



Financial Affairs Advisory Committee (FAAC)

Minutes of Meeting: 10/9/2025

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Present: Becky Peterson (Chair), Doug Burtch, Dale Thomson, Geoffrey Chatas (VP and CFO), Vance Jackson, Stefanie Russman Block, Bobby Hewlett (Vice President for Finance), Julie Boland, Hsiao Sung

Absent: Emily Luxon, Sara Soderstrom, Gillian White, Jefferson Williams, Kentaro Toyama (SACUA)

Guests:

Pam Gabel, AVP, SSC and Special Advisor to the EVPCFO

Tally Thrasher, AVP and Chief Procurement Officer

Faculty Senate Office: Eric Vandenberghe

4:01pm-4:06pm: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes, Announcements

The agenda was approved. The minutes for both September FAAC meetings were approved. This will be EVP Chatas's last meeting with the FAAC. He will be taking another position at another institution starting on 11/1.

Chair Peterson proposes a motion: The FAAC thanks EVP Chatas for his service to the University of Michigan and his willingness to work co-operatively with faculty through the FAAC.

The motion is seconded by member Thomson. The motion carries unanimously.

Action: Motion thanking EVP Chatas

4:06pm-4:12pm: CFO update

Summary: The EVP and his team are evaluating policies that have been discussed in prior FAAC meetings. This includes presidential or EVP review of hiring and non-payroll transactions over a \$50,000 threshold. Additionally, implementation of changes to university policies related to the use of a Pcard instead of a shortcode for hosting expenses will be delayed for further evaluation.

A meeting is requested this academic year for the committee to discuss the changes made to Work Connections in response to the 2021 SACUA resolution. This will likely be a joint meeting with other Faculty Senate committees.

There is a new VP for Facilities and Operations- Kim Kiernan.

Action: Updates

4:12pm-5:09pm: Shared Services Center, incl. Procurement and Travel

Summary: EVP Chatas introduces AVP Gabel, who provides a presentation on the work of the Shared Services Center (SSC). SSC works with all members from the UM community. This includes students, faculty, and staff from all units, on all campuses. An overview of the SSC leadership is provided.

There are three service areas of the SSC: finance, HR, and support. They do not set policy or create SPGs.

For finance, SSC prepares expense reports. They pay all invoices for the university and Michigan Medicine. They facilitate awards, honorariums, and gifts. They collect funds from sponsors. Their automations in PeoplePay save 950 hours per year.

SSC is part of the full employment lifecycle. They process benefits and complete I-9s for faculty, staff, and students. They process new hires and promotions. They support the J-1 visa process and work with the International Center. They answered 6,338 phone calls during Benefits Open Enrollment in 2024 and processed 1335 faculty hires.

SSC service areas include the MCard Program, Organizational Excellence, project management, document imaging, document archival, and survey management, among others. Their automated MCard printing saves the university \$40,000 per year. Members thank AVP Gabel for the presentation and for the work that SSC does.

The Finance team proceeds to answer the questions provided by the committee prior to the meeting. A faculty CTP task force has been formed and is currently collecting data. The Finance team will work with this group to gain feedback.

The committee asked about the financial benefits of using CTP. The EVP office reply is that “Units receive discounts on travel services such as airfare and hotels directly during booking. We estimate those to range in discount from 2-4%. Units that use U-M’s contracted airline suppliers will see the most savings (Delta, United, American, and Southwest), as we have negotiated benefits with these suppliers. As we continue to increase the volume running through CTP, those we anticipate being able to negotiate greater discounts with carriers. There will be some time before we can assess the financial impact from this policy. In addition to financial benefits, centralizing travel booking through CTP provides the university with better support and duty of care for all U-M travelers, increased insight into our travel spend, [ability to repurpose tickets that would have gone to waste, efficiencies on the backend during reimbursement,] and a greater ability to help meet our sustainability goals.”

Further questions about CTP are discussed. These discussions include: the new requirement to not reimburse until after the event/travel coupled with the lack of uniformity between units in the use of PCards to cover such early expenses, which causes hardship; the lack of ability in Emburse to log expenses for which reimbursement is not being requested, which is needed when limited reimbursement funds are available; the lack of connection between Emburse and Rackham Travel Grants; ongoing issues with Lightning, especially the fact



that the discounted price is not shown until the confirmation page, making it difficult to “shop” for flights; the inability to buy basic fares, driving up costs; and the anticipated transition to units paying the CTP fee starting after FY26.

Some pain points of CTP are brought up by members. The process is found by some faculty to be more cumbersome, and an inefficient use of their time; the cost-benefit tradeoff to the University as a whole remains unclear. Issues of international travel are discussed, with some flights not appearing in the CTP system (i.e. remote overseas locations served by local carriers), requiring additional procedures to secure flights. The FAAC indicates that in the future, it would be advantageous to collect more feedback from key stakeholders before rolling out broad initiatives, in order to alleviate pain points.

The guests are thanked for their presentation and for attending the meeting. EVP Chatas is thanked again for his service to the university and work with the committee.

Action: Presentation and discussion

5:09pm: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Vandenberghe
Faculty Governance Coordinator
Faculty Senate Office