

Minutes of 12 October 2015 SACUA
Circulated 2 November 2015
Approved 2 November 2015

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA)
6048 Fleming Administration Building
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1340
Phone: (734) 764-0303

Present: Fagerlin, Lehman, Mondro, Schultz (Vice Chair), Smith, Szymanski, Weineck (Chair), Wright, Ziff

Absent: Potter (Interim Secretary)

Guests: Provost Martha Pollack, Special Counsel Kelly Cunningham, Faculty Ombuds Professor Bruno Giordani

Press: Michigan Daily, University Record

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Draft Agenda
2. Draft Minutes of October 5, 2015

3:15 Chair Weineck called the meeting to order at 3:15 and the draft agenda was approved.

3:16 CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of October 5, 2015 were approved with changes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Due to Fall Study Break there will be no October 19 SACUA meeting. The next SACUA meeting is November 2.

Vice Chair Schultz asked if SACUA liaisons to the Senate Assembly committees should insist that minutes be taken of committee meetings. Chair Weineck said that this could be discussed at the committee chairs' meeting currently being arranged.

Chair Weineck said that she has written to the deans of the schools and colleges that still lack complete representation on Senate Assembly.

Chair Weineck reported that she met with Associate Vice Provost and Senior Director of Academic Human Resources Jeffery Frumkin and Associate Vice Provost and Senior Director and Title IX Coordinator Anthony Walesby about resolving the remaining issues regarding the Office for Institutional Equity (OIE). Associate Vice Provost Frumkin told Chair Weineck that Title IX sanctioned institutional compliance boards cannot be overturned by a faculty panel. SACUA responded by saying that such a faculty panel could ask for "reconsideration" instead of "overturning" the OIE report. Also, the faculty panel

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could claim the right to review when new evidence is discovered. SACUA discussed whether the SACUA Faculty Hearing Committee (FHC) could serve as the faculty panel for such reviews. Chair Weineck reminded SACUA that sexual harassment complaints (even by email) to OIE trigger mandatory reporting requirements and those students considering reporting need to be aware of this first. Professor Lehman asked Chair Weineck to obtain the number of OIE complaints.

PREPARATION FOR MARCH FACULTY GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE

Discussion about the March faculty governance conference was postponed to later in the meeting.

ARRIVAL OF GUESTS

Provost Martha Pollack and Special Counsel Kelly Cunningham arrived at the meeting at 3:33 pm.

Provost Pollack said that the ten searches for deans are going well.

Chair Weineck informed the Provost about her meeting with Associate Vice Provosts Frumkin and Walesy. The Provost stated that if there are sanctions, the sanctions are appealable through the current grievance system. SACUA members stated that they support the idea of requesting OIE reconsideration given that Title IX rulings cannot be overturned by a faculty panel. SACUA also supported the use of the SACUA Faculty Hearing Committee when appropriate.

Chair Weineck reported to the Provost that she has received many emails with concerns about difficulties involving CANVAS and wanted to alert the Provost to the widespread problem. The Provost asked Chair Weineck to contact Associate Vice President and Chief Information Officer Laura Patterson for assistance dealing with specific problems but that the implementation will still occur on time as scheduled.

Chair Weineck thanked Provost Pollack for her involvement with the recent Davis, Markert, Nickerson Academic Freedom Lecture (AFL). It was agreed the event was a success. Chair Weineck suggested the possibility of an honorary degree or emeritus professor status in the name of the AFL named professors who all had distinguished academic careers after leaving the University in the 1950s. This might be more positive than asking for a public apology as has been done, unsuccessfully, in the past. Provost Pollack said this is the first she has heard of the idea and will look in to it.

Vice Chair Schultz asked about the process used in the Medical School reorganization plan. Provost Pollack stated that would be better answered by the President.

Chair Weineck stated that clinical faculty at the Medical School and elsewhere have no representation in central faculty governance activities.

SACUA discussed the upcoming Senate and Senate Assembly meetings and the two resolutions to be acted on. The first resolution is meant to combat abusive undergraduate drinking by calling for holding certain classes on Friday mornings. The second resolution

involves the validity of the current course evaluation instrument and the use of its results including public release. Provost Pollack said that if Senate Assembly votes against the immediate release of the course evaluation data, she would be willing to slow the process.

Provost Pollack and Special Counsel Cunningham left the meeting at 4:10 pm.

SACUA continued its discussion about the validity and use of the current course evaluations.

In terms of prediction usefulness, Professor Wright said that some survey questions actually produce the opposite result as what was expected. Professor Lehman said that, based on his student contacts, the students just do not care about the University's course evaluation and they have other means for assessing courses. Professor Szymanski cautioned that whatever the new result is, there will be some faculty who object. Chair Weineck said that it is important to have student participation from the middle of the group and not just from the two fringes. She also said, if released, the evaluations should be search able by course rather than by the instructor's name. Professor Wright said the evaluations are not very reliable. He said it is really a question of evaluating the "signal to noise ratio" of the responses to filter and determine if sufficient value exists to use the data. Chair Weineck said that the new instrument will be better than the one now used because the current instrument was designed to be a private student communication to the instructor.

PREPARATION FOR MARCH FACULTY GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE

SACUA resumed its earlier discussion about the March faculty governance conference.

SACUA discussed whether the conference participants should include the Regents, the executive officers, the public, or SACUA's national faculty governance peers. It was agreed that SACUA's public and private peers should be the participants although the president and the provost could be asked to give short introductory remarks. A round table format will be used occasionally. Northwestern University Professor Laura Kipnis will be the keynote speaker and her talk will be open to the public and the administration. SACUA will set the discussion topics which could include: 1) the role and authority of faculty governance, 2) faculty governance leaders sitting at the Regents' table, 3) the use of faculty in senior leadership searches, 4) academic freedom and civility, 5) professional standards for faculty, 6) how do peers communicate with their faculty constituencies, 7) the use of social media, 8) analyze success stories, and 9) ask the President and Provost for suggestions.

ARRIVAL OF EXECUTIVE SESSION GUEST

Faculty Ombuds Bruno Giordani arrived at the meeting at 4:30 pm to apprise SACUA of the issue topics he has encountered.

The Faculty Ombuds left the meeting at 5:15 pm. and the meeting came out of executive session.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS/MATTERS ARISING

There were no unfinished business nor matters arising.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:20

Respectfully submitted,

T. Schneider
Secretary pro tem

University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Chapter IV:
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 polices 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."