

Minutes of 9 December 2013 Senate Assembly Meeting  
Circulated 10 December 2013  
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Approved 27 January 2014

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY SENATE MEETING  
SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING  
9 DECEMBER 2013

**Present:** Alderstein Gonzalez, Adler, Bradley, Burrow, Campbell, Cotera, Danziger, DiPietro, Dolins, Fagerlin, Fenno, Fiore, Fraser, Garcia, Grosh, Holland, Hollingsworth, Jacobsen, Johnson, Jones, Kirshner, Larsen, Lim, Lehman, Masten, Mitchell, Mondro, Mutschler, Odetola, Oey, Olsen, Poulsen, Prygoski, Raphael, Rothman, Schloss, Silveira, Smith, Staller (Chair), Swain, Szymanski, von Buelow, Winful, Wright, Young, Ziff

**Requested Alternate, None Available:** Adunbi (LSA), Biteen (LSA), Muehlberger (LSA), Nielsen (LSA,) Swain (Medicine), Wong (Medicine)

**Alternates:** Fatima Gocek (LSA)

**Absent:** Atchade, Baker, Barolo, Bayraktar, Brown, Cervetti, Christman, Custer, Friesen, Hayes, Hershovitz, Katapodi, Kee, Koopmann, Lu, Mansfield, Mora, Nevett, Nielsen, Pandey, Primus, Princen, Ryan, Sarma, Shah, Thompson, Trandafirescu, Turnley

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#### MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Agenda for Senate Assembly
2. Draft Minutes of the 19 November 2013 Senate Assembly meeting with Appendix
3. Administrative Transformation Services (AST) Timeline, handout dated 9 December 2013, by SACUA Chair K. M. Staller
4. The Many “Shades” of Shared Services, p. 12 from

<http://sharedservices.lnwprogram.org/sites/default/files/University%20of%20Michigan%20Presentation%20-%20Rowan%20Miranda.pdf>

Chair Staller convened the meeting of the Senate Assembly at 3:18 P.M. The proposed agenda was approved.

#### MINUTES

The draft minutes of 19 November 2013 were approved.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. President Coleman and Provost Pollack will attend the 27 January 2014 meeting of the Senate Assembly.
2. Ann Arbor CIO Laura Patterson and the UM-Dearborn CIO have been invited to the 17 February meeting of the Senate Assembly.

## AST OVERVIEW

Chair Staller reviewed distributed items 3 and 4 to provide a historical context for the ongoing controversy regarding proposed Administrative Services Transformation (AST). She then called on Professor Olsen at 3:32 P.M. to take the floor and introduce two resolutions proposed by SACUA.

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## ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY 120913-1

### **AST Process**

WHEREAS, we join with the University of Michigan Board of Regents and Central Administration in seeking to deliver excellent education at affordable cost in an era of sharply diminished state appropriations;

WHEREAS, the administration of financial and human resources at the University exists to further the mission of the University by serving its faculty and students;

WHEREAS, the design and development of the Administrative Services Transformation program was performed by external consulting firms and financial office employees without the meaningful participation of and evaluation by the faculty, resulting in inadequate consideration of the consequences and costs of the program;

BE IT RESOLVED that Senate Assembly endorses suspension of the implementation of AST until its impact on the educational and teaching missions of the university can be fully considered and properly evaluated in light of the diverse and often specialized needs of various academic disciplines and units across campus, and that such deliberations include representatives of central faculty governance.

(end of resolution)

### *Discussion of the Active Motion*

Open discussion ensued and Assembly members voiced a series of questions and comments.

- Even though the administration now says there will be no layoffs, staff are nonetheless being asked to reapply for jobs. Evidently staff will have different sets of duties when they are assigned to the Shared Services Center, and there is no guarantee their pay will not decrease.
- It may be reasonable to seek out cost savings through consultation. Knee-jerk opposition may open the faculty to a backlash aimed at the intransigency of ivory tower intellectuals.
- Attrition may be a better approach than layoffs.
- The transition involves a transfer of funds from departments to who knows where. Faculty must have input; what cuts is the administration taking?
- The proposed Action is not controversial or inconsistent with concessions already agreed to by the administration.
- The amount of money supposedly to be saved seems similar in magnitude to the expansion of central administration costs over the last decade.

- The gag order reportedly imposed on department chairs indicates that the administration does not, in fact, want input.
- Some chairs do not recollect direct imposition of a gag order from their dean's office, but rather an admonition to move slowly because information was incomplete at best even within the dean's office. LSA chairs definitely report imposition of a gag order by the dean's office.
- This is not the first time that the UM has endured deep budget cuts. What we need to view is the big picture and not a piecemeal approach.

Members called for the question to be called and Professor Olsen asked for a show of hands of those favoring an end to debate and a vote on the Active Motion. The motion to end debate was unanimous. She then called for a vote on the Active Motion.

Vote on the Active Motion (120913-1):

Number approving- 41  
 Number disapproving- 0  
 Abstentions of record- 0

Professor Olsen declared that the motion had been passed unanimously.

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ACTION OF SENATE ASSEMBLY 120913-2

**Consulting Firms**

WHEREAS, The University of Michigan retained outside consulting firms to develop and implement the Administrative Services Transformation (AST) of finance and human resources, the IT Rationalization plan, and the Retirement Benefits review, all of which resulted in deeply flawed planning processes, damaging the confidence of the faculty in the Administration; and

WHEREAS, The University has spent tens of millions of dollars on these consulting firms; and

WHEREAS, The University is a preeminent institution, employing faculty with international expertise, in fields including business, finance, information technologies, organizations, and education; and

WHEREAS, The University's top academic leadership includes some of the most prominent, experienced, and talented Administrators in the nation, most of whom have been faculty members themselves; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, Senate Assembly advises that any continued and future retention of external consulting firms be contingent on supplemental and meaningful consultation, participation, and evaluation by faculty with content expertise in the targeted initiatives.

(end of resolution)

*Discussion of the Active Motion*

Open discussion ensued and Assembly members voiced a series of questions and comments.

- Selection of the consulting firms has not been by an open and transparent process.
- Evidence that two high-ranking members of the administration were former employees of Accenture, one of whom was an executive partner, smacks of the revolving door practices that link Congress with K Street.
- Assessments by the consulting firm Hewitt have been secretive and of questionable accuracy.
- Calling for the involvement of ‘faculty with content expertise’ might be problematic because internal experts can be viewed as having a conflict of interest.

Again, members called for the question to be called. Professor Olsen assessed readiness to vote on the Active Motion by a show of hands. There was unanimous approval of the Assembly’s readiness to vote.

Vote on the Active Motion (120913-2):

Number approving- 36  
 Number disapproving- 3  
 Abstentions of record- 1

Professor Olsen declared that the motion had been passed by majority vote.

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#### DIGITAL AND ENGAGED LEARNING

Professor Olsen returned the chair to Chair Staller at 4:00 P.M. Chair Staller then introduced first vice-provost James Holloway and then vice-provost James Hilton, who delivered presentations about educational initiatives from the provost’s office (Appendices 1 and 2). At the conclusion of his prepared remarks, J. Holloway invited members to contact hagar@umich.edu if they wish to join teaching task teams.

Professor Masten commented that expansion of engaged learning is expensive, and he asked how it would be funded. J. Holloway replied that the expense is why they are promoting engaged learning and digital learning at the same time, to promote synergies between them. He added that there was also a need to develop an evidence base for the learning approach.

James Hilton took the floor at 4:25 P.M. and declared that the primary goal of the learning initiatives is to enhance and differentiate residential programs from online teaching programs. He likened the rise of massive open online courses (MOOCs) to the advent of mp3 compressed audio technology and its infancy. He pointed out that MOOC enrollments can be tens of thousands or more, but that its technology is immature with lots of room for improvement. He said that the cost of accredited online degrees is approaching zero, and that the challenge faced by the UM is to individuate and differentiate the education available at a research university from the myriad of online offering. He invited Senate Assembly members to visit <http://www.coursera.org/umich> to learn about current activity in this area.

In response to questions from the floor about resources available to faculty who want to try creative approaches to improve teaching he suggested that faculty talk with their peers, and perhaps CRLT in the future. He said that what is needed is scalable implementation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

John T. Lehman  
Senate Secretary

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**University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 4.01:**

*The University Senate*

The 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.

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**University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 4.04:**

*The Senate Assembly*

The Senate Assembly shall serve as the legislative arm of the senate.

The assembly shall have power to consider and advise regarding all matters within the jurisdiction of the University Senate which affect the functioning of the university as an institution of higher learning, which concern its obligations to the state and to the community at large, and which relate to its internal organization insofar as such matters of internal organization involve general questions of educational policy.

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**Rules of the University Senate, the Senate Assembly and the Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs:** In all cases not covered by rules adopted by the Senate, the procedure in Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.