

Minutes of Meeting: 9/28/2026

Circulated: 10/2/2026

Approved: 10/5/2026

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs

Monday, September 28, 2026, 3:00pm

The hybrid meeting was held in 1100 Ruthven and via Zoom

Present: Kentaro Toyama (Chair), Kirsten Herold (Vice Chair), Steve Buchman, Kim Kearfott, Soumya Rangarajan, Michael Schubnell, Rogério Meireles Pinto (Senate Secretary), Jesse Capecelatro, Melanie Tanielian

Absent: Derek Peterson

Guests:

Provost Laurie McCauley

Christine Gerdes, Special Counsel to the Provost and Associate General Counsel

Faculty Senate Office: Luke McCarthy, Eric Vandenberghe

Press:

Emma Lombard -- Daily

Genevieve Monsma -- Record

3:03pm: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the 9/14/26 meeting were approved.

3:04pm: Chair's Update; SA Committee Liaison Updates

Summary: Chair Toyama provides updates:

- The Senate Assembly voted to approve the Senate Assembly Committee Charges at the September meeting.
- The Faculty Senate Office hosted the first event of the [Open Questions](#) series. The first event discussed Institutional Neutrality with Michelle Adams, Henry M. Butzel Professor of Law, and Gary Harper, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor of Health Behavior and Health Equity, as the initial participants. The Record recently published an [article](#) about this series.
 - o The October event will center on norms for university ceremonies. The November event will focus on large scale research infrastructure. Speakers

and future events will be determined in the coming weeks and months with further details to come.

- The Faculty Senate Office recently hosted the [Regent Candidate Forum](#). Five candidates for Regent attended and answered questions submitted by Senate Assembly members.
- SACUA's ad hoc committee focused on artificial intelligence is currently filling out its roster of members. Some potential members that SACUA suggested have declined, and there is a call for more suggestions.
- Chair Toyama had corresponded with a member of the LSA leadership team regarding the new grade covering policy. Chair Toyama received clarity on questions posed by SACUA at an earlier meeting. SACUA proceeds to discuss the importance of faculty consultation on matters such as this.

FSO Director McCarthy discusses two upcoming events:

- The annual Davis, Markert, Nickerson Lecture on Academic and Intellectual Freedom will take place on 11/5 at 4:00pm in University Hall. This year's [lecture](#) will feature Michael Ignatieff.
- The next [Political Speech in the Public Square Event](#) will take place on 10/8 at 12:00pm noon on the Diag. The scheduled topic is grades.

SACUA Liaisons are given the opportunity to update SACUA on any work their committee is currently undertaking:

- DAC- VP Baird will speak to the Assembly at the December meeting. There is a call for questions and topics for that segment of the meeting.
- FAAC- UM has new office space in Washington DC. UM will be working towards the acquisition and implementation of a new business management system in the coming years.

Action: Updates and discussion

3:27pm: Discussion: Drafting a Declaration of Faculty Rights & Responsibilities

Summary: The Chair introduces this topic. The purposes of a Declaration of Faculty Rights & Responsibilities include creating a set of guiding principles for the Faculty Senate. It will clearly articulate what the U-M faculty expects from UM administration. SACUA members ask questions to clarify the nature and purpose of this document.

Chair Toyama provides a suggested step-by-step process by which this document will take form. SACUA, the Senate Assembly, and the full Faculty Senate will all have opportunities to provide input, as well as vote on this document. SACUA discusses this proposed course of action.

SACUA provides, in the form of bullet points, potential concepts and recommendations

that will be considered for this document.

Action: Discussion and brainstorming

4:00pm: Guest: Provost McCauley

Summary: This portion of the meeting was held in executive session.

Action: Discussion

4:31pm: New Business

Summary: This portion of the meeting was held in executive session.

During the executive session, SACUA approved a SACUA endorsement of the *revisions* proposed by the Provost's Office for Model Grievance Procedures. The revisions arose from a 2+-year process involving input from SACUA, AAAC, and a faculty task force appointed by the Provost. The proposed revisions are favorable for faculty and administration: the addition of an Alternative Dispute Resolution process; a provision for Faculty Advocates to support grievants; and the requirement of an implementation meeting after the Grievance Hearing Board makes its recommendations. SACUA, however, felt there remained concerns with the overall grievance process and chose not to endorse the Procedures in their entirety. The endorsement will be accompanied by additional revision requests. The vote carries unanimously.

Action: Discussion

5:03pm: 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.”