FACULTY SENATE
SENATE ASSEMBLY
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

1120 Ruthven Building
1109 Geddes Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

Research Advisory Committee (RAC)

Minutes of Meeting: 10/28/24
Circulated: 11/18/24
Approved: 11/25/24

Present: Audrey Bennett, Arthur Lupia (Interim Vice President for Research and Innovation), Orsolya Lautner-Csorba (Chair), Karen Downing, Alena Stocking (OVPR), Quentin Stout, Jesse Capecelatro, Mrinal Sarkar, Fadhl Alakwaa, Seth Guikema, Magda Ivanova, Tyler Nix, Angelica Previero

Absent: Suresh Madathilparambil, Alex Yasha Yi (SACUA Liaison)

Guests: Dr. Jing Liu, Executive Director, MIDAS

Faculty Senate Office: Eric Vandenberghe

1:01pm-1:02pm: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes, Announcements

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the September RAC meeting were approved.

1:02pm-1:24pm: AI Research Committee Report Summary

Summary: Interim VP Lupia provided an overview and update on the recent internal report produced by the Artificial Intelligence Research Committee. The report focuses on three broad areas: key investments, internal innovation, and ethics & compliance.

The committee worked to determine what key investments are necessary to put them in the best position for global leadership in AI-related research. It is necessary to invest in existing structures, including: computational infrastructure expansion, new human capital, education of the campus community, etc. The second point discussed as an area of key investment is to implement strategies to increase U-M's state of readiness for funding opportunities. These strategies include the promotion of interdisciplinary collaboration and improving networking opportunities, among others. Finally, AI research consulting services are discussed. Further examples are provided.

The committee offered recommendations regarding internal coordination and collaboration. The committee provided recommendations regarding establishing an advisory committee to advise OVPR on AI-related matters, developing a strong web presence that leads stakeholders to AI-related resources, among others. In-depth interviews with key stakeholders took place to inform these recommendations. Internal coordination, communication, and fostering external partnerships are listed as key priorities.

Ethics and compliance are part of the final area covered. The monumental importance of maintaining the highest ethical and compliance standards is conveyed. It is critical to modify existing guidance and establish new guidance as necessary. Specific recommendations are shared.

Questions asked by the committee are answered and discussion ensues.

Action: Presentation and discussion

1:24pm-1:40pm: MIDAS and AI

Summary: The Chair introduces the guest. Dr. Liu presents to the group on enabling AI in research through the work of MIDAS. The definition of AI has been evolving over the last few years, and examples of this are provided. MIDAS has been collaborating with key stakeholders to review and innovate on a wide range of AI-related topics. These collaborations include internal and external stakeholders, both in the private and public sector, including other academic institutions. The current state of AI at UM is discussed.

Resources provided by MIDAS include a genAI tutorial series, as well as step-by step-instructions to use various genAI tools. Examples of current ongoing research on and utilizing genAI is shared. Last summer, MIDAS worked on comprehensive guidelines for using GenAI.

Action: Presentation

1:40pm-2:02pm: Discussion

Summary: Discussion ensues on UM's role in the AI space is discussed. The guest indicates that academic research phase and will continue to play an important role in all aspects of AI. Academia can focus on issues not related to commercial aspects.

A member suggests highlighting success stories regarding genAI on campus. It is further suggested that these stories be shared directly with the committee during a meeting.

Parallels between the supercomputing and AI are shared by a member. The similarities between the rapid development are discussed. AI is an issue at the forefront and can influence the political and international landscape.

Discussion ensues on the roles outside entities play when it comes to AI at UM. Potential collaboration opportunities are discussed.

A question is asked regarding AI and qualitative research. Discussion ensues. Further questions are asked and answered.

The following related sites are provided during the meeting for members to review:

https://midas.umich.edu/
https://micde.umich.edu/
https://midas.umich.edu/research/research-resources/generative-ai-hub/users-guide/

Action: Discussion

2:02pm: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Vandenberghe
Faculty Governance Coordinator
Faculty Senate Office