

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

Senate Assembly

Monday, December 15, 3:15

The Hybrid meeting was held in 2000 University Hall, Ruthven and Zoom

Minutes: December 15, 2025

Circulated: January 23, 2026

Approved: January 26, 2026

**In-person attendees:** Sybil Biermann, Theodora Danciu, Keith Duncan, Mira Edmonds (nonvoting), Johannes Foufopoulos, Joshua Hausman, Ann Marshall (nonvoting), Vilma Mesa, Rebekah Modrak, Susan Najita, Heather O'Malley, Derek Peterson, Rogerio Pinto, Soumya Rangarajan, Andre Monteiro Da Rocha (nonvoting), Michael Schubnell, Ian Shin, Craig Smith, Deirdre Spencer, Michael Steinberg (nonvoting), Ashu Tripathi, Eric Vandenberghe (nonvoting), Stephen Ward (nonvoting), Craig Wilkins (nonvoting).

**Virtual attendees:** Charlotte Karem Albrecht, Helen Burgess, Jesse Capecelatro, Yi-Su Chen, Amy I-Lin Cheng, Meghan Courtney, Francine Dolins, Terri Friedline, Caren Goldberg, James Gulvas, Sarah Hawley, Stefanus Jasin, Kevin Joiner, Kimberlee Kearfott, Michael Kennedy, Elizabeth Keren-Kolb, Brad Killaly, John Magee, Shahzad Mian, Genevieve Monsma (nonvoting), Mukesh Nyati, Louise O'Brien, Sarah Palushi (nonvoting), Pamela Pennock, Stacy Rosenbaum, Kimberly Saks, Suzanne Selig (nonvoting), Jill Shake, Albert Shih, Christina Snider, Quentin Stout, Krithika Suresh, Melanie Tanielian, Bruce Tharp, Elizabeth Viglianti, Apryl Williams, Jason Young, Paul Zimmerman.

**Press:**

Genevieve Monsma – The University Record

Sarah Palushi – The Michigan Daily

**3:21 pm Come to order**

- The meeting was called to order without quorum.

**3:21 pm Senate Assembly Chair Update**

- Lisa Carter, Dean of the U-M Libraries, will bring a proposal to the March Senate Assembly meeting that addresses open access publishing and strategies for being less dependent on for-profit publishers, such as Elsevier.
- On December 2, in front of Hatcher Library, [Political Speech and the Public Square](#) was held on the topic of “Surveillance: Does it Make Us Safer?” The event was moderated by Mira Edmonds and covered by [an article published by the Michigan Daily](#).
- On December 8th, Vice Chair Soumya Ragaranjan and Chair Derek Peterson met with clinical faculty for the first event in a series of [Clinical Faculty / Faculty Senate Dialogues](#). Upcoming sessions will focus on adult medicine clinical practitioners and a zoom session for clinical faculty working across many departments. Clinical faculty are



newly enfranchised members of the Faculty Senate following the expansion of several years ago.

- On December 4th, a townhall on Work Connections was held. Work Connections has been under scrutiny since at least 2021 when the [Faculty Senate passed a motion calling for reform of Work Connections](#). Two regents attended the townhall, and the Financial Affairs Advisory Committee (FAAC) also held a productive meeting with EVP-CFO Bobby Hewlett on Work Connections. There is a sense that some progress has finally been made with Work Connections, and Senate Assembly leaders will continue to push for change.
- On December 4th, Senate Assembly committee chairs met to discuss the work of their committees. A virtual platform will be created to give committee chairs a means to share the work of their committees with each other.
- On December 14th, Chair Derek Peterson and Vice Chair Soumya Ragarajan participated in the hooding of the honorary degree recipients for [Winter Commencement 2025](#). For the greetings on behalf of the faculty, Chair Peterson spoke of the importance of free speech and the actions needed to support such freedoms.
- It is with sadness that Chair Peterson announced that Heather O'Malley, a third-year SACUA member and 2024-2025 SACUA Vice Chair, will be leaving U-M and stepping down from SACUA in January 2026. Appreciation was shared for Dr. O'Malley wise advice and counsel at SACUA and Senate Assembly. An election to fill the open seat will commence in January.

### **3:30 pm Quorum and Approval of the Minutes**

- Quorum was reached, and the minutes from the November 24th Senate Assembly meeting were approved by consent.

### **3:30 pm Guest: President Domenico Grasso**

- President Grasso provided opening remarks. He began by sharing his appreciation for the invitation to meet with the Senate Assembly and also for the staff in the Office of the President.
  - Much has been accomplished, first, in reaffirming trust and accessibility to the Office of the President. President Grasso has met with many groups, both on campus and in the community, including SACUA and with many student organizations. He has worked to engage both the Flint and Dearborn campuses, has launched a DPSS group to work with faculty, has met with donors, and has hosted dinners at the U-M President's House for schools and colleges and their advisory boards and donors.
  - Second, President Grasso has focused on demonstrating the value of U-M and regaining the public trust. He launched the [Look to Michigan](#) campaign, an alignment of the capital campaign with the strategic plan. A media campaign has promoted Look to Michigan in the *LA Times*, *NPR*, and the *New York Times*, among others. Because of these efforts, visits to the U-M website have increased by 1,000 percent. The November 2025 [State of the University](#) focused on U-M's ongoing achievements, with an intent to have U-M groups and individuals front



and center on stage. Key projects include investments in an [institute for civil discourse](#) and a [biomedical and bio-innovation institute](#). A new VP for Communications, to begin on January 3rd, will focus on communicating the value of U-M faculty as public intellectuals and will provide toolkits to help faculty share their research more widely.

- Third, President Grasso has worked to improve operations and efficiency. In January, Ken Kettenbeil will become the interim VP for Communications, and Bobby Hewlett recently became the new Interim EVP-CFO. There are searches underway for an Executive Director of Audits and an Executive Director of DPSS. President Grasso has worked to empower the executive officers to be leaders of the university, to work collaboratively, and for SACUA to be a part of this leadership team. In the seventy-year history of the Audit Office, there had never been an audit of the President's Office. The first audit of the President's Office is due out in January 2026. In addition, a strategic student enrollment plan is being developed. In the last five years, U-M's enrollment has grown without bounds, with 10,000 students being added in the last five years. The enrollment planning process will involve students, faculty, and the regents.

### **Discussion**

- Chair Peterson opened the floor for discussion and asked the first question – What is the logic and status of U-M security's enhancement? What is the rationale and need? President Grasso responded that, given the tragic recent events at Brown, as well as earlier tragedies at Michigan State University and Virginia Tech, U-M needs to be able to respond more quickly. The cameras are not to be used for surveillance, and the video is destroyed after sixty days. President Grasso is committed to academic freedom and does not want security to impinge on academic freedom. He wants to make sure the campus is safe and that U-M can quickly remediate incidents, including acts of sexual violence.
- A Medical School faculty member remarked, as a U-M mom, she appreciates the discussion of security and asked if there would be any other changes in terms of added modalities? President Grasso responded that there is a heightened level of security on campus after the Brown shootings, with a risk of possible copycat incidents. President Grasso remarked that additional police officers are being hired to replace security officers, since security officers are only able to call in incidents.
- The Senate Secretary asked if any preventative strategies have been considered instead of responding after the fact. President Grasso remarked that the security cameras and additional security presence were also installed for deterrence. There is a worry about non-UM individuals taking advantage of students and faculty. Michigan Medicine has been appreciative of the increased security. There are mental health issues, and deterrence is the preferred approach.
- An LSA faculty shared appreciation for the challenges a university president faces when responding to a risk of gun violence and also noted that the increased security arose around student protests and demonstrations on campus. The faculty member shared that she doesn't feel safer with additional security, and the internet poses challenges. The faculty member asked how President Grasso thinks of these issues together -- how to



address the damage done around student protest, including regarding OSCR proceedings, and how to move forward. President Grasso remarked that he respects and is proud of U-M's history of activism. It is a part of who we are, and the intention is not to impede peaceful protest. A disciplinary process is needed, for example, if attendees disrupted a Bruce Springsteen concert. President Grasso remarked that the disciplinary proceedings are not because of peaceful protest, but from other lines that were crossed.

- A Library faculty member shared that he had been to many of the protests and observed students being arrested. From videos, the police deliberately chose particular individuals to target. If you were at the event, you have a clearer version of what happened. It is disturbing to again hear lies about the student protests. Chair Peterson added that the [Daily did a very good article on issues with the OSCR process](#). Chair Peterson asked how the administration would respond to the Daily reporting, given that it appears there were [multiple OSCR process violations](#). President Grasso remarked that he would ask VP for Student Life Martino Harmon about an administration response to the issues raised by the Daily.

**Action Item:** Follow-up with President Grasso and VP Martino Harmon about the administration's response to the OSCR violations reported on by the Michigan Daily.

- A Pharmacy faculty asked about the potential impact of security footage on international faculty at U-M and if there is a risk of camera footage being sent to federal authorities or being used to impact visa status. President Grasso responded that security footage would not be shared with federal authorities unless there is a court order to do so.
- The Pharmacy faculty asked a second question about what steps the university is taking with AI, e.g. training students and adapting for change. President Grasso responded that multiple committees are working on how to adapt to the AI revolution. The AI impact on education will take many forms. For example, if schools move to doing only oral exams, this will be very labor intensive, especially for courses with 1,000 students. The question is how to best leverage AI and to not have it leverage us.
- A Stamps faculty member remarked that thousands of U-M women undergraduates are sexually assaulted each year, and faculty have prepared a report of best practices on this issue. ECRT recommends faculty meet with President Grasso about the recommendations. The faculty member shared that she feels less safe with security cameras, and security personnel will follow students off campus. This is not a coincidence given that the cameras and increased policing cover every inch of campus. There are concerns about needing to submit forms to exercise first amendment rights and the rewriting of the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities by the regents without the required faculty and student input. It appears that the increased surveillance was in response to the encampment and not to campus shootings. U-M could increase support for mental health instead of making campus into a surveillance state. President Grasso responded that he'd be happy to meet with faculty on this issue and also to commit resources.

**Action Item:** Follow-up with President Grasso to schedule a meeting on the above issue (see also [Motion 4](#), page 6, passed in November 2024) and on Grasso's promise to commit resources.



- An LSA faculty member remarked, as a physicist with prior funding from the Department of Energy (DOE), he has been told by the DOE that his next grant proposal must include AI in order to be funded. What will U-M do to help faculty address this? President Grasso responded that it is inescapable that AI will be a part of the future of U-M. He noted the work of Bruin AI and Arc Institute’s AI models and of U-M’s investment of \$250 million in [Unit X](#). President Grasso will provide resources for all faculty to use AI. Ohio State University is requiring AI to be a part of every OSU course. While this is an extreme approach, he wants to empower faculty to take advantage of AI to do what they already do.
- A second LSA faculty shared appreciation to President Grasso for reaching out to various constituencies across the university. The faculty member encouraged President Grasso to continue to have an open-door policy with the issue of surveillance. A closed-door approach gave the protests energy under the prior U-M administration. With regards to the OSCR proceedings, it is important to not be punitive; the students are young and doing their best. Universities have an ethical responsibility to have a public conscience, to lead, and to continue to think creatively about how to meet world challenges. Grasso responded that he had dropped his U-M security detail, and the university is open from 6 am to 10 pm to create a more open atmosphere. President Grasso walks across campus on his own and works to accommodate everyone who asks for a meeting. Both he and his wife are U-M graduates and, when he leaves U-M in May, he hopes to have recreated a campus of trust. Happy Holidays and Go Blue!

#### **4:06 pm On-Campus Security Cameras**

- The goal of this portion of the meeting is to provide SACUA-nominated members of the DPSS Advisory Committee – Mira Edmonds, Andre Monteiro Da Rocha, Michael Steinberg, and Craig Wilkins (all in-person attendees at the meeting) – with advice they can share with the DPSS Advisory Committee on behalf of Senate Assembly.
- Chair Peterson provided an overview of U-M on-campus security developments and displayed a slide deck.
  - The university replaced [SPG 606:01 Proper Use of Security Cameras \(Internet Archive version\)](#) with a new [SPG 510.02 Physical Security Technologies](#). The initial SPG was created when cameras were installed in the dorms, with both the ACLU and the Daily advocating for a more developed policy. The new SPG eliminates seven provisions within the old SPG. The new SPG 1) does not mention academic freedom as the prior policy did, but does prohibit “unlawful or unauthorized” uses that (i) “chill, compel, prevent, or punish speech or association,” (ii) discriminate, or (iii) violate privacy “where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy”, 2) does not address covert cameras, while the prior policy specified that UMPD could install covert cameras only for criminal investigation and with special approval, 3) does not include any restrictions on audio recording, while the prior policy prohibited audio recording, 4) does not include retention guidelines, while the new policy kept recorded images for 30 days except in cases of an ongoing criminal investigation, 5) does not address training or access of individuals to camera footage, while the prior policy required up-to-date lists of



people authorized to access footage and also required training, 6) does not allow for U-M units to install security cameras and vests DPSS with primary responsibility for security technologies, and 7) does not include provisions for an oversight committee as the prior policy did.

- A new [DPSS Security Technology Enhancement Project \(STEP\), with an online FAQ](#), has been created with a stated intent to “modernize” and “strengthen” campus safety through technology, with a goal of improved emergency response times and the creation of a STEP DPSS Advisory Committee. The FAQ however is not a policy document.
- Additional issues that have not been addressed in the new SPG include the use of AI, the use of facial recognition, and the interrelation of camera surveillance data with other forms of tracking. The recently released U-M salary report indicates a total of 27 new security hires at Michigan Medicine and 21 new DPSS Ann Arbor hires.
- These changes are happening within the context of the federal government targeting international students, student protestors, and questioning visa status processes. Student [visa applicants have been vetted for “hostile attitudes” because of their “entire online presence”](#), and [nationally more than 8,000 student visas have been revoked because of supposed support for terrorism](#).
- Mike Steinberg, director of the Civil Rights Initiative at Michigan Law and prior legal director of the ACLU of Michigan for twenty-two years, provided remarks. Mike Steinberg expressed disappointment with on-campus surveillance. Students should not be conditioned that their every moment should be watched by the government. This is characteristic of authoritarian regimes and police states, not democracies. The campus community should be concerned with mission creep with the security cameras. There are approximately 1200-1400 cameras on campus, [with two very powerful cameras recently installed on the two sides of Hatcher Library facing the Diag and a camera on the Law Quad](#). The three cameras can zoom in 40x, have infrared night vision, record audio and have facial recognition. While such features may not be active, there is no policy prohibiting their use. The U-M Law School Chapter of the ACLU wrote an [open letter](#) that received about 800 signatures, including the [statement from SACUA](#). The ACLU letter states that the timing and placement of the cameras suggest they were not installed for safety, but to monitor speech. The cameras were not installed after the MSU shooting, but after the student protests. There is very little crime on the Diag and Law quad, and research suggests that cameras are not effective in deterring crime, especially violent crime. The three cameras look ominous, have a red tint, chill speech, and create fear. From the Law quad, the cameras are powerful enough to view inside students’ rooms. The 4th amendment prohibits illegal search and seizure. The new cameras were installed without any participation of the DPSS advisory committee, and there has not been accountability or transparency. A FOIA request on the matter was denied. The letter calls for all three cameras to be taken down immediately and for a moratorium on cameras until the proper committee can review the matter. Instead of complying with the policy, DPSS seemed surprised by the policy and then repealed the SPG. Students care about privacy, and fifteen groups have formed a coalition against surveillance. A recent, well-attended [panel](#) was hosted by the undergraduate U-M ACLU chapter.

**4:34 pm Discussion**



- A Medical School faculty expressed appreciation for the extra security at the hospital and suggested that this is a separate issue from the surveillance cameras.
- A Public Policy faculty asked if U-M was an outlier on security as compared to similar campuses such as Ohio State and the University of Wisconsin. Chair Peterson noted that it seemed questionable whether such cameras were impactful at MSU. Many institutions may be doing it, but is there a correlation between the use of such cameras and outcomes? Mike Steinberg responded that most studies conclude that cameras are not effective in deterring violent crime. For example, Project Greenlight in Detroit installed cameras in convenience stores and gas stations with a direct line to the police, but the cameras were ineffective in deterring crime. The cameras may provide some marginal benefit with property crime, but not for violent crime such the MSU or Brown shootings.
- A Michigan Medicine faculty noted that, in an article about security cameras in São Paulo, Brazil, there were no changes in security markers from camera installations. The faculty asked what measures SA and SACUA can take to have the SPG modified? Chair Peterson responded that he has heard informally that the SPG is being revised, and the Senate Assembly could draft a resolution. Another faculty similarly remarked that, within dictatorships, cameras don't deter crime. They just make people afraid.
- It was suggested that other strategies for crime prevention be identified and to consider expertise from entities such as the [Institute for Firearm Injury Prevention](#), Marc Zimmerman's research, and others in the School of Public Health.
- A Taubman faculty member remarked on the growth of surveillance capitalism and shared concerns about surveillance data. Both public and private entities profit off of surveillance data. A School of Social Work faculty also expressed concerns with surveillance capitalism and recommended the Senate Assembly collaborate with the local AAUP chapter on this issue.
- An Education faculty member shared similar frustration about the U-M administration not relying on empirical evidence.
- A Law faculty remarked that the administration needs to consider the type of crime they are trying to deter (property theft, mass shootings, sexual assaults, etc.) and also the tradeoffs these technologies pose with civil liberties.
- A Library faculty remarked that there are DPSS staff wearing body cams in the hospital and in the library in spaces where more privacy is expected. U-M is in violation of policies of the American Library Association on such issues. ITS wifi allows U-M to track where you are on campus and such systems can be integrated with other security on campus. Those who are marginalized are at higher risk of being targeted by such technologies and facial recognition software does not work well with darker skin tones.
- An LSA faculty also noted that lecture capture records student comments, and the new parking system uses cameras to check people's license plates.
- Chair Peterson remarked that surveillance would be discussed again in February when interim DPSS Richard Arnold would be guest.

**Possible action items from the above discussion:** Use empirical evidence to inform U-M security policies, work with U-M experts on violence prevention, collaborate with AAUP on a possible resolution and/or other actions, follow-up with SACUA-nominated members of the DPSS committee, including Mira Edmonds, Andre Monteiro Da Rocha, Michael Steinberg, and Craig Wilkins).

### **5:00 Adjourn**

- Chair Peterson invited the Senate Assembly to raise any new business. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned.

### **Addendum**

#### Senate Assembly Actions

Respectfully submitted,

Rogério M. Pinto  
Faculty Senate Secretary

#### [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 polices 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."