

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA)
The hybrid meeting was held in 1100 Ruthven and via Zoom

Minutes of Meeting: September 8, 2025

Circulated: September 12, 2025

Approved: September 15, 2025

Present: Derek Peterson (Chair), Meaghan Blanchard (FSO), Jesse Capecelatro, Kirsten Herold, Ann Marshall (FSO), Luke McCarthy (FSO), Vilma Mesa, Rebekah Modrak (Immediate Past Chair), Heather O'Malley, Rogério Meireles Pinto (Secretary), Soumya Rangarajan (Vice Chair), Melanie Tanielian, Kentaro Toyama.

Press:

Genevieve Monsma – *University Record*

Halle Pratt – *Michigan Daily*

Guests:

Domenico Grasso, President of the University of Michigan

Stephen Yaros, Chief of Staff, Office of the President

Kenneth Kettenbeil, Senior Advisor to the President, Office of the President

3:01 Call to Order and Approval of the Minutes

The August 25, 2025 meeting minutes were approved.

3:02 Chair's Update

- Jonathan Brennan is the new chair of the Rules, Practices and Policies Committee (RPP) and has stepped in to fill a vacancy.
- Arthur Lupia, Vice President for Research and Innovation, will be the invited guest at next week's September 15th SACUA meeting. There will be a discussion of potential events to highlight the importance of U-M research as a way to respond to federal funding cuts to university research.
- Chair Peterson continues to work on having conversations with students from the Jewish Research Center, students who are pro-Palestinian, and Jewish faculty to consider how to bring these groups together for a joint event and dialog on the larger landscape of the conflict.
- Many faculty have expressed concerns about the closing of CSCAR and conversations about possible next steps are ongoing.
- The [Next UM President: A Town Hall](#) was held on Wednesday, September 3rd, with 200 people attending on zoom and another 80 in-person in the room. At least two Regents were in attendance. Appreciation was shared for Kentaro Toyama's role as moderator and for the Faculty Senate Office's efforts with planning the event.
- A luncheon for the 2025-2026 committee chairs was also held on Wednesday, September 3rd, with 15 out of 18 chairs attending. There was good discussion among the chairs about the important work ahead for the Senate Assembly advisory

committees.

- Rebekah Modrak is serving as the SACUA liaison on a newly formed committee, the Protections for Faculty Working Group. Rebekah shared that the committee is pursuing how the Provost's Office can more proactively protect faculty who are experiencing doxing, as well as how the Provost's Office can provide a more robust set of resources on the Provost's website.
- Since the prior SACUA meeting, the names of the six faculty were approved as [SACUA Nominations for the DPSS Advisory Committee](#). These have been forwarded to the President's Office. The membership of this committee will include three faculty, two deans, two staff, and two students. The committee will work on issues related to campus surveillance with an eye toward how to maintain academic freedom. Rick Arnold is Interim Executive Director of DPSS, and, since [SACUA's Statement concerning surveillance on the University of Michigan campus](#), there is now a [DPSS website](#) created regarding issues raised by SACUA. It was noted that at a recent protest, with U.S. Representative Tlaib, in front of Ruthven, police personnel were discreet and there were no barricades or show of force.
- Jesse Capecelatro is chairing the Collegiate Travel Planners Task Force that will look into the numerous complaints raised by faculty about the new [CTP travel process](#). Jesse shared that the committee is in the data collection phase and a form to collect feedback will be distributed to faculty in the upcoming week. There was discussion about whether the form would also be shared with staff. It was recommended that the messaging about the form encourage SA members and others to distribute the form to the whole department, including staff.
- In the past year, the Student Relations Advisory Committee (SRAC) has had much back and forth discussion with the university administration about the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) (SSRR). SRAC put forward 19 amendments, including the restoration of a faculty appeals board. The current SSRR does not reflect the 19 amendments, and the status of the faculty appeals board is still under discussion. SRAC is assessing the current situation and will then provide an update to SACUA. It was noted that SRAC was not mentioned in communication about the SSRR, even though SRAC met weekly on this issue. Frustration was expressed about the lack of faculty involvement in the administration's handling of SRAC recommendations.
- The SACUA annual retreat will be held on September 12th. A draft of the agenda has been shared with SACUA, and SACUA will vote on the agenda items on the day of the retreat. In addition to meetings, the retreat will include boating at Gallup Park Livery.

3:12 New ECRT Policy Discussion

- The Equity, Civil Rights and Title IX Office (ECRT) has announced new mandatory reporting obligations (see [SPG](#)) that require all (non-confidential) faculty, staff, and student employees to report misconduct of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. The new policy expands ECRT reporting beyond Title IX sex-based harassment and includes penalties for not reporting.
- There was discussion about faculty concerns with the new ECRT reporting

mechanisms, as follows. The new set of policies was enacted rapidly and faculty concerns raised on drafts have not been addressed. The policy was enacted without any prior notice to the campus community. There are concerns about the data being centralized, with the risk of data being subpoenaed, and the potential impact of the policy on protected activities with respect to free speech and academic freedom. For example, there are concerns that speech during a classroom discussion or speech in close proximity to a classroom could be targeted. Speech within the classroom, a space of experimentation and free inquiry, could, with the new policy, become part of a report, be accessed by federal authorities, and be extracted from a database that could be targeted.

3:26 Guest: President Grasso, President of the University of Michigan

- This agenda item was in Executive Session and no minutes were taken.

4:03 Post-Guest Discussion

- This agenda item was in Executive Session and no minutes were taken.

4:15 Resolution Concerning the Presidential Search Committee

- The intent is that the resolution be approved first by SACUA, then by Senate Assembly, and then by the University Senate.
- A motion to consider the resolution was moved by Kirsten Herold and seconded by Rebekah Modrak. The floor was opened for discussion.
- SACUA members discussed several potential edits to the text and made minor revisions. A vote was called on the edited version of the resolution.
- The vote on the resolution passed unanimously.

4:30 Open Letter Regarding Consultative Decision-Making

- Kentaro Toyama opened the discussion on the letter. The intent is to send the letter to the *Record* for publication.
- SACUA member discussion of the draft covered topics which included: the role of the Regents, faculty involvement based upon faculty expertise, the impact of OVPR cuts to block funding on U-M units, and AI bots as potential replacement of CSCAR.
- Further consideration of the draft was tabled to the SACUA retreat to be held on September 12th.

4:42 Initiation of SACUA Vacancy Process

- Luke McCarthy reviewed the process for filling a SACUA vacancy ([SOP](#), pg. 24-25). SACUA's role at this time is to initiate the vacancy process. Members of the Senate Assembly are eligible to run for the open seat on SACUA, with a term ending on April 30, 2026. After a three-week nomination period, a candidate pool will be identified. Rules related to the composition of unit representatives on SACUA apply. Chair Peterson will announce the election at the September Senate Assembly meeting.

4:45 New Business

- Due to time restraints, no New Business was discussed, but there will be an opportunity to do so at the SACUA retreat on Friday.

4:46 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:

- At the retreat on Friday, SACUA should discuss its upcoming meeting with Skip Lupia on 9/15.
- SACUA needs to collect more information about the newly announced Title VI policies.
- SACUA needs to complete its drafting work of its Open Letter Regarding Consultative Decision-Making.
- The FSO needs to open the Senate Assembly nomination process for a new SACUA member, who will complete a term ending on April 30, 2026.

[University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 5.02:](#)

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."