



**Academic Affairs Advisory Committee (AAAC) Minutes**  
**October 22, 1:45 – 3:15 pm (Provost attending 2-3 pm)**  
Ruthven Conference Room 1140 and via Zoom (hybrid)

Minutes of Meeting: 10/22/2025

Circulated: 11/5/2025

Approved: 11/12/2025

**Present:** Silke Weineck (Chair), Netta Berlin, Ceren Budak, Bilal Butt, Robert Deegan, Christine Gerdes (Special Counsel to the Provost), Gavin LaRose, Ann Marshall (FSO), Luke McCarthy (FSO), Laurie McCauley (Provost), Rafael Neis, Soumya Rangarajan (SACUA liaison), Mireille Roddier, Scott Spector, Jon Wargo, Yi-Li Wu

**Absent:** Colleen Conway, Mick Kennedy, Albert Liu, Rahul Mannan

1. In preparation for the arrival of the Provost, the minutes from 10/1/2025 were approved, and AAAC members briefly discussed AAAC agenda items.

2. Support for newly tenured associate professors

- Guests Vice Provost Sara Blair and ADVANCE Director Denise Sekaquaptewa presented on the Post-Promotion Academic Career Exploration Pilot Program (PACE). PACE began in 2023 to support newly tenured faculty across all units by offering external one-on-one coaches. To date, 92 faculty have participated with up to 8 sessions being offered per faculty. The costs to replace a tenured faculty member who leaves U-M are high and the pilot is designed in part to address retention among tenured U-M faculty. Following PACE, faculty report greater commitment to U-M, more clarity and progress regarding career next steps, and an increased sense that U-M and schools/colleges care about their well-being. The current pilot also covers tenured faculty new to U-M who were granted first-time tenure at the time of their appointment. Pre-reading materials on PACE were shared with AAAC prior to the meeting.
- Discussion covered the following topics. It was recommended that there might be better ways to engage faculty who are unsure about PACE and that the initial PACE participant survey might feel like a barrier if the faculty hasn't yet identified post-tenure goals. Some faculty may be more ready to participate in PACE several years post-tenure. There was discussion about mentors, both pre and post tenure, and support for clinical faculty. This type of coaching is also particularly impactful for faculty who are taking on new responsibilities such as a directorship. It was noted that women were more likely to participate in PACE and that outreach to Engineering might help explore why less men have participated.

3. Challenges in Higher Education: Gender Affirming Care (GAC) for People under 19 at the University of Michigan, with AAAC member Rafe Neis presenting on behalf of AAAC.

- **Action Item:** A version of the presentation slides for the Provost will be shared with the Provost's Office. Topics discussed included the following:
- Research on Trans and Nonbinary (TNB) students shows significant mental health disparities between TNB and cis/hetero counterparts before 2022 and worsening TNB stigmatization in 2022-current that is also amplified within the current climate and with the canceling of DEI.



- Data from the [Healthy Minds Study](#), with a PI at U-M, shows [increased depressive symptoms among LGBTQIA+ students](#) even college student mental health overall has improved. These issues are a matter of life and death, with self-injury reports of trans/gender non-conforming close to one in four students ([NCHA 2024](#)). The universal consensus of major medical associations and global health authorities affirm the evidence-based necessity for GAC. Yet, there is an unprecedented rise of transphobic rhetoric, hate-crimes, and transphobia (Trevor Project, Pichette 2025, among others).
- Over 200 transgender or gender nonbinary undergraduates under 19 at U-M can no longer access critical gender affirming care services through UNC for which they have paid and are entitled. One in three undergraduates are either queer or trans (ACHA NCHA) and the broader trans/queer community has been impacted by transphobia and the pause on GAC.
- The pause on GAC chills faculty teaching (self-censorship), faculty research, faculty public engagement, and invites overreach into the academic mission.
- U-M has been a site for excellence for research on TNB youth and adults under 19, including, among others, prominent scholars in Michigan Medicine, the School of Public Health, and the School of Social Work.
- The process of enacting the U-M GAC pause was highly problematic. Decision makers did not consult with providers or their legal counsel, relied on attorneys without expert knowledge in LGBT law and health law, did not investigate alternatives, was fragmented and unclear, and resulted in damage to the core missions of U-M and Michigan Medicine that also compromised scientific autonomy, basic medical standards, and best practices.
- The federal legal landscape includes Sn. 1557 of ACA, Bostock, executive orders, federal regulations, *Skrmetti*, DOJ subpoena (blocked by court). The state of Michigan landscape includes the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act and [Attorney General Dana Nessel's letter to U-M](#). The end of services for those under 19 violates MI civil rights age-discrimination protections.
- **Recommendations** include: 1) advocate for an academic evidence-based, best-practices informed and legally-sound decision to resume GAC, 2) share data that show the impact of the GAC pause on student academic success and mental health, 3) affirm material support for TNB students and faculty, 4) amplify support by central administration leadership across the schools and units and call for transparency, prevention and reverse the anti-trans climate as well as regressions in the Athletic Department, bathrooms, student housing, and the Spectrum Center, 5) draw on U-M faculty expertise including experts in CGSP, Pediatrics, OBGYN, Psych, Public Health, Social Work, UM Law Faculty, and Spectrum.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Marshall, Faculty Governance Coordinator (FSO)