

Minutes of Meeting: 9/15/2025

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs
Monday, September 15, 2025, 3:00pm
The hybrid meeting was held in 1100 Ruthven and via Zoom

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

Absent: Soumya Rangarajan (Vice Chair)

Guests: Arthur Lupia, Vice President for Research and Innovation

Faculty Senate Office: Luke McCarthy, Meaghan Blanchard, Eric Vandenberghe

Press:

Savannah Halpern -- Daily

Genevieve Monsma -- Record

2:59pm-3:40pm: Guest: Arthur Lupia, Vice President for Research and Innovation

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

Action: Presentation and discussion

3:40pm-3:51pm: Post-Guest Debrief

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

Action: Discussion

3:54pm-3:56pm: Come to Order and Minutes

Summary: The agenda was approved. The minutes for the 9/8/2025 meeting were approved.

Action: Discussion

3:56pm-4:23pm: Chair's Update

Summary: The Chair offered updates on ongoing efforts.

- SACUA has approved the Statement Concerning the Presidential Search Committee. It will be considered by the Senate Assembly at their next meeting.
- Senate Assembly members have been told about the vacancy election for the open SACUA seat.
- SACUA held its annual retreat on 9/12. It was a productive day that ended with members and staff kayaking and voyaging onto the river in other vessels.
- The Chair discussed a recent situation where a faculty member made remarks online that have led to calls from external groups for their resignation. President Grasso has sent out a message on X reaffirming faculty freedom of expression.
 - o A motion is made by Chair Peterson and seconded by member Capecelatro. The motion reads: “We thank President Grasso for standing firm in his commitment to freedom of expression, even at a time when powerful forces seek to suppress controversial speech.
 - Discussion takes place on the motion. A point is made that SACUA needs to publicly show support for the President for his leadership on this matter. Another point is suggested that a better idea would be to send the thank you privately. Debate ensues on the merits of both actions.
 - At the end of the discussion Chair Peterson withdraws the motion.

Action: Update; consideration of motion

4:23pm-4:48pm: Committee Charges

Summary: SACUA is asked to consider the charges of the 18 Senate Assembly Committees. These charge drafts were shared with SACUA the week prior to this meeting for their consideration. Those charges approved by SACUA will then be considered by the Senate Assembly at their next meeting on 9/22/25. Chair Peterson and FSO Director McCarthy have been meeting with all the committee chairs and the corresponding executive officers to review the charges.

The Chair reads through several charges that have touched on issues that have been recently discussed by SACUA. He asks the members to offer feedback and suggest changes regarding any of the 18 charges. Members indicate that some of the charges, particularly AAAC and GCAC, are too long and will not be able to be thoroughly completed. It is suggested that the charges remain as they are, but that the chairs are told to prioritize a few of the most important charge items.

Members raise questions and offer suggestions for the RAC and FAAC charges. After discussion it is determined that the new suggestions will fall under the final charge item for each respective charge, which is a catchall that allows committees to address emergent issues.

Upon conclusion of the discussion, Member Toyama motions to approve all 18 charges. Member O'Malley seconds the motion. The motion is passed unanimously.

Action: Discussion; approval of charges

4:48am-4:55pm: SA Agenda Approval

Summary: The draft Senate Assembly agenda for the 9/22/25 meeting is considered by SACUA. The meeting will serve in part as an orientation for new members. Chair Peterson will provide an explanation of faculty governance at the University of Michigan to help new members understand their role within the structure. The Chair will provide an update to the Assembly about the recent and ongoing work related to faculty governance at UM.

The Senate Assembly will consider SACUA's recently passed [Statement Concerning the Presidential Search Committee](#).

The Senate Assembly will consider the Charges of the 18 Senate Assembly Committees. These have been passed by SACUA and will be shared with the Senate Assembly members in advance of the meeting,

Discussion ensues whether another topic, campus surveillance, should be included in the agenda. A point is made that having too many topics would not allow for a thorough discussion. Another member indicates that having an issue of this importance would indicate a focus on relevant issues facing the Faculty Senate. It is determined that the topic will at least be introduced by the Chair and may need to be carried forward to the October meeting.

The agenda is approved through unanimous consent.

Action: Discussion, approval of the Senate Assembly Agenda

4:55pm-4:58pm: New Business

Summary: Brief discussion ensues on the letter SACUA is considering regarding the necessity of faculty consultation. By unanimous consent, SACUA agreed to a final review of the draft document for at least a couple more days. The SACUA Chair would then review the document and resolve any outstanding issues. A SACUA e-vote would then be initiated between meetings on whether to approve the document.

A member brings up unionization discussions among a group on campus and indicates that it may be something that will come onto SACUA's radar soon.

Action: Discussion

4:58pm: 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 members will review a draft open letter regarding the necessity of faculty consultation when making decisions. The SACUA Chair will then resolve any outstanding issues in the document, and SACUA will then have an e-vote on whether to approve the letter.

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."