



## GENERAL CHARGE FOR STANDING SENATE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES

Standing committees are established by the Senate Assembly as mandated in Section 4.06 of the Regents' Bylaws. In collaboration with the Faculty Senate Office and SACUA, standing committees advise and consult with the vice presidents of the university on matters within the areas of their respective responsibilities. Senate Assembly standing committees are charged with bringing faculty voice and perspective to a broad range of university activities including policy and procedure. Senate Assembly standing committees shall strive to provide advice and consultation to their respective vice presidents in a timely fashion so that faculty perspectives are considered during the decision-making process.

*General Counsel's Advisory Committee (GCAC)*

*Advisory to:* Timothy Lynch, Vice President and General Counsel

*Committee Chair:* Jordan Siegel, Ross School of Business

### SPECIFIC CHARGE – 2025 – 2026

1. Inquire about the legal strategies being pursued by the University in response to injurious federal executive orders. Can the University's legal analyses be shared with some subset of elected members of faculty governance (e.g., SACUA, Senate Assembly)? Can faculty have input into such analyses? Relatedly, inquire about why and how an executive order to cease "illegal discrimination" in universities was interpreted broadly—beyond illegal activities, of which presumably UM is largely innocent—to serve as a reason (as explained by President Ono) to dramatically alter how UM engages in DEI work. Messages sent by President Ono undergo OGC review. How did this pass muster?
2. Inquire about how decisions are made with regard to when University of Michigan leads, joins, files an amicus brief, or avoids lawsuits filed against federal agencies. For example, UM was a plaintiff in seeking to block the loss of funding from the Department of Energy, but not on some other lawsuits that affect UM's bottom line even more. How was that decision made, and why did it come out differently from others?
3. Have a presentation on the work done by the OGC. When is the OGC brought into discussions at a School or College level? And how and why are decisions made to bring in outside counsel to address internal matters?
4. Consider how to provide further support to international faculty, staff, and students, such as by considering the following:
  - a. A hotline to contact in case of ICE arresting UM community members that is supported by U-M legal personnel equipped to address the moment of crisis and deploy, as needed, across campus
  - b. Distribution of a pocketable card for U-M community members with resources and a Do/Don't list that is targeted toward providing source during an ICE arrest.



5. Seek clarification around the institutional neutrality policy. In December last year the SACUA Chair sent the Provost's Office and General Counsel staff [a set of questions about the IH policy](#). We have as yet had no reply to these questions. The GCAC should discuss these questions with the General Counsel, with the goal of producing a clarifying statement that responds to the concerns that we have raised.
6. Pursue with the General Counsel the matters raised in SACUA's '[Statement concerning surveillance on the University of Michigan campus](#)' (June 18, 2025), which urged the University to 1. constitute an oversight committee to develop policies controlling the proliferation of surveillance equipment on campus; and 2. Asked for an account of how and why the agents of City Shield were engaged by this university and how they (City Shield) came to think they could act in ways towards UM students that President Grasso condemned. This discussion should be coordinated, as appropriate, with the Academic Affairs Advisory Committee and the Student Relations Advisory Committee.
7. Discuss the implementation of [Motion 4](#) from the November 2024 meeting of the University Faculty Senate, titled 'Accountability for the Handling of Gender-Based Violence at the University'. The resolution passed with 80.2% of University Faculty Senate votes in favor.
8. Discuss the implementation of [Motion 1](#) from the April 2025 meeting of the Faculty Senate, which urged the University to establish a Mutual Defense Compact with other universities of the Big Ten Academic Alliance. The resolution passed overwhelmingly, with 2,700 faculty voting in favor and only 214 opposed.
9. Consider the University's legal posture in relation to student protestors and review ongoing legal and disciplinary actions against protestors in relation to First Amendment protections on free speech and assembly.
10. Discuss the University's legal stance regarding faculty employment contracts and related matters of enforceability.
11. Discuss the University's policy which pushes some tenured faculty members on long-term disability into forced retirement (which the AAUP national organization views as a violation of tenure).
12. Consider emergent issues or topics brought forward by the GCAC committee members and/or the General Counsel for discussion over the course of the year. The committee may also continue discussing any issues or topics raised in the committee's most recent annual committee report.