

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA) Minutes:
Monday, October 5, 2026, 3:00pm

The hybrid meeting was held in 1100 Ruthven and via Zoom

Minutes: 10/5/2026

Circulated: 10/9/2026

Approved: 10/12/2026

Present:

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

Press:

Genevieve Monsma – Record

Kevin Gonzaga -- Daily

Maahi Patel – Daily

Meeting Minutes:

3:00 pm: Come to Order and Minutes

- The minutes from 9/28/2026 were approved by consent.

3:02 pm: SACUA Chair Update

- The SACUA Ad Hoc AI Committee has been launched. A faculty member from Stamps School of Art and Design has been added to the committee roster to provide an arts perspective.
- Twenty people have volunteered thus far to serve on one of SACUA's self-led AI committees. Volunteers were recruited through a link circulated in the most recent SACUA Chair's newsletter. The intent is for each of these AI committees to have about 4-5 members for a total of 4-5 committees.
- SACUA's recent endorsement of the revisions to the Model Grievance document, with notes for further requested changes was sent to HR leadership. HR leadership acknowledged SACUA's endorsement of the revisions and also communicated that they will hold onto the more substantive, complex additional requests for the next revision cycle.
- Chair Toyama and Soumya Rangarajan provided an update about the status of clinical faculty promotion process at the Medical School. The current system has required clinical faculty to meet promotion criteria similar to tenure track faculty. With this system, it has been common for clinical faculty to remain at the clinical assistant rank for decades. The new clinical track system would allow for promotion based upon criteria such as quality control, access, and equity. SACUA's [white paper on clinical faculty concerns](#) probably had some impact on these developments.
- The Political Speech and the Public Square event scheduled for October 8th has

- been cancelled, with the next event in the series to occur on October 29th.
- On October 6th, Chair Toyama and Vice Chair Herold will meet with the faculty governance chairs from U-M Dearborn and U-M Flint.
 - There were no SACUA liaison updates regarding Senate Assembly committees.

3:13 pm: Strategy on Faculty Salaries

- Chair Toyama provided a summary of the most recent Faculty Senate Chair survey of faculty that asked faculty how they would allocate a 10% bonus: as cash or as non-cash benefits if those non-cash items went 20% further than the cash equivalent? The survey received 650 responses, with the top results: 1) cash (almost half of the total value), 2) housing, 3) child care, 4) tuition for kids, and 5) other. The results also show that assistant faculty indicated higher concerns about housing. The results reinforce that SACUA may want to prioritize salary as an issue and may also want to raise housing as a separate area of concern.
- SACUA discussion on faculty salary covered the following topics. At the prior SACUA meeting, the Provost remarked that salaries are determined by units. Are there numbers showing an imbalance of salaries across the units? There is faculty concern about the growth of funds spent on administrators and on administrative bloat. Do exit surveys (see ADVANCE) include data about salaries as a reason faculty leave U-M? As a public university, there are multiple sources of data about faculty salaries (see U-M published salary data, U-M Almanac, etc.). Such data can be difficult to interpret since published data may not include bonuses or FTE administration. Michigan Medicine aims to have faculty salaries meet at least 75% of AAMC. There was discussion about whether salary differences across and within units should be considered a problem. Comparisons with peer institutions might be more impactful. Engineering has worked on equity of salaries within their unit. Engineering also has floated an idea about being compensated for a “thirteenth month” from research funds. Data from a [2024 gender salary study](#) could be applicable. LEO experiences can be instructive, and there was discussion about a “cost of living” salary that would set a minimum bar for salary increases. There might be interest in drafting a Faculty Senate resolution on this issue.

Action Item: The Faculty Senate Office will assist in compiling data about faculty salaries (see above).

Action Item: A SACUA Task Force on Salary will be created with Kentaro Toyama, Soumya Rangarajan, Michael Schubnell, and Jesse Capecelatro as members.

3:45 pm: Further work on “Declaration of Faculty Rights & Responsibilities”

- SACUA members worked on an in-progress draft of a potential Declaration of Faculty Rights & Responsibilities. Members were encouraged to add high-level and organizational comments to a shared online document.

4:09 pm: Senate Assembly Meetings: Advance Planning

- SACUA members discussed guests and plans for upcoming Senate Assembly meetings:
 - On October 26th, Matt Kaplan, Director of Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CLRT), will discuss AI and pedagogy. CLRT

- assists faculty and departments with pedagogy including regarding AI.
- At a future Senate Assembly meeting Patty Hurn, Interim VP for Research is expected to be a guest. Potential topics include 1) federal research funds, 2) internal grants, 3) threats facing scholars from China such as pressures on co-authorship, and 4) the impact of 2026 election results.
 - On November 23rd, Ravi Pendse, VP for IT & CIO, is expected to be a guest. Potential topics include 1) the Faculty Senate resolution on AI-free zones. It was noted that units may offer different levels of support via tools for locking down laptops, relevant software, and dedicated rooms for exams. 2) The 2026 digital accessibility deadline and ITS support.

Action Item: Senate Assembly members will be invited to submit questions for the guests in advance to help plan the structure of these sessions.

4:18 pm: New Business

- There was a motion to hold the remainder of the meeting in Executive Session. The motion passed by unanimous consent.
- This agenda item was in Executive Session and no minutes were taken.

5:00 pm: 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."