



## **Report on Activities of the Secretary of the University Advisory Committee (SAC) for 2025-2026**

### **Overview:**

- *From:* Francine Dolins, Chair, Secretary of the University Advisory Committee (SAC)
- *Subject:* Report on Activities of the Secretary of the University Advisory Committee (SAC) for 2025-2026
- *Committee Members:* Francine Dolins, Barbara Klein, Samantha Kreklau, Rashmi Rama, Liz Rohan, Jonathan Shillingford, John Tropman, Beth Wilensky, Jay Winkler
- *SACUA Liaison:* Vilma Mesa
- *Meeting Dates:*
  - Monday 9/8 from 12:00pm-1:30pm
  - Monday 10/20 from 12:00pm-1:30pm
  - Monday 11/24 from 12:00pm-1:30pm
  - Friday 12/19 from 3:00pm-4:30pm
  - Monday 2/2 from 12:00pm-1:30pm
  - Friday 3/13 from 3:00pm-4:30pm
  - Monday 4/6 from 12:00pm-1:30pm
  - Monday 4/28 from 11am-12pm

### **2025-2026 Committee Charge**

1. Explore how to return the Regents and the Executive Officers to a more frequent and robust consultation with relevant University stakeholders, with special emphasis on developing a consultative structure with SACUA. Relatedly, review current norms and practices in support of faculty connection to the Board of Regents, such as by considering whether to pursue the appointment of faculty liaisons to the Board of Regents or, more informally, a new norm of periodic lunches or casual conversations in support of faculty and Regent relationship building (perhaps organized by the Secretary's Office).
2. Discuss the ongoing efforts of the Secretary's Office to revise the University Bylaws.
3. In coordination with the SACUA Chair, keep aware of Board of Regent meetings and decisions, and draft periodic "need to know" bulletins or explanations that could be circulated when as part of the SACUA's chair's periodic newsletters, focusing on developments that impact the daily lives of faculty.



4. In partnership with SACUA, receive and review suggestions from SACUA and the Senate Assembly members for strategic priorities for the University to pursue that could be communicated to the Board of Regents, and select a subset of those submissions to share with VP Kinsey for consideration by the Board.
5. Consider emergent issues or topics brought forward by SAC committee members or the Secretary of the University for discussion over the course of the year. The committee may also continue discussing any issues or topics raised in the committee's most recent annual committee report.

### **Committee Actions/Information Obtained**

- Established a strong, collegial relationship with Vice President Kinsey, which allowed for faculty to provide feedback on a number of major university happenings, such as the presidential search and campus surveillance.
- Worked closely with Vice President Kinsey and the Faculty Senate Office to review the proposed regental bylaw project. This work also led to the committee hosting former Vice President Sally Churchill, who initiated this project.
- Provided faculty insight into a number of topics, including The Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education, campus surveillance issues, the impact of RCI/Block grant cancellations, and the potential impact of the settlement between Northwestern University and the federal government to restore federal research funding.
- Proposed initiatives to maintain and bolster funding to academic universities by lobbying members of Congress.
- Discussed concerns regarding inequity between the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and campuses.
- Provided faculty feedback regarding the presidential search and simultaneously advocated for the faculty senate to be represented on the board in future searches.

### **Recommendations**

- Hold a joint meeting with the SAC and RAC to better understand how these two groups can advocate for one another.
- Hold a joint meeting with the RPP to gain better insights into the regental bylaw project.
- Conduct a historical review of the regental bylaws to better understand the context of why they were added and conduct an impact analysis to better understand how the removal of certain bylaws could affect the university. After the completion of these two tasks, consider a more optimal time to revise the bylaws.
- Consider more initiatives to better advocate for the Flint and Dearborn campuses.

## **Overall Summary of Committee Work**

SAC is charged with building a relationship with the Regents to be able to share and inform both parties on issues that impact the University. The Vice President and Secretary to the University plays a vital role in this relationship, both by providing updates from the Regents to SAC while also seeking and listening to faculty voice concerns about issues that affect them, their units, colleges and campuses, and summarizing these for the Regents to consider.

In future, it would be beneficial and would be welcomed if one or more of the Regents were to attend SAC meetings and/or to invite SAC members to share discussions in a less formal setting.