

Minutes of 10 November 2014 SACUA
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA)
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Present: Holland, Lehman, Masten (chair), Mondro, Oey, Schultz, Smith, Weineck, Ziff, Schneider, Snyder

Absent: none

Guests: President Mark Schlissel, *Daily* reporter, *Record* reporter

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Draft agenda
2. Draft minutes of 3 November 2014 SACUA
3. Electronic mail message from A. Levy to S. Masten, dated 7 November 2014, regarding IT-Related SPG Revisions
4. IT Policies under review (<http://cio.umich.edu/policy/policies-under-review.php>)
5. Draft agenda for Senate Assembly meeting
6. Topic summary for SACUA meeting with President Schlissel
7. Electronic mail exchange between A. Avlyonah and S. E. Masten regarding SACUA request for advice from the Tenure Committee

Chair Masten convened the meeting at 3:15 P.M. The draft agenda was approved.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 3 November 2014 were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Senate Assembly will meet next week.
2. The next meeting of the Senate Assembly will include athletics issues including athletics department governance.
3. The next Academic Freedom lecture will be delivered on 8 October 2015.
4. Regents meet next on Thursday, 20 November. Chair Masten and CESF Chair Ulsoy will meet with the compensation subcommittee earlier in the day. The CESF report will be presented shortly after 3 P.M.
5. Members are asked to volunteer for attendance at future Regents' meetings.
6. The president will meet with the ABIA on Thursday.

PROPOSED REVISIONS TO IT STANDARD PRACTICE GUIDES

Chair Masten called attention to distributed item 4. He asked SACUA members to review the proposals in anticipation of meeting with Mr. A. Levy.

VISIT OF PRESIDENT

1. The guest arrived at 3:30 P.M. The president acknowledged that current developments have caused the athletics program to become a more serious time commitment than he had envisioned. He said that he has made inquiries about measures to ensure that a situation like the academic fraud that rocked the University of North Carolina cannot happen here. Chair Masten pointed out that the next Senate Assembly meeting will feature athletics issues, and that the Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) will make a presentation.

2. Professor Weineck pointed out that the legislative council of the NCAA has few if any regular faculty members on it. The president agreed, but pointed out that even when faculty have more prominent roles, athletic programs are adept at building firewalls between themselves and faculty oversight. He said he is moving methodically on a search for a new Athletic Director (AD), and that there is no end of media speculation and unsolicited advice about the position. He recognizes that public attention to athletics issues even at this prominent research university dwarfs academic and intellectual achievements. He said that faculty will be part of the search committee for AD when the committee is constituted.

3. Professor Schultz asked for clarification about the president's perspective on faculty and administrative jurisdictions. Professor Schlissel drew a distinction between academic issues such as curriculum, degrees, and degree requirements on the one hand and business decisions on the other. Professor Schultz cited Administrative Services Transformation (AST) as an instance that transcends any sharp distinction between spheres. The president responded that AST has proven to be a learning experience for all involved, and that it disrupted a sense of collegiality. He argued, however, that the underlying motivation for AST and other initiatives is to provide more resources for supporting faculty and for the mission of the institution. Professor Schultz asked what principles should guide the decision to use outside consulting firms in lieu of local expertise. The president pondered the question and responded that the use of outside consultants is widespread and that it has been a feature of every university he has ever been, perhaps because scholars should be permitted to study what they want to study. He pointed out that faculty served on planning committees at UC Berkeley in addition to the use of consultants in their ongoing implementation of AST-style reorganization. Nonetheless, the program remains contentious and faculty remain resistant to the changes. He characterized faculty as generally liberal politically but personally conservative, particularly with respect to relationships that they perceive to be working well for them. It remains an empirical question as to whether alternative arrangements will be better or worse.

4. Chair Masten cited the example of retirement plan deliberations last year during which faculty interacted with outside consultants and managed to correct some misinterpretations and faulty calculations. The president acknowledged the value of using faculty with expertise in areas relevant to an issue. He added that when faculty play a greater role at the table, the likelihood of complaints like those heard about AST are lessened.

5. Professor Lehman said that the topic of post-tenure review surfaces periodically and he asked about the president's attitude toward the subject. Specifically he asked if the president believed that tenure itself should ever be on the table in any post-tenure merit or performance review. President Schlissel replied that tenure is such a well-established fixture of academe that if any university contemplated unilateral steps to reverse it, that institution would suffer irreparably. He said that he knew that SACUA was in discussion with the provost about a policy known as fitness for duty that could apply to rare instances when faculty were unable to perform their functions. Professor Lehman replied that instances of incapacity could arise, but that it was incumbent on SACUA to assure that there was no room for administrative abuse in any such policy. Lehman added that he believed bestowal of tenure by the Board of Regents was tantamount to making tenured faculty a type of officer of the university, with the responsibilities of a self-regulating professional body.

6. Professor Weineck asked if the president believes it is too easy to get tenure at the UM, considering that the tenure success rate is relatively high. The president replied that he has not been here long enough to form an opinion on the subject. He said his interest was to see the UM continuously become better. He suggested that fair treatment, which is essential in all tenure cases, does not call for positive decisions in close calls. He said that personally he would ask whether a new faculty member will be better than the average faculty member already in the department. Professor Weineck acknowledged that academic performance was one key metric, but that atmosphere, collegiality, and absence of fear were also important considerations.

7. Professor Smith asked what the president would do about someone with tenure who has been productive but then "hits a brick wall." He asked whether loss of a named chair, reduction in salary, or increased teaching load constitutes demotion. The president responded that Smith had raised a tough issue. He said that if research has faltered, asking for more teaching is OK, unless they are not doing a good job with their teaching.

8. Professor Ziff said that he canvassed junior faculty in his department and they reported that their major concern was support for graduate students. The president acknowledged that it was difficult to raise money for graduate students compared to undergraduate education and medicine. He said that a finite amount of money is available to the institution, and that the academic community itself has to decide how that money should be apportioned among students, faculty, and facilities.

The guest left the meeting at 4:07 P.M.

SENATE ASSEMBLY MEETING AGENDA

SACUA approved distributed item 5 as a draft agenda for the Senate Assembly meeting.

Professor Holland moved that the Senate Assembly be given a copy of the current confidentiality agreement regarding the Advisory Board on Intercollegiate Athletics (Weineck seconded).

Vote on the Active Motion:

Number approving: 6

Number disapproving: 2

STATUS REPORTS

Model and Unit Grievance Procedures-
No new developments.

Office of Institutional Equity Procedures-
No new developments.

Ongoing grievances and Faculty Hearing Committee inquiries-
Deferred to executive session.

Fitness for Duty and Professional Standards for Faculty SPGs and Tenure-
No new developments.

Unit deviations from University-wide policies and procedures-
No new developments.

Total Compensation Propriety and Transparency-
No new developments.

Administrative Services and IT Rationalization, Implementation and Oversight
No new developments.

Senate Rules Amendments
No new developments.

ABIA Confidentiality Agreement-
No new developments.

SACUA COMMITTEE LIAISON UPDATES

Tenure (Masten)- See distributed item 7. The tenure committee has agreed to investigate and advise SACUA about situations that could lead to demotion or dismissal of tenured faculty.

GCAC (Oey)- A special meeting has been called to discuss sexual assault policy

RPC (Ziff)- The committee discussed of computing on campus as well as patents.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no other unfinished business.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The meeting entered executive session at 4:45 P.M. Discussion topics included ongoing grievances, and a status report from the Faculty Hearing Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John T. Lehman
Interim 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."

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