

**To:** SACUA

**From:** Marita Rohr Inglehart, Chair, Student Relations Advisory Committee (SRAC)

**Subject:** Report on Activities of the Student Relations Advisory Committee (SRAC) for 2024/25

**Members:**

Charlotte Karem Albrecht  
Jonathan Brennan  
Marna Clowney-Robinson  
Myles Durkee  
Cindee Giffen  
Bruno Giordani  
Anouck Girard  
Kaitlin Karmen  
Charlie Koopmann  
Oliver Kozler  
Jamie Niehof  
David Potter  
Joel Scheuher  
Om Shah

**SACUA Liaison:**

None

**Meeting Dates:**

Fri. 9/20 from 11:30am-1:00pm  
Fri. 10/18 from 11:30am-1:00pm  
Fri. 11/15 from 11:30am-1:00pm  
Fri. 12/13 from 11:30am-1:00pm  
Fri. 1/10 from 11:30am-2:00pm  
Fri. 1/17 from 11:30am-2:00pm  
Fri. 1/24 from 11:30am-2:00pm  
Fri. 2/21 from 11:30am-1:00pm  
Fri. 3/21 from 11:30am-1:00pm  
Fri. 4/18 from 11:30am-1:00pm

### **Committee Charge**

1. SRAC is charged with reviewing the Statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities every three years. These efforts will take up the majority of time of the SRAC activities in the 2024/25 academic year.
2. In addition, assessing the factors that challenge students' progression to graduation should be considered. With this focus in mind, three potential moderating factors should be explored:
  - a. A first factor of interest is to gain a better understanding about how students with diverse abilities and special accommodations encounter their journey to graduation. This topic is timely and relevant because of the rapidly increasing numbers and types of accommodations that have been appearing. We suggest a review of common practices across similar institutions as well as meetings with the leadership of the Student Accessibility and Accommodations Services (SAAS) and the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office. The results of these efforts should be reported back to SACUA as recommendations for future faculty initiatives.
  - b. A second factor of interest is to explore how students from the LGBTQ+ community and especially gender diverse students experience their journey to graduation. Meetings with the Spectrum Center administrators will be helpful for these efforts.
  - c. Exploring how students with mental health-related diagnoses experience their journey to graduations and the services they receive is the third aspect of these efforts.
3. Solicit feedback on the perception of a "healthy campus social climate" from students and units, programs, and offices already working in this area, and develop recommendations to improve cross-campus coordination and collaboration to increase awareness and participation in existing and new initiatives.
4. Emergent issues or topics brought forward by SRAC committee members or the Vice President for Student Life for discussion should be discussed over the course of the year. One such new development is the introduction of an inaugural Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Angela Dillard. SRAC should invite Vice Provost Dillard for at least one committee meeting to explore how positive collaborations between this new Vice Provost and the Student Life administration can be achieved.

## Committee Actions

As expected, the charge to review the Statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities (SSRR) took up a majority of time of the SRAC activities in the 2024/25 academic year. Section “VIII. Related Procedures; Part J. Amending the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities of the SSRR” the process of amending the SSRR is described as follows:

*The Statement is a dynamic document subject to revisions by the community. The Statement will be open for amendments every three years. The VPSL, SRAC Chair, and the CSG President may unanimously agree to have an off-cycle amendment period if necessary. The Board of Regents has provided the Student Relations Advisory Committee (SRAC) of the Senate Assembly with primary oversight of the review. Campus community members are encouraged to participate in the process. Amendments may be proposed by CSG, the Senate Assembly, or any Executive Officer of the University. SRAC will review the proposed amendments and consult with the Office of General Counsel. SRAC will then forward the proposed amendments and their recommendations to the VPSL. The final decision on amending the Statement will be the President's. The President should communicate the decision to accept or reject each of the proposed amendments in a public and timely manner, at least two weeks before the last day of classes during the winter semester. The President's communication to the student body should state a rationale for each decision to reject or accept an amendment”.*

Despite this charge, the Regents of the University of Michigan proposed two changes to the amendment on July 18, 2025, in their monthly meeting and accepted them at this meeting. These proposed changes to the SSRR were:

*Change #1. Confirm that the University may act as the complainant. This change, shown on page 7 of the Appendix, clarifies that "the University" may serve as a complainant. While it is permissible for the University to serve in this role without this change, this will explicitly codify that "the University" - in addition to faculty, staff, and students - may act as a complainant under the Statement.*

*Change #2. Make the process move swiftly and without delay. The proposed changes add firm deadlines by which next steps must occur during the resolution process such that all proceedings would conclude within approximately 45 days. Complainants still have six months from the time an incident occurs to file a complaint. The 45-day clock starts ticking as soon as OSCR formally notifies a respondent that their behavior may have violated the Statement. These changes are shown on pages 7-11 of the Appendix.*

Appendix 1 is attached to this report.

Most faculty members of the SRAC then convened in a zoom meeting on August 9, 2024, discussed this change to the SSRR and decided to send a letter to the President of the University of Michigan and the Regents to “pause these changes so the regular amendment process could take place in the academic year 2024/25.” This letter was then circulated among all SRAC faculty members, unanimously approved and mailed on August 14, 2025.

On September 18, 2024, a negative response to this letter was sent by President Ono and Katherine E. White, the Chair of the Board of Regents per email to the faculty members of the SRAC. See Appendix 2.

The SRAC began the SSRR amendment process in its September 20, 2024, meeting. Invited guests Erik Wessel, the director of the Office of Student Conflict Resolution (OSCR), and Mike Ryan, the associate director, provided an introduction to the amendment process, and provided an overview of OSCR’s mission and the history of the SSRR and its amendment process. The timeline of the amendment process was discussed. A link for proposal submissions was already posted on the OSCR website. A description of the possible workflow was provided.

During the October 18, 2024, SRAC meeting, the email from September 18, 2024, by President Ono and Chair of the Regents White was discussed and the decision was made to invite both to the next SRAC meeting. A letter was sent to both with an invitation to the November 19, 2024. Both declined to attend. However, they offered that Jon Kinsey, the Vice President and Secretary of the University, should attend the November meeting and this offer was accepted.

Concerning the SSRR amendment process, Erik Wessel, the Director of OSCR, provided an update on the status of the amendment process and provided an overview of the few proposals submitted at this time. These proposals were reviewed.

VP Kinsey attended the November 15, 2024, SRAC meeting, While the committee still wanted to meet with President Ono and Regent White, the discussion with VP Kinsey about the SSRR changes made by the Regents addressed all major points. The hope was that VP Kinsey and VP Harmon would communicate the discussed points to President Ono.

In addition to the discussion with VP Kinsey, Director Wessel provided an update of the SSRR amendment process. He reported that a total of 29 amendment submissions had been received by OSCR. This number was higher than in the past and SRAC decided to have additional SRAC meetings in January 2025 to be able to review all proposals and submit the proposed amendments to the President. Five proposals submitted by staff members were discussed, but not voted on, because the committee had not seen all proposals yet. Reviewing them all before making decisions seemed important to avoid overlap.

During the December 13, 2024, meeting, the SRAC members discussed several faculty submitted proposals. Included with these proposals were comments from Senate Assembly members that were not collective thoughts and had not been voted on. However, they

provided some additional thoughts to the SRAC members. Proposals discussed started with Amendment 3 and 4 that focused on removing the right of the University to initiate or join a resolution process, amending the Resolution officer process, and restoring the SSRR Appeals Process. A discussion of Amendment 5 followed about including language about doxxing as part of the section on harassment and bullying. The final discussion focused on Amendments 16 to 25 which were concerned with the July 18, 2025, made changes.

The first meeting on January 10, 2025, revisited the proposed amendments 3 to 5 and 16 to 25 previously discussed in December.

In the January 17, 2025, meeting, the discussion centered around the amendments in a chronological order of how they pertain to the SSRR sections. See Appendix 1 for the wording of the SSRR and the Sections discussed. Proposed amendments to Sections 6.1, Section 6.2.3, Section 8 and Sections III, IV, and N were discussed and the last submitted proposals were reviewed.

The final January meeting on January 24, 2025, was used to vote on each of the amendments. Each vote was completed individually and all amendments were approved unanimously with nobody abstaining. One exception was the vote on Section V. Scope of the Violations, Number 4, when one member abstained because she had been out of the room at the discussion.

The next steps were also discussed, namely that a cover letter had to be written to accompany the voted on amendments. This letter will be sent to VP Harmon and the Office of the Vice President and General Counsel (OGC) for review. VP Harmon will then send the letter and proposed amendment changes to President Ono. Once the President will have completed the work, a letter will be sent to the Chair of the committee with the decisions and rationale provided. Previous review cycles had typically ended in early April.

Appendix 3 provides a copy of this letter and the submitted and voted on proposed amendments. It is important to note that these proposed amendments are based on submissions by students, staff and faculty members of the university and were all unanimously approved by SRAC.

At this point in the academic year, SRAC could turn to Charge 2 to assess the factors that challenge students' progression to graduation. In the February 21, 2025, meeting, Central Student Government President Mario Thaqi and the CSG Vice President Jake Frederick provided an update of their perceptions of a healthy campus social climate. They focused on their two major priorities, affordability and campus climate. Housing affordability and food insecurity were discussed. They advocated for an expansion and increased funding for the Maize and Blue Cupboard. They reported that they work on providing guidance to students regarding their eligibility for SNAP benefits on a grocery store transportation initiative that would help students access grocery stores in the area more easily.

Concerning their second priority, the campus climate, speech and protest were the initial priority of this section. They advocated for having a student representative on the Board of Regents and met with individual regents to bring this idea to their attention. They also met with DPSS representatives to address issues of activism management, immigration enforcement, and information dissemination. They concluded their presentation by offering their observations on the current social climate on campus.

The second guest at the February SRAC meeting was Kelly O'Mara, the Program Manager of the Maize & Blue Cupboard. Prior to the meeting, the committee had received the program's 2024 annual report. Program Manager O'Mara provided an overview of the Maize & Blue Cupboard, and the service provided. She stressed that there is no demonstration of need, meaning anyone can get food through this program. Shoppers make an appointment to better utilize the space and prevent long wait times. They show their M-Card, but it is not scanned. Nobody is turned away without food.

In response to a question regarding what the program's biggest challenge is, Program Manager O'Mara indicated that the program could benefit from expanded space. She also described that the initial seed money for this program came from OVPSL, but that they currently operate off donations. It was suggested that student groups could collaborate with the Maize & Blue Cupboard for certain events.

In addition to the regularly scheduled SRAC meeting in March 2025, a special meeting with Kelly Cruz from the OGC took place on Thursday, March 20, 2025, from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. to discuss the OGC's thoughts concerning the submitted amendments to the SSRR. One lesson learned from this meeting was that the SRAC can utilize the OGC during the discussion of amendments to the SSRR which can be helpful.

The collection of information about the factors that challenge students' progression to graduation continued in the March 21, 2025, meeting with a visit by the director of the Spectrum Center, Jesse Beale who provided information about how students from the LGBTQ+ community experience their journey to graduation. Director Beal began their presentation by providing context for the number of 2SLGBTQIA+ students currently enrolled at UM. UM has a sizable amount of this community in its student body and is overall highly rated for its inclusivity. UM has 5 out of 5 stars on the Campus Pride Index and has been named one of the 40 "Best of the Best" by Campus Pride Index. They described that the Center was co-founded in 1971 by Jim Toy and Cynthia Gair. It was the "first staff office for queer students in an institution of higher learning in the United States." Spectrum Center Welcome Programs include Pride Outside, QTBIPOC Welcome, and QT Grad & Professional Student Welcome. The Center includes affinity programs Freshpectives and Q'mmunity Q'nnections.

Director Beal identified unavailability of all-gender restrooms, issues with housing and mental health services as challenges for students. The mental health crisis facing this community has gotten worse over the past few years, partly due to a hostile climate. Work done by UM's Coordinated Community Response Team (CCRT), and Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness

Center (SAPAC) is brought up in an effort to end Anti-LGBTQIA2S+ Violence. The Spectrum Center works to build a supportive and caring community. To this end, the Spectrum Center hosts university-wide LGBTQIA2S+ events, partners with student orgs, and provides grants that enhance campus climate. They work to provide resources for students in need. There are educational opportunities provided by the Spectrum Center that are available to everybody in the UM community.

When asked what faculty can do, director Beal encouraged faculty to advocate for their students and community members.

In addition to Director Beal's visit, a second guest was invited in response to Charge 4 given to the SRAC. Charge 4 suggested that emergent issues or topics brought forward by SRAC committee members or the Vice President for Student Life for discussion should be discussed over the course of the year. One such new development was the introduction of an inaugural Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Angela Dillard. SRAC therefore invited Vice Provost Dillard to explore how positive collaborations between this new Vice Provost and the Student Life administration can be achieved.

VP Dillard presented her team's work on "Creating a Student Success Network". She described closing gaps to make sure students who enroll at UM actually graduate through early momentum. Because research showed that students who take a full 15-credit course load in their first-year graduate in four years at a higher rate than students who take fewer credits, efforts are made to encourage incoming students to fully engage in taking classes right from the start. Her team is focused on the first-year experience, and analyzing course demand and registration, among others.

The final SRAC meeting of the 2024 -25 academic year was dedicated to learning more about two questions. The first question focused on how students with mental health-related diagnoses experience their journey to graduations and the services they receive from the University Health & Counseling (UHC) and Student Life. Chief Mental Health Officer Dr. Lindsey Mortensen who is the Executive Director of these services provided an excellent overview of the services provided. The second question was concerned with the findings in the "Sex and Gender-Based Climate Survey" findings. Rachel Roth Sawatzky, the Assistant Director of the Prevention, Education, Assistance & Resources (PEAR) Department and Anne Handeyside Huhman, the Director at University of Michigan Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center (SAPAC) attended this meeting and provided helpful information about this climate study.

An additional SRAC action was to send a letter to the Regents and the President concerning the university's response to students who engage in free speech activities during demonstrations. See Appendix four.

**Final note:** By the time this Yearly SRAC Report was submitted in May 2025, no response to the submitted proposed SSRR amendments has been received from the president of the university.



## **Information Obtained**

SRAC members received extensive information during the 2024-25 academic year. This information was summarized in the minutes of the meetings.

Above all, VPSL Harmon's Report about Student Life developments at the beginning of each SRAC Meeting offered an excellent overview of ongoing and planned SL activities.

Learning from guests in the February, March and April meetings (see descriptions above) was exceptionally helpful.

## **Recommendations**

The first recommendation is concerned with assuring to inform faculty members better about SRAC activities. On the Faculty Senate website in the Committee section, SRAC related available documents are only the SRAC Meetings agendas. It is recommended to also post the SRAC meeting minutes and potentially related materials in this part of the website.

The second recommendation is related to informing faculty better about SL matters. Of particular interest to faculty colleagues could be the excellent overview of ongoing and planned SL activities that VPSL Harmon's Report about Student Life developments at the beginning of each SRAC Meeting offered. This raises the question how faculty at large could have access to this information. It is recommended to consider how his report could be presented in a monthly column for faculty.

The third recommendation revisits the SSRR amendment process. During the SSRR amendment process, one additional issue surfaced. It became clear that the selection of Resolution Officers (ROs) is not clearly described in the SSRR. To ensure optimal faculty involvement, it is recommended to engage in efforts to motivate academic units in designating faculty as Resolution Officer. In addition, it is recommended to find ways to collaborate with OSCR in the training of resolution officers so that faculty members can contribute to ensure that complainants and respondents as well as other students engaged in this process experience this process as educational and not as punitive.

The fourth recommendation focuses on helping faculty gain a better understanding of how student organizations can contribute not only to student life but to educational aspects of students' experiences at the University of Michigan. A survey for members of student organizations should focus on this question.

The final recommendation is to ensure that SRAC should always include at least two undergraduate and one graduate or professional education student. The benefit of having the student perspective presented in discussions cannot be overestimated.



Appendices:

- #1: July 18, 2024, Changes to the SSRR
- #2: September 18, 2025, response by President Ono and Regent chair White to SRAC
- #3: Submitted proposed SSRR amendment letter and proposed changes
- #4: May 2025 SRAC Letter to regents and President concerning free speech concerns