

Minutes of Meeting: 10/6/2025

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs

Monday, October 6, 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), Rogério Meireles Pinto (Senate Secretary), Melanie Tanielian, Kentaro Toyama

Absent: Heather O'Malley

Faculty Senate Office: Luke McCarthy, Eric Vandenberghe

Press:

Genevieve Monsma -- Record

Maddyn Shapiro -- Daily

Antoinette Lowy -- Daily

3:03pm-3:06pm: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the 9/29/25 meeting were approved.

3:06pm-3:43pm: Chair's Update

Summary: The Chair provides an update.

- Chair Peterson updates SACUA on potential guests coming to join future SACUA meetings. These include several regents.
- Regarding accessibility requirements for course websites, the Chair encourages SACUA members to test the tools available on their own materials ahead of the meeting in the coming weeks with VP Pendse. A member shares their experience using one of the online tools.
- There are two upcoming events on Wednesday 10/8. The first is a faculty work retreat on North Campus. The second event is the annual faculty mixer, which will take place at the Detroit Observatory in the afternoon.
- Regarding the DMNC Lecture scheduled for 11/6, the speaker, Professor Ruth Ben Ghiat, will not be able to come to campus for safety reasons. The event will be tweaked, with Professor Ghiat speaking for 30 minutes, followed by a two to three panel of UM faculty who can offer their thoughts and take questions. A

- dinner with discussion is expected.
- Regarding the Student Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (SSRR), a decision has yet to be made on the final recommended change offered by SRAC during the last update cycle. The outstanding recommendation has to do with bringing back the appeals board that had been removed by the Regents in July 2024. SRAC Chair Inglehart is commended for the good job she has done as chair of the committee. Her recent comments to the [Daily](#) are highlighted.
 - SACUA's open letter consulting faculty on university decisions is scheduled to appear in the Record on 10/13. Reaction received from a member of the administration is discussed. Chair Peterson will reach out to OVPR to discuss the matter further.
 - The SACUA vacancy election to fill former member Professor Alex Yi's seat will start imminently.
 - An update is provided on the work of the Faculty Protections Working Group. The committee has ambitious goals and a well-organized Chair.
 - An update is provided on the work of the CTP Task Force. Over 140 responses have been received for the [survey](#) that was sent out gauging experience with CTP. Members of SACUA will meet with members of the Provost's Office to discuss this matter further.

Action: Update

3:43pm-4:08pm: Introduction: SA Committee SOP Draft

Summary: Director McCarthy introduces a draft SOP which is meant to codify specifics regarding the composition of Senate Assembly Committees. This is an introduction to the SOP, with a hope for SACUA consideration in the coming weeks.

Student membership of faculty committees is discussed. Chair Peterson provides historical context. Students have been on faculty committees dating back to 1963. Committee Chairs are asked for their preference of student inclusion on these committees dating back to that time. Members discuss the pros and cons of having students serve on committees.

There are times when student participation may not be a good fit, particularly with committees like the RPP or AEC. Others recommend having a uniform policy across the board. Further consideration of this matter will take place at a later date.

Faculty on sabbatical can remain on committees and return upon completion of their sabbatical. The new SOP would clarify this policy. Attendance issues, staff membership, and emeritus leadership are also discussed.

Action: Discussion

4:08pm-4:20pm: RAC Charge

Summary: The RAC charge was not voted on by the Senate Assembly at the last meeting due to concerns raised by OVPR. The OVPR preference is to have two matters listed in the charge instead arise under a charge item for emergent issues.

A member clarifies that executive officers are not part of committee leadership and that these committees are completely faculty led. Another member does not feel that these items should be removed, as they are pertinent topics that faculty have reached out to SACUA about. Advisory committee dynamics generally are discussed. On the other hand, these items were added after the OVPR/Committee Chair meeting to review the charges.

Action: Without objection, SACUA approved returning the committee charge to its form during the OVPR/Committee Chair meeting, before addition of the two items, but with the understanding that the committee will be raising these items anyway as emergent issues.

4:20pm-4:35pm: New Business

Summary: Chair Peterson brings up the recent letter sent by the federal government to several peer institutions- "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education." Some of the points are read through, with commentary offered on why this deal would be harmful to the academic community should universities agree to the compact. Chair Peterson suggests that a resolution could be considered with SACUA denouncing the compact as a show of solidarity.

A member asks that the Chair check with upper administration to see how they feel about this compact. A member asks how other peer institutions are reacting to this. Members offer further opinions, and the Chair agrees to reach out to upper administration, as well as peers at other institutions. A motion may be considered at a later date.

Action: Discussion

4:35pm-4:51pm: Academic Freedom and External Threats to Faculty

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

4:51pm: 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:

- The SACUA Chair would invite members of the Board of Regents to attend future SACUA meetings.
- SACUA members will test the tools available to remediate their own course materials ahead of the meeting on October 20th with VP Pendse.
- SACUA Member Jesse Capecelatro would meet with the Provost's Office to discuss initial faculty feedback regarding CTP gathered by the CTP Task Force.
- SACUA members will review a draft SOP regarding SA committee membership.
- SACUA may consider whether to approve a resolution in response to the Trump administration's recent "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education." The SACUA Chair would check with upper administration and peer institutions about a response to this Compact.

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."