

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**  
**Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs**  
**Monday, May 11, 2026, 3:00pm**  
The meeting was held via Zoom

**Minutes:** 05/11/2026

**Circulated:** 5/15/2026

**Approved:** 5/18/2026

**Present:**

Kentaro Toyama (Chair), Meaghan Blanchard (FSO), Steven Buchman, Jesse Capecelatro, Kim Kearfott, Ann Marshall (FSO), Luke McCarthy (FSO), Rogério Meireles Pinto (Senate Secretary), Soumya Rangarajan, Michael Schubnell, Melanie Tanielian

**Absent:**

Kirsten Herold, Derek Peterson,

**Press:**

Chris Sebastian – Record

Caleb Obico – Daily

**Meeting Minutes:**

**3:00 pm: Continued Discussion: “Spring 2026 Commencement SACUA Chair Address Response”**

- This item was in Executive Session and no minutes were taken.

**Approval:** SACUA approved having an e-vote, over a 48-hour period after today's SACUA meeting, on whether to permit a statement by SACUA member Derek Peterson, in his individual capacity, being posted on the Faculty Senate website.

**3:38 pm: SACUA Chair Updates and Priorities**

- Chair Toyama presented on three priorities for SACUA to pursue in 2026-2027:
  1. **Strengthen shared governance** – While shared governance has waxed and waned, on the whole, the spirit of shared governance has declined in favor of a more top-down approach. Shared governance should be for all stakeholders – faculty, students, staff, and, as relevant, alumni. Toyama will work to establish good working relationships with administration, executive officers, and the regents. President Grasso has been very open to meeting with SACUA, and Toyama will continue the tradition of inviting a SACUA member to join Toyama during his regular meetings with President Grasso. Provost McCauley has also been very willing to meet.
  2. **U-M decision-making based on shared values** – A second goal is for U-M to make more of its decisions based upon shared values instead of on what is expedient. There have been a number of cases where justice for an individual has

been set aside for some other type of expedience. One such example is the Anderson case. More effort is needed to identify and better address such cases.

3. **Freedom of speech and academic freedom** – This involves not only rules of who can speak and how they're administratively enforced, but also building a culture of protecting free speech. Free speech is a practice, a skill, and a culture in which the entire community repeatedly and vocally recommits to allowing a broad range of speech, else free speech itself will wither away. Such a skill is especially crucial at a public university. Toyama is interested in hosting events that will help promote real discussion and rebuild the culture of free speech.

### **3:44 pm: Open Discussion of Goals/Priorities**

- Chair Toyama invited discussion, asking SACUA members if the three themes resonated with them and if they had additional priorities to share.
- The discussion on SACUA priorities covered the following topics: SACUA members offered support for the three priorities Toyama had identified; U-M should better align with its own bylaws; Free speech is particularly salient in regards to faculty teaching; Concerns were raised about the curtailing of free speech at Texas Tech and at IU; Protections are needed even when researcher's speech is controversial, including protections for Chinese post-docs at U-M; Another suggested priority is support for research track faculty and continued work in support of clinical faculty; There is interest in the Regents focusing more on its fiduciary responsibilities; Careful watch is needed on the Regents bylaw revision process, especially in regards Regents bylaw 5.09.
- SACUA discussed successes from the prior year: 1) Collegiate Travel Planners (CTP) was made voluntary in response to a University Senate resolution, a SACUA task force, data collected through a faculty survey, and the efforts of the Financial Affairs Advisory Committee (FAAC) Chair's work with VP Hewlett. Much was learned, i.e. 50% of U-M travel is not faculty travel. Good processes are still needed for Engineering and LSA faculty who don't have PCards. 2) CSCAR was reinstated in response, in part, to a University Senate resolution and also broad advocacy, including from RAC and behind the scenes efforts by several units working together. Also, such successes came about from many meetings and a professional tone. A SACUA member remarked that Chair Peterson also had a very good rapport with the executive officers and the regents.
- A SACUA meeting will be held in June and July, and it is understood if members cannot attend. U-M passes its budget during the summer.

### **4:02 pm: New Business**

- No new business items were raised.

### **4:03 pm: Adjournment**

Respectfully submitted,

Rogério Meireles Pinto  
Faculty Senate Secretary

## **ADDENDUM**

### SACUA Actions

Between regular meetings, SACUA has performed the following actions by electronic vote that should be included in the SACUA minutes:

- On May 13<sup>th</sup>, SACUA approved posting on the Faculty Senate website a statement from SACUA member Derek Peterson, with that statement titled as [“Statement from Professor Derek Peterson.”](#) provided that this statement is identified as being his own statement, acting in his individual capacity and not on behalf of the University, the Faculty Senate, or the Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA). SACUA member Derek Peterson was recused from the discussion of this matter and from the vote. The vote result was 4 in favor and 3 against, with 1 abstention (in addition to Professor Peterson’s recusal).

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.”