

Minutes: September 23, 2024

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Senate Assembly

Monday, September 23, 2024, 3:15

The hybrid meeting was held in University Hall 2000 Ruthven and remotely via Zoom

**In-person attendees:**

Mousumi Banerjee, Meaghan Blanchard (nonvoting), Jon Brennan, William Calvo, Theodora Danciu, Alexa Eisenberg, Paul Fossum (nonvoting), Ingrid Hendy, Charlotte Karem Albrecht, Ann Marshall (nonvoting), Luke McCarthy (nonvoting), Rebekah Modrak, Susan Najita, Heather O'Malley, Derek Peterson, Deirdre Spencer (nonvoting), Wayne Petty, Soumya Rangarajan, Andre Monteiro Da Rocha, Albert Shih, Melanie Tanielian, Kentaro Toyama, Eric Vandenberghe (nonvoting), Jon Zelner.

**Virtual attendees:**

Mark Allison, Christina Aplin-Snider, Michael Atzmon (nonvoting), Jayapalli Bapuraj, Sue Anne Bell, Jeffrey Bleiler (nonvoting), John Branch (alternate), Tom Braun (nonvoting), Jade Burns, Deepa Butoliya, Jesse Capeceletro, Rogerio Castilho, Yi-Su Chen, Amy I-Lin Cheng, Cameron Cross (nonvoting), Aileen Das, Robert Duncan, Monica Dus, Allison Earl (nonvoting), Johannes Foufopoulos, Terri Friedline, Caren Goldberg, Gideon Goodrich (nonvoting), Jay Guo, Brendan Haug, Joshua Hausman, Sarah Hawley, Justin Hodge, Holly Hughes, Leila Kavar (nonvoting), Shake Ketefian (nonvoting), Brad Killaly, Liz Kolb, Carolyn Kuranz, Patricia Leoncio (nonvoting), Corey Lester, Yongqing Li, Brian Love, Charles Lwanga, Vilma Mesa, Zetian Mi, Shahzad Mian, Karin Muraszko, Mojtaba Navvab, Mukesh Nyati, Phillip Palmbo, Jessica Pasquale, Pamela Pennock, Geila Rajaei (nonvoting), Harmony Reppond, Stacy Rosenbaum (alternate), Kimberly Saks, Suzanne Selig (nonvoting), Craig Smith, Lauren Smith, Brian Stewart, Sarah Vordenberg, Craig Wilkins, Alex Yasha Yi, Jason Young, Yaqing Zhang, Robert Ziff, Paul Zimmerman

**Press:**

Jeffrey Bleiler – *University Record*

Patricia Leoncio – *Michigan Daily*

**3:15 Come to Order and Minutes** The meeting was called to order at 3:15pm. The minutes of the April 15th meeting were distributed and approved by consent.

**3:20 New Member Welcome**

The chair welcomed new members, thanked them for their service and referred them to their new member packet. The chair laid out the rules for the meeting. The meetings are open to the public, but discussion is limited to Senate Assembly members. The chair must recognize members for permission to speak. When the floor is open to discussion, those in person must raise their hands to be recognized and wait to receive the microphone. Zoom attendees must use the raised hand function and speak your comment or question and not use the Zoom chat because others cannot hear and it is difficult to monitor. When speaking please give your name and unit.

### **3:30 Senate Assembly Chair Update**

The only update is that the Faculty Senate Office is collecting policies and bylaws from the various schools and departments. If you think that your school or department is doing a particularly good job of including faculty in decision-making let the FSO know. A question arose regarding details of the kind of information requested: the roles of committees and faculty voting, how people are elected to committees, tenure processes, etc.

### **3:40 Committee Charges Approval**

The Secretary announced that SACUA had approved 17 committee charges for consideration by the Senate Assembly. As a result of the Secretary's report, the matter automatically became a pending question for the Senate Assembly. The charges had been distributed to the Senate Assembly in advance of today's meeting.

Before discussing and voting on the charges, there was one preliminary issue to address. We received an updated charge to one of the committees: the Committee for the Economic and Social Well-Being of the Faculty. The Chair asked if there were any objections to including the updated charge for discussion and approval. There were no objections, so the updated charge will be included with the others being considered.

The floor was then opened to discussion of any or all of the 17 charges. A faculty member had concerns about the recent changes to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities (SSRR) that the Board of Regents made at their July 2024 meeting, without consultation with CSG or the Faculty Senate (including SRAC). The SSRR governs student conduct for the Ann Arbor campus. The question was whether this concern should be included in SRAC's charge. There was then discussion of the efforts that SRAC has already performed on this issue, including sending a letter to the Regents and continuing to discuss actions in their committee. Later in today's meeting of the Senate Assembly, there will be an opportunity to reach a consensus on how the Faculty Senate should move forward, including through the Senate Assembly acting. Further efforts to address the SSRR changes can still be directed to the committee under the SRAC charge as written, which includes allowance for "emerging issues and topics" to be brought forward. The SA, therefore, did not implement any changes to the SRAC charge due to the flexibility of the charge language.

The Senate Assembly then approved all of the 17 committee charges under consideration. **57 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 abstention. Total 58 votes.**

### **4:00 SACUA Vacancy Election Process SOP Approval**

The Secretary announced that SACUA had a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) regarding SACUA vacancies for consideration by the Senate Assembly. As a result of the Secretary's report, the matter automatically became a pending question for the Senate Assembly. The SOP had been distributed to the Senate Assembly in advance of today's meeting.

Under the Senate Rules, the Senate Assembly determines how a vacancy is filled. We have used a particular procedure for the last four off-cycle elections to fill a vacancy, but that procedure has needed to be approved by the Senate Assembly every time a



vacancy occurs. To be more efficient, SACUA has developed a standard operating procedure (SOP) that codifies prior practices so that vacancies can be more easily filled by the Senate Assembly. The SOP was shared with the Senate Assembly members in advance of the meeting. Under the SOP, there will be a three-week nomination process. Candidates must be current Senate Assembly members. Candidates will submit a written candidate statement and will be permitted an opportunity to submit a video statement. The Senate Assembly will then vote electronically on the candidates over a 72 hour voting period.

After brief discussion, the Senate Assembly approved the SOP regarding SACUA vacancies. **60 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions** **The SACUA Vacancies SOP has been approved.**

The Faculty Senate Office will email the Senate Assembly within 3 working days and will begin requesting nominations. Talk to your colleagues about getting involved. The faculty Senate is involved in many initiatives, and this is a good time to become involved if you want to effect change. This is a short, 6-month term which will end May 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **4:10 Recent Changes to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities**

On July 18, 2024, the Regents adopted substantial revisions to the SSRR despite the language of Article 8, Section J, of the SSRR which said that SRAC, a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, has primary oversight of the amendment process for the SSRR. The university made no effort to engage or inform SRAC in the revision of the policy, depriving students of the right to due process with no faculty oversight. The Regents removed the student's right to an appeals committee that included representation from faculty, students, and the administration. Now, appeals are considered by a single person alone, the Vice President for Student Life, without faculty involvement. The Regents also effectively eliminated the student's right to a student hearing panel (a jury of their peers), placing the hearing decision in the hands of a single staff member. On August 15<sup>th</sup>, SRAC sent a letter to the Regents and President Ono asking the Regents to pause the amendments to the SSRR. On September 18<sup>th</sup> a letter from the President and Regent White responded to state that the Regents have the authority to amend the SSRR without faculty input, and that the changes don't fundamentally alter the SSRR but only clarify existing University policies. SRAC met on September 20, 2024 to discuss the SSRR and the Regents' response. There will be future updates on the SRAC's continuing discussions.

Regarding the SSRR changes, there were a number of general concerns raised in the meeting.

First, what do these changes without faculty input suggest in relation to the administration's commitment to shared governance at U-M?

Second, there was a concern raised about the lack of community involvement in these changes, since the campus community is usually involved in SSRR revisions. Every three years, SRAC reviews the entire SSRR and has primary oversight of a revision process which permits faculty, staff, and students to suggest amendments. SRAC decides if the proposed amendments should go forward. That process was already planned to start in Fall 2024 and is going forward now. The July 18<sup>th</sup> changes were

lacking faculty governance inclusion and community input. The student code of conduct is a document derived from the general U-M community, not the Regents alone.

Third, there was a concern about the legitimacy of the SRAC process in general. Are faculty being asked to waste their time? What are they doing if not providing input that will be considered? The Regents' actions have indicated there is also a different amendment process, one that faculty are not involved in, which undercuts the regular process.

Fourth, some members indicated that while they had been aware that changes had been made, they were just now learning about the process-related concerns.

Fifth, members were concerned about how changes made "the University" an entity which could make a complaint, in addition to faculty, students, and staff. "Who is the University if not students and faculty" who could bring a complaint? The Chair mentioned that the administration has retained an outside consulting group, Grand River Solutions, which is also retained by other universities.

Member Derek Peterson moved that the Senate Assembly approve a statement calling upon the administration to pause implementation of the SSRR changes. The motion was seconded. During the discussion, the proposed language was revised multiple times, and the amendments were permitted by unanimous consent, resulting in the following:

The Senate Assembly calls upon the University's administration to pause the implementation of the revised Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities, and asks that the Administration would respect the collaborative role of students, staff and faculty in formulating changes to this policy, following the process now under way under the leadership of the Student Relations Advisory Committee.

After discussion, the Senate Assembly approved the motion. **Yes 47, No 6, Abstentions 2.**

#### **4:50 Matters Arising.**

The Black Student Union left the TAHRIR group because their voices were not being respected.

#### **Adjourned at 4:53**

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."