



Government Relations Advisory Committee (GRAC) Minutes

Minutes of April 10, 2025, 3-3:45 pm, regular meeting

Circulated: 9/19/2025

Approved: 9/25/2025

Present: Sue Anne Bell (Chair), Jowei Chen, Shevon Desai, Anouck Girard, Chris Kolb (Vice President for Government Relations), Andi Lewis (Government Relations Specialist), Shahzad Mian, Soumya Rangarajan, Sara Samuel, Jeffrey Yackley.

Absent: Nakhiah Goulbourne, John Mansfield, Beth Wilensky.

1. The meeting was called to order and the minutes from the previous meeting were approved.
2. VP Chris Kolb Update
 - Congress has begun its budget process, and the executive branch has been exerting influence over federal grants. There is much focus on antisemitism, with some attention to DEI. International students have been targeted both in blue and red states.
 - There was GRAC discussion regarding concerns of U-M international students' visas being revoked, and that students had been identified for reasons as routine as a parking ticket. Interest was expressed in the university offering additional support for international students.
 - Government Relations has been working on a pilot qualitative and quantitative research project to better understand how voters within the state and also nationally feel about higher education in general and about the University of Michigan in particular. Initial results are expected by May 12. The intent is that the project would help inform messaging about U-M.
3. U-M work with federal organizations (HHS, FEMA) and national labs (Oak Ridge, Sandia)
 - At this time, it is hard to predict what may happen next. It was noted that search algorithms have been used to target grants based upon specific terminology.
4. Possible Opportunities for GRAC, SACUA, and Faculty Senate to support Government Relations' efforts and initial GRAC Final Report brainstorming
 - The messenger can be important, and students, recent graduates and patients can be particularly meaningful messengers. It can be helpful to hear from an ordinary person. There is a lot of support for research in Washington D.C., and Government Relations works hard to remind legislators of the necessity of research and U-M's careful stewardship of the public dollar.
 - An idea of collaborating with U-M Communications was shared. Entities within Michigan Medicine regularly meet with MM Communications to work on sharing research from a human perspective and breaking down medical research into narratives for a wider audience. This work is not political and, with patient approval, narratives are shared in the form of annual reports, social media, etc. Another example of communicating MM's research impact is Representative Dingell's presence at a Mott Children's Hospital event. Interest was expressed in sharing such messages within bipartisan contexts.
 - Faculty also meet with elected officials through their own unit-level responsibilities and as individual citizens.
 - There was some initial interest among GRAC members in possible ways GRAC, with Government Relations' guidance, might offer some kind of support and/or attend Government Relations' outreach efforts to legislators. If it made sense to pursue this, additional discussion and planning



would be needed.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Marshall, FSO, Faculty Governance Coordinator