Student Relations Advisory Committee

January 18, 2001

Members in Attendance:

Alphonse Burdi, Donald Heller, Robert Simpson, Margaret Terpenning, Gary Faerber, Karen Reiman-Sendi, Colin Heitzmann, Melissa Mercer, Richard Mayk, Frank Cianciola, Simone H. Taylor

Members not in Attendance:

Bruce Karnopp, Martin Gold, Teshome Wagaw, Nichole Pinkard, Taryn O'Leary, and Royster Harper

Guests:

William Zeller, David Shoem, and Sandy Gregormen

Meeting called to order at 12:05 by Chair Al Burdi.

Presentation by David Shoem: Committee provided with Michigan Community Scholars Program handout.

David Shoem provided the committee with information on the Michigan Community Scholars Program. The program is two years old and pulls together several important undergraduate initiatives: 1.) Community service learning, 2.) Student leadership, 3.) Diversity, and 4.) The living learning initiative. The faculty of this program teach in the residence halls and are important part of the student's lives. Students in the program are required to attend office hours during the first month of school. The course work of this program represents diversity as it employs subject matter from not only LS&A, but also the School of Education, School of Natural Resources, the Music School among several others.

Faculty response to the program has been good, as the classes taught within the program count as part of that faculty member's regular course load.

Session opened to questions for Mr. Shoem.

Gary Faerber wondered what the target number of students in the program was, as well as if future growth in the program will be in non LS&A students. Shoem informed SRAC
that the program has about 200 students in it, and that this is an issue for the future of the program. On what scale, large or small, can this program function and still be affected?

This program is primarily a first year program, although about 25 sophomores did return this year to assist the freshman in the program as peer advisors. The program is aimed at creating leaders, and the students participating in it are responding to a drop off in involvement in civic society at the collegiate level. Al Burdi suggested that this program was a good way for such a large university to have a smaller atmosphere for those students interested.

Presentation by Sandy Gregormen: UROP

The Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program has both residential and non-residential components. The program began in 1988 as a way of attracting minority students. UROP is a good way to integrate research and teaching. Currently the program has between 800 and 850 students and around 600 faculty sponsors. The majority of the research being done is in the sciences, but the program is much broader than that. UROP has tried to create community in two ways: 1.) Through the use of peer advisors (typically juniors and seniors) who help counsel the younger students, and 2.) Research peer groups. Research peer groups are groups of students that meet with the faculty they are assigned. Faculty speak with the students about the expectation and goals for the program and the students. The students speak on similar issues. The program has attracted a diverse array of faculty, and participation numbers are particularly high among women faculty and faculty of color. Engineering was recently added to the program and is currently becoming an integral part of UROP.

The Residential Component of UROP includes around 130 students who live together in Mosher-Jordan Residence Hall.

Committee session opened to questions for Ms. Gregormen.

Chair Burdi inquired what effect the Life Sciences Initiative will have on UROP. Ms. Gregormen said the LSI would create a unique opportunity to enhance the program through more interdisciplinary cooperation between students and faculty.

Presentation by Mr. William Zeller: Mr. Zeller distributed several articles about the lay our and architectural planning of US high schools and colleges.

There is discussion about a new residence hall on campus, as well as discussion regarding a major renovation procedure of all existing residence halls. The residences halls were all built within a fifty year period, between 1918 and 1968, and no new residence halls have been built since. Residence halls should be designed to merge outside class and inside class components of education, and the current residence halls do not do this.

The intention is to bring together the campus to build a type of learning center, a building that would facilitate real living and learning initiatives. Many other institutions are
addressing these redesign issues. In terms of faculty, the goal would be to create a place that would easily facilitate interaction with the students. Such design elements could include informal gathering spaces and "pods" designed for particular activities.

Donald Heller wondered about faculty living in residence halls, would this be a part of the new residence hall? Mr. Zeller said that faculty living in the new residence hall would certainly be part of the conversation in constructing this new facility. Robert Simpson wondered if the notion is to construct this new building with respect to the existing buildings. Mr. Zeller informed the committee that the university is going through a master planning effort, and that the location of any new residence hall must be very carefully thought out. A concern was also raised about how to attract more senior undergraduate students to move back into the residence halls. Mr. Zeller explained that upper level students experience and lifestyle change and want to have more privacy.

Perhaps the new residence hall could accommodate this type of lifestyle.

Report from the OVPSA: Frank Cianciola

Mr. Cianciola, in Royster Harper's absence, informed SRAC that a decision had been made about the Affirmative Action lawsuit (UG) and that there is a general assumption that this decision will be appealed. The Law School lawsuit is currently under litigation, and President Bollinger is set to testify. Bollinger was the Dean of Admissions at the law school at the time in question.

The university just signed a new athletic contract with Nike. There was some concern among a student group about worker's rights under this new contract. There are provisions in the contract that facilitate the protection of worker's rights.

Agenda for Future Meetings: Chair Al Burdi

A very important issue for SRAC right now is the code. It is important for SRAC to recall what was done and work out a process for code changes. Simone H Taylor informed that there should be an opportunity for SRAC to discuss the code as a group, and that the Office of Student Conflict Resolution will provide some help on this issue. Al Burdi suggested that SRAC have some of the review materials, so they can be aware of the revisions process. This would be essential in making sure that a good recommendation for a revision to the code is not discarded.

Next Meeting February 16, 2001.

Meeting Called to close at 12:35 by Chair Al Burdi.