in SACUA. Due to time constraints, Senate Assembly voting occurred after the meeting.

Senate Assembly members then discussed the recent Disruptive Activities Policy draft, which had been released and feedback requested after the previous Senate Assembly meeting. Senate Assembly also voted to approve an endorsement of the letter sent by SACUA to President Ono and General Counsel Tim Lynch voicing concerns with the draft policy.

- On April 15, 2024, Senate Assembly first discussed and then voted to approve two resolutions, both of which were brought to the floor by SACUA. The first was the "Resolution on Salary Increase Underpayments for Faculty on University Year Appointments;" the second was a resolution to make the Rules, Practices, and Policies (RPP) Committee a standing Senate Assembly committee.

3. Final Thoughts

- This is the final report I write as chair of Senate Assembly and SACUA. It has been an incredible experience being able to lead the Senate Assembly and SACUA through a rather turbulent year. The insight and knowledge I have gained cannot be adequately described, and I hope I have served to create a strong, collegial, and respectful relationship between UM faculty and UM administration. There are certainly areas in which faculty and administration continue to disagree and debate, but I am hopeful that my approach to leading those debates will continue with the new leadership and membership of Senate Assembly and SACUA.

Submitted: April 29, 2024



Tom Braun, SACUA Chair
SACUA Regents Update April 2024