

Minutes of Meeting: 08/25/2025

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs

Monday, August 25, 2025, 3:00pm

The hybrid meeting was held in 1100 Ruthven and via Zoom

Present: Derek Peterson (Chair), Soumya Rangarajan (Vice Chair), Jesse Capecelatro, Kirsten Herold, Vilma Mesa, Rebekah Modrak (Immediate Past Chair), Heather O'Malley, Rogério Meireles Pinto (Senate Secretary), Melanie Tanielian, Kentaro Toyama

Guests: N/A

Faculty Senate Office: Luke McCarthy, Eric Vandenberghe

Press:

Genevieve Monsma - Record (virtual)

Edith Pendell - Daily (in-person)

3:00pm: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the 05-19-2025 meeting were approved. The Chair highlighted several items worked on by the Faculty Senate Office staff over the summer. A list of work is included in the 8/22 FSO Director's Report.

3:02pm-3:36pm: Chair's Update

Summary:

- The Chair acknowledges the departure of valued SACUA member Alex Yasha Yi who has accepted a new position at another academic institution. Professor Yi's commitment and engagement with faculty governance is greatly appreciated. He is noted for providing important insights on issues facing the Dearborn campus. He is thanked for his service to faculty governance and the university. We wish him well in his new position.
- Chair Peterson has met with many of the Senate Assembly Chairs regarding their charges for the upcoming year. When applicable, Vice Presidents have joined the meetings. These meetings will continue. Chair Peterson compliments the passion of the chairs, and thanks Immediate Past Chair Modrak and the Senate Assembly

- Nominating Committee for their efforts in determining the Chairs.
- Roster changes are announced. A new chair will be found to lead the Rules, Practices and Policies Committee (RPP) committee as the current Chair needs to resign for personal reasons. A number of one-year appointments have been made by Chair Peterson to supplement committees that lost members over the summer.
 - In order to provide faculty-focused recommendations for improvement, Jesse Capecelatro is chairing a task force focused on University's new policy that university members are required to utilize the Collegiate Travel Planner platform to book all travel on university business. Discussion ensues on this topic, with faculty sharing issues that they have encountered when utilizing the service. It is suggested that an online form be refined and shared with faculty to share their experiences. Such forms are currently circulating in small pockets of the faculty, and it is suggested that their availability be broadened to the wider faculty community. Chair Peterson indicates that the EVP Chatas has let him know that he is open to meeting with the task force or other faculty governance representatives to discuss this issue further.
 - A Working Group focusing on protections for faculty has been formed. It will focus on how the University can support faculty who have been doxxed, and who have been the subject to abusive treatment online or otherwise. Jonathan Kuuskoski of SMTD is chairing this committee. A focus will be to make resources available or those that should be considered by the Provost's Office.
 - Chair Peterson is working on organizing events to explore the negative impact felt by the U-M community because of federal funding cuts to universities. Events are meant to showcase how university innovations are important in everyday life. Media will be invited to attend this event. Ideas were shared on what topics should be highlighted. Further ideas are shared on who should be involved. Chair Peterson indicates that VP Lupia has expressed interest in participating in this event as a panelist.
 - Chair Peterson mentions that another event is being considered after he met with the Jewish Resource Center last week. The idea is in its early stages, and more information will be shared later should it move forward.
 - There will be a SACUA vacancy election to fill the open seat. FSO Director McCarthy explains the process laid out in the relevant SOP that was passed by SACUA and the Senate Assembly last fall. The replacement will need to be currently in the Senate Assembly as required in the SOP. Discussion ensues on the composition requirements of SACUA, with the conversation focusing on the value added to the committee from members from the Dearborn and Flint campuses.

Action: Updates

3:36pm-3:54pm: CSCAR

Summary: An announcement was made recently by VP Lupia that the CSCAR Office will be closing. Chair Peterson reiterates that VP Lupia indicated that the CSCAR staff will be given new roles.

Discussion ensues on this topic. Faculty were not consulted in this decision-making process. This decision, and recent related decisions made by administration without consultation of faculty governance, have direct impact on faculty. Members who utilized the services indicate that the costs will be brought to the units. This will also affect graduate students who would otherwise be employed by CSCAR,

It is determined that a letter will be crafted for further SACUA consideration. After discussion, the overarching theme identified as faculty consultation is necessary. The audience of the letter is identified as the administration and the Faculty Senate.

Action: Discussion

3:54pm-4:12pm: Presidential Search

Summary: In late May, SACUA disseminated their [Statement of Principles Concerning the Upcoming Presidential Search](#). This was based on feedback received by the Senate Assembly, and endorsed by the University of Michigan AAUP, University of Michigan-Dearborn AAUP, University of Michigan-Flint AFT-AAUP, and UM-Flint Faculty Senate. The process chosen by the Regents is a closed process with no representation of junior faculty, clinical faculty, or lecturers. The committee also lacks representation from central faculty governance. These decisions are not in line with the suggestions made by SACUA in May.

Discussion ensues on how SACUA should respond. After further discussion related to the lack of faculty governance representation, it is determined that a short resolution be crafted for further consideration.

Action: Discussion

4:12pm-4:20pm: University Senate Meeting Planning

Summary: The question is raised whether there should be a University Senate meeting before the end of the calendar year, and when it should be. The University Senate normally has one full meeting per year, typically in November. The prior two years have required two meetings. After discussion, it is determined that the November meeting will remain. It may be necessary to have a second meeting in the Winter term, and that will be determined as needed. Issues are discussed, including creating a statement specifying what SACUA hopes for for the new president

Action: Discussion

4:20pm-4:21: New Business

Summary: A member provides an update on a personnel change at the University.

Action: Update

4:21pm-4:52pm: University Policy

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

Action: Discussion

4:52pm: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Rogério Meireles Pinto
Faculty Senate Secretary

ADDENDUM

Pending Matters

At the close of the meeting, the following items were pending matters for later resolution:

- SACUA Member Kentaro Toyama would share with SACUA an initial draft with SACUA of a letter addressing concerns that faculty are insufficiently consulted prior to major decisions being made.
- SACUA Chair Derek Peterson would share with SACUA an initial draft of a resolution related to the lack of faculty governance representation on the announced presidential search committee.

SACUA Actions

Between regular meetings, SACUA has performed the following actions that should be included in the SACUA minutes:

- On August 25th, SACUA nominated the following faculty, who have indicated they are available and interested, to participate in a new DPSS advisory committee being assembled by President Grasso and DPSS Interim Chief Rick Arnold:
 - Charles H F Davis, Assistant Professor, Marsal Family School of Education
 - Mira Edmonds, Clinical Professor of Law, Law School
 - Andre Monteiro Da Rocha, Research Assistant Professor, Internal Medicine, Medical School
 - Martin Murray, Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, A Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Adjunct Professor

- of Afroamerican and African Studies and Professor of Sociology, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts
- Michael J. Steinberg, Clinical Assistant Professor of Law, Law School
 - Craig Wilkins, Associate Professor of Architecture, A Alfred Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning
 - On August 25th, SACUA voted to prioritize topics that should receive ample time for special focus at the SACUA retreat on September 12th:
 1. Strategizing for SACUA becoming more effective in influencing the Regents / EOs
 2. The presidential search
 3. Communication processes
 4. Research funding issues
 5. SACUA's composition
 6. AI

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 policies 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."