



Academic Affairs Advisory Committee (AAAC) Minutes:

February 13, 2026, at 10:45 am – 12:15 pm (Provost attending 11 am to noon),
Ruthven Conference Room 1100 and via Zoom (hybrid)

Meeting Information:

Circulated: 3/9/2026

Approved: 3/13/2026

Present: Kentaro Toyama (Chair), Netta Berlin, Colleen Conway, Christine Gerdes (Special Counsel to the Provost), Gavin LaRose, Ann Marshall (FSO), Luke McCarthy, Laurie McCauley (Provost), Soumya Rangarajan (SACUA liaison), Mireille Roddier, Jennifer Trigger

Absent: Hayley Bedell, Ceren Budak, Bilal Butt, Mick Kennedy, Albert Liu, Rahul Mannan, Rafael Neis, Scott Spector, Jon Wargo

Minutes:

1. In preparation for the arrival of the Provost, the minutes were approved by consent and AAAC members briefly discussed agenda items.
2. Tenure Review
 - a. Chair Toyama introduced the topic, shared appreciation for the [Tenure and Promotion Review in the Office of the Provost](#) document, and noted that no cases had been overturned during Provost McCauley's time as provost. In addition, Chair Toyama noted that the provost role with tenure can be a mystifying to faculty, and there are questions about what future provosts might do especially if there isn't adequate transparency.
 - b. Discussion -- The Provost asked if there were instances where the Provost should overturn tenure cases. A faculty remarked on the tremendous labor that goes into a case. There was a comment on the importance of a centralized standard, and the Provost's Office is a useful place for this and also a way to ensure that labor goes into the process. Most case decisions are clear, and the number of cases turned down as a campus is low, with units successfully coaching faculty towards tenure. A faculty remarked that tenure is in crisis at Michigan Medicine, with many on clinical track instead of tenure track, and with promotion criteria varying across departments. The Provost noted that schools and colleges have their own bylaws and that disciplinary conventions vary. The Provost's role includes a procedural review regarding the unit's compliance with their own bylaws.
 - c. AAAC request for a provision to allow candidates to exclude people as reviewers -- AAAC Chair Toyama asked for more transparency about those who do reviews, such as a candidate not wanting their neighbor to be reviewer as part of the Provost process. The Provost shared that there is a process for candidates for tenure to list names of those they don't want as reviewers, and the Provost's Office keeps the names of such reviewers confidential.
3. AI and UM – continuation of previous meeting's discussion
 - a. Chair Toyama shared that Mika LaVaque-Manty, Chair of the AI and Education Working Group, would be meeting with SACUA.



Action Item: A summary of AAAC's discussion from today's meeting would be shared with Mika LaVaque-Manty.

- b. The discussion on AI covered the following topics and comments.
 - i. Challenges due to an ambiguity of policy and best practices – An SMTD faculty was asked by a doctoral student what the AI policy is for their dissertation. How does the department, unit, Rackham, and the faculty member navigate this? How do students navigate this ambiguity and is the policy the same/different for cello, piccolo, etc.? It is challenging for undergraduates to navigate different policies for each course, leading to a student's sincere misunderstanding of expectations. Should there be a "policy" or would a set of principles and/or best practices be better? An LSA faculty doesn't encounter AI difficulties with language classes, but is very much in need of support with AI and writing classes. Since faculty are fundamentally in charge of their classes, how is AI similar/different from policies for attendance, etc.?
 - ii. Challenges due to the culture around AI and learning – how can faculty motivate students to buy-in to learning given the proliferation of AI? Given challenges of time management, AI is an easy last-minute tool and students are defaulting to chatgpt for their assignments.
 - iii. AI as a fundamental shift and existential threat to learning – AI is undermining higher education in a way that has not yet been reckoned with. AI is presenting a crisis of instruction for faculty. A Taubman faculty stopped teaching a critical theory class that she has taught for the last 25 years because of the challenges posed by AI. This faculty member's colleagues are having similar crises of instruction.
 - iv. AI as tied to intensified production and inequity – AI challenges are not just at the university level, but are also global. There is a need for regulation at an inter-university level, and AI is tied to competition and increased chaos. AI is controlled by big tech and pursued by values of productivity with the absence of global warming policy. There are concerns about the job market and of the pipeline of high school students soon to be college students. There are mental health issues, e.g. Billie Eilish's "What were we made for?"
 - v. U-M messaging on AI – U-M messaging has aggravated AI challenges and have not yet addressed AI issues. What is U-M emphasizing or pushing regarding AI? There is a need for institutional support on the challenges presented by AI and more support for critical thinking.
 - vi. Questions about what a centralized approach might look like -- Given U-M's value of decentralization, it is likely not feasible to say every student should have a course on AI. Are there ways to more broadly communicate -- this is who we are as a community and who we are as graduates of U-M?
4. Addition committee discussion
 - a. After the Provost left the meeting, there was brief additional committee discussion.

5. Adjournment

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