

Minutes of Meeting: 1/6/2025

Circulated: 1/10/2025

Approved: 1/13/2025

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs

The hybrid meeting was held in 1100 Ruthven and via Zoom

Present: Rebekah Modrak (Chair), Soumya Rangarajan, Heather O'Malley (Vice Chair), Vilma Mesa, Craig Smith, Derek Peterson, Alex Yasha Yi

Absent: Simon Cushing, Melanie Tanielian

Guests: none

Faculty Senate Office: Eric Vandenberghe, Luke McCarthy

Press:

Genevieve Monsma – The University Record

Sarah Spencer – The Michigan Daily

**3:06pm-3:07pm:** Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the 12/9/24 meeting will be reviewed at a subsequent meeting.

**3:07pm-3:22pm: Welcome Back!**

Summary: The SACUA members and Faculty Senate Office members present discussed how they spent the recent Winter Break.

Action: Discussion

**3:22pm-3:45pm: Chair's Update**

Summary: The SACUA Chair provided updates on work that has been completed since the last SACUA meeting.

The SACUA Chair polled the SACUA members present for a date to hold the annual Faculty Senate luncheon in April. The current dates under consideration at this time are 4/9 and 4/11. Wednesday 4/9 is preferred by the majority of the members present. Friday 4/11 is noted as possible for some of the members present. The Faculty Senate Office will work to set a date, book a venue, and send out invitations to Senate members, Committee members, and Executive Officers. The preferred date is tentative and will be dependent on logistical issues.

Chair Modrak was recently invited to a school to discuss current issues facing faculty governance at the University of Michigan. During this discussion, institutional neutrality was the primary issue addressed. An issue related to the recent bylaw regarding institutional neutrality is that there is supposed to be a frequently asked questions page provided by the administration that provides guidance on this new bylaw. This FAQ is not available currently. The school involved in this discussion created a list of questions related to institutional neutrality they would like answered. Chair Modrak sent the list of questions to Provost McCauley and Special Counsel to the Provost Gerdes, who have forwarded the list of questions to the group working on the FAQ. Chair Modrak will share the list of questions provided to the Provost with SACUA.

Director McCarthy and Chair Modrak attended a meeting regarding the Faculty Senate Office Budget. Director McCarthy provided a brief overview of the FSO budget and indicated that it primarily consists of salaries. The budget can be discussed by SACUA further at a future meeting regarding what other functions the Faculty Senate Office can have. Examples of further functions are given, including hosting panels on faculty governance and related issues. The Rules, Practices and Policies Committee (RPP) is currently conducting a peer comparison of faculty governance at other institutions. They will work to provide models to SACUA later on, which should help guide SACUA conversations on the role of faculty governance bodies at UM. That discussion of the future of the UM Faculty Senate can then guide future budget requests.

The RPP has also been reviewing the Faculty Senate's Rules. Some of the rules need to be updated to be in line with the Regent's bylaws. It is indicated that most of the recommendations are not substantive, although there are a few substantive recommendations. These recommendations will be shared with SACUA later this term for review. A few examples are shared of the recommendations that will be offered, with the most prominent being a recommendation to increase SACUA's size to 11, with a permanent seat of a representative from Dearborn and a representative from Flint.

A suggestion has been made to have SACUA visit the Flint and Dearborn campuses. Support is offered for this suggestion by members present, with suggestions offered for activities that could take place during such a visit.

Recent issues facing the Dearborn campus are discussed. CASL faculty concerns are discussed. After the recent town hall related to the CASL issues, two letters were written. Both letters have been sent to Chancellor Grasso.

Action: Updates and discussion

### **3:45pm-4:42pm: Personnel Matters**

Summary: This portion of the meeting was held in executive session.

Action: Discussion

**4:42pm-4:46pm: Matters Arising / New Business / Agenda Building**

Summary: A member offers an update and their perspective on emergent health issues.

Brief discussion is held on the tentative segments of the upcoming Senate Assembly meeting. These will be discussed and voted on at the next SACUA meeting.

Action: Discussion

**4:46pm: Adjournment**

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Vandenberghe  
Faculty Governance Coordinator  
Faculty Senate Office

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."