

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**  
**Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs**  
**Monday, April 6, 2026, 3:00pm**

The hybrid meeting was held in 1100 Ruthven and via Zoom

**Minutes:** 4/06/2026

**Circulated:** 4/10/2026

**Approved:** 4/13/2026

**Present:**

Derek Peterson (Chair), Meaghan Blanchard (FSO), Steven Buchman (guest, incoming SACUA member), Jesse Capecelatro, Kirsten Herold, Kim Kearfott (guest, incoming SACUA member), Ann Marshall (FSO), Luke McCarthy (FSO), Vilma Mesa, Rebekah Modrak (Immediate Past Chair), Susan Najita, Soumya Rangarajan (Vice Chair), Michael Schubnell (guest, incoming SACUA member), Melanie Tanielian, Kentaro Toyama

**Absent:**

Rogério Meireles Pinto (Senate Secretary)

**Press:**

Genevieve Monsma – Record

Francis Toma – Daily

Ariel Li – Daily

**Meeting Minutes:**

**3:02 pm: Come to Order and Approval of the Minutes**

- The meeting was called to order and Chair Peterson welcomed the three incoming elected SACUA members to today’s meeting. The incoming SACUA members have been invited to attend SACUA meetings in April as guests and without speaking privileges. Their terms begin on May 1.
- The minutes from 3/30/2026 were approved by consent.

**3:02 pm: SACUA Chair Update**

- There has not yet been any announcement from administration about Collegiate Travel Planners (CTP), and complaints about CTP continue.
- Chair Peterson met with VP-Secretary Jon Kinsey to stress the importance of Regent bylaw 5.09 for U-M faculty tenure protections. The 5.09 process began in the aftermath of the McCarthy era when two U-M faculty were [dismissed](#) and U-M was censured by the AAUP. Vilma Mesa, SACUA liaison to Secretary of the University Advisory Committee (SAC), provided an update about potential revisions to the Regents bylaws. Mesa shared that the review of the bylaws will focus on the pros and cons of the level of detail included the bylaws. U-M bylaws are longer than peer institutions. If content is removed from the bylaws, where would this content go and what would be the implications be of such changes? In addition, there is interest in adding conflict of interest language applicable to

regents members to the bylaws. **Discussion:** An example of a detail perhaps not needed in the bylaws is a provision that the Faculty Senate hold its meeting in the winter term. Since U-M administration manages SPGs and there is not collective bargaining for tenured faculty at U-M Ann Arbor, the protections for faculty offered by the regents bylaws are often viewed as particularly important by faculty. Another faculty commented that the Regents bylaws are a defacto constitution for U-M and it would be a major change if 5.09 was removed.

**Action Item:** SAC is requesting SACUA feedback on the appropriate level of detail in Section 11 and Section 4 of the regents bylaws. What are the pros and cons of having academic unit and other committees be required and/or detailed in the regents bylaws.

- Chair Peterson sent a thank you note to Mika LaVaque-Manty, Chair of the AI in Education Working Group, expressing appreciation for being a guest at SACUA on March 30<sup>th</sup>.
- SACUA will discuss Standing Judicial Committee nominees today as a follow-up from discussion at SACUA on March 30<sup>th</sup>.
- April 13<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to submit resolutions for the April 27<sup>th</sup> Faculty Senate meeting. SACUA will discuss two such resolutions at today's meeting.
- On March 31, Vice Chair Soumya Rangarajan hosted the most recent Clinical Faculty/Faculty Senate Dialogue. There was a good turnout with attendees from Pharmacy, Nursing and U-M Flint, among others. The next dialogue will be on April 8<sup>th</sup>. An outline of the issues raised at the clinical dialogues will be shared with SACUA to help guide 2026-2027 future actions.
- Chair Peterson met with the Provost and discussed: 1) mental health on campus, including the recent death of a College of Engineering postdoc, 2) the [Resolution Concerning Surveillance on Campus](#), 3) the importance of faculty protections in Regent Bylaw 5.09, 4) and the results of the [censorship survey](#).
- On April 9<sup>th</sup>, the annual Faculty Senate luncheon will be held in University Hall. The event is an opportunity for committee members, Senate Assembly, and SACUA to informally meet with executive vice presidents and the provost to share appreciation for accomplishments over the past year.
- On April 16<sup>th</sup>, a [U-M AI summit will be held on "Everything That Is Wrong About AI: A Critical Look at Challenges & Opportunities,"](#) and Chair Peterson is one of the faculty panelists.
- On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, a faculty governance advocacy day will be held in Lansing for faculty leaders from across MI, including those from Michigan Tech, Central Michigan, Grand Valley State, Western Michigan, Michigan State, Eastern Michigan, U-M Flint, U-M Dearborn, and U-M Ann Arbor, among others.

### **3:28 pm: SACUA Officer Election**

- Chair Peterson shared that Kentaro Toyama had come forward as candidate for SACUA Chair and Kirsten Herold had come forward as candidate for SACUA Vice Chair. Chair Peterson invited additional nominations from the floor. Hearing none, Toyama and Herold were each invited to make a candidate statement.
  - Toyama remarked that he had been involved in faculty governance since first joining U-M and had been in meetings with four presidents and four provosts, including working with Provost Martha Pollack. He has served

on a dozen Senate Assembly committees and on SACUA twice, met with regents and executive officers in various roles, and revived a dormant U-M chapter of the AAUP. He stated that there is no one way to approach leadership and believes in being strategic and using a whole range of tactics dependent on the person and context. His strategies have included asking nicely, writing op-eds, sponsoring petitions, speaking at protests, attending a football game with administration, one-on-one debate, and sponsoring resolutions. Serving as SACUA chair is challenging because faculty very frequently do not agree. He shared appreciation for the foundation that Derek Peterson and Rebekah Modrak have built as chairs. The fundamental crux of every issue is the erosion of shared governance, and it is important to be focused on this objective and to pursue it issue by issue and inch by inch.

- Herold remarked that she had been recruited by Toyama to be vice chair and was elected to SACUA the year after lecturers became full members of the Faculty Senate. Directly prior to joining SACUA, she had been LEO President, and prior to this had been LEO Vice President for many years. She has gotten to know many people and these connections make her effective. She has learned that each school and college is different and has worked with and settled agreements with many deans and chairs, at Michigan Medicine, at U-M Flint, and at U-M Dearborn. Even though working conditions vary, all faculty and all librarians face issues as employees, including the problems with Work Connections. She will bring her extensive experience and a sense of what can be done, including pushing for change even when not immediately successful. It took lecturers twenty years to achieve faculty governance rights. The university moves slowly and the movement needs to be in the right direction.
- **Vote:** A confidential vote was held via SimplyVoting. Kentaro Toyama was elected as 2026-2027 SACUA Chair and Kirsten Herold elected as 2026-2027 SACUA Vice Chair.

### **3:41 pm: Discussion of Possible University Senate Resolutions**

- Chair Peterson shared that he is aware of several in-progress resolutions for the upcoming Faculty Senate Meeting, including potential resolutions on U-M's military officer training program in partnership with the U.S. Department of War, challenges faced by U-M transgender athletes, the Senate Assembly's surveillance resolution, and a resolution on new training for department chairs.
- **Athletics oversight and faculty input draft resolution:** SACUA reviewed a draft of the resolution, with discussion covering the following topics and comments. There are concerns that Advisory Board on Intercollegiate Athletics (ABIA) does not offer sufficient faculty input into U-M athletics, especially compared to earlier years (pre-2002). There are also concerns of transparency, accountability, and multiple scandals within U-M athletics. SACUA does not receive a required ABIA report, and other reporting mechanisms seem to be lacking. Athletes are students in faculty courses, and faculty are concerned the U-M athletics programs have become so professionalized that student athletes may

lose the opportunity for a true U-M education. It was noted that recent changes in NCAA rules regarding student athlete transfers have accentuated such challenges. It was suggested that the Ethics, Integrity & Compliance Office may have an important role to play.

- **GenAI-free zones draft resolution:** SACUA reviewed a draft of the resolution, with discussion covering the following topics and comments. The intent of the resolution is to create educational spaces that are free of AI. A question was raised about whether this is different from the discretion faculty already have over their own classrooms and existing spaces such as an internet-free coffee shop. Another faculty commented that a “just say no to AI” approach is likely ineffectual and students need to learn to monitor their own AI use. Some faculty face practical challenges, such as with student handwriting and what can be required within the rules for three-credit courses. There was a comment that many students may need to know AI for their future careers and another comment that such spaces might be branded to be pro-critical thinking instead of anti-AI. It was suggested there might be curricula where one learns some AI, but not as a career focus. Black Mountain College was shared as an example of a deliberately created art space, focused on a set of values and skills, that was highly influential in the arts. There were also comments about how important it is for students to engage in learning without the crutch of AI.

#### **4:30 pm: New Business**

- There were no new business items raised.

#### **4:33 pm: Standing Judicial Committee Nominees**

- The Provost was unable to attend as previously scheduled. SACUA used the time slot to discuss plans for the Standing Judicial Committee nominees.
- This agenda item was in Executive Session and no minutes were taken.

#### **4:47 pm: Adjournment**

Respectfully submitted,

Rogério Meireles 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 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."