Student Relations Advisory Committee

October 15, 1998 Meeting

Attendance:

Naoko Akiya, Alphonse Burdi (chair), Frank Cianciola, Martin Gold, Colin Heitzmann, Donald Heller, Julia Klein, Matt Lafferty, Wei Chih Dave Lu, Susan Pritzel, Royster Harper, Simone H. Taylor, Margaret Terpenning, Teshome Wagaw, and Grace Wu (staff).

I. Welcome and Introductions

Professor Burdi opened the meeting by welcoming the Committee members who then introduced themselves. He expressed great satisfaction and value that SACUA has appointed a committee that appears as representative of the University community.

II. Committee missions and procedures

The Chair briefly reviewed the general missions of SRAC as articulated by SACUA and the Senate Assembly. It was emphasized that SRAC is chiefly responsive and advisory to the Vice-President of Student Affairs, SACUA and the Senate Assembly. The Chair confirmed that committee members saw Friday (Noon to 1:30 pm) as being the most workable time for our monthly meetings. The committee reacted favorably to Professor Gold's suggestion that it may be effective for subcommittees or work groups of SRAC to meet at times between our monthly meetings.

In terms of committee work, both Vice-President Harper and Professor Burdi emphasized that every effort will be made to inform and prepare the committee prior to our meetings so that SRAC members will see great worthiness in actively and regularly participating in committee activities. Such preparations include bringing to SRAC issues of substance and import, addressing issues in a timely matter, and the provision of appropriate backgrounding and information.

III. Brief Review of 1998-1999 SRAC Activities

The Chair reported that the 1998-99 year was especially productive for SRAC as the committee addressed matters dealing, as examples, with the "Living-Learning" initiatives, alcohol and substance abuse issues, and the "Code of Student Conduct". Much of this productivity seemed related to including on the agenda for each month
matters framed as "update/review" items, and "in-depth" items. The former usually included inviting resource persons (closest to the action) to meet with the committee. The latter called for more focused discussion among SRAC members often leading to some consensus advisory statement to either the Vice-President for Student Affairs and/or SACUA. The current SRAC viewed this approach as being workable for the coming year.

The committee also asked that as much feedback be given to SRAC from those offices and programs to which SRAC offered its advice. Committee members saw great value for SRAC to even meet with other Senate Assembly committees addressing common issues.

IV. Comments from Interim Vice-President Royster Harper

The Vice-President also extended her welcome to the committee emphasizing the very important role that SRAC has in advising her office on matters dealing both with the broad and specific issues of student life. Given this important role, she (as mentioned above) sees it as crucial to fully inform SRAC (as prospectively as possible) so that the committee is positioned to offer her its input. She distributed to the committee a descriptive writeup on the Division of Student Affairs (DSA).

In summary that writeup showed that the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) was created for and is dedicated to providing support to the academic mission of the University of Michigan. It was focused on both student learning as well as, if not as important, the environment in which all of our students can enjoy a successful living environment. Thus, she added, our mission is to create and sustain an environment where students can become what they want and achieve their goals at the University. The primary purpose of the Division is to provide programs, services, facilities and support for all students. Collegial principles govern DSA work and approaches to it, including the way we work with and support our colleagues and those we serve. In fulfilling the DSA mission, her office and programs are guided by the student development theory, and are built upon the very important infrastructure or principles of integrity, honesty and trust.

V. Charting the Course for SRAC in 1999-2000 Year

Professor Burdi invited SRAC members to recommend topics for future SRAC agenda. He noted that such recommendations would be welcomed as soon as possible after the October meeting, or at any other times of the year. Those recommendations should be sent to the Chair or Grace Wu for compilation.

SRAC members suggested a number of topics for future agenda. These included (1) emerging needs for service programming for international/graduate students and their families; (2) an update on the purposes and educational/life values of Greek Life on our campus; (3) student orientation programs; and (4) research in Office of VPSA.
A fifth, and most notable if not most timely suggestion, pointed to the explicit planning and plans for student involvement in the campus' new "Life Sciences Institute". Committee member Frank Cianciola provided an informative summary (or "snapshot") of this matter of student (undergraduate, graduate, professional) involvement in the LSI. Given the apparently wide philosophic support and financial support for this LSI, the SRAC committee assigned notable importance to the explicit roles and benefits of students in the LSI, and wished to pursue this as an agenda item in the very near future.

VI. Discussion/Action Items

• Search Committee: Director, Office of Student Conflict Resolution The Committee heard that it was invited by the OSCR Search group to identify a SRAC member for the search activities. After some discussion of schedules and levels of involvement, Susan Pritzel agreed to have her name sent to the OSCR search committee. The Chair thanked Professor Pritzel for her willingness to serve on the search, and he indicated her name would be transmitted within the following week.

• Search Committee: Vice-President for Student Affairs. Professor Burdi reported that he has communicated to SACUA his view that a faculty member of SRAC be considered and named to this important search committee. The rationale for this is that SRAC has worked in close and productive partnership with the VPSA over the years, and should have a formal role on the search. SACUA agreed and has forwarded this request to the administration. Moreover, SRAC, in supporting Burdi's action, so it as appropriate that the current Chair of SRAC be that person on the search committee.

• SRAC role in "Code" amendment process. At the Chair's request, Simone H. Taylor led the discussion on this new regentally assigned (in April 1999) role and responsibility of SRAC in the "Code" amendment process. A preliminary draft of a code amendment process produced by the Office of Student Conflict Resolution staff was distributed for discussion purposes only at that time. Prior to some extensive discussion of the preliminary model, Professor Taylor briefly reviewed for both new and returning SRAC members that the "Code" was reviewed at the institutional level in 1998-99. One outcome of that review assigned the responsibility for amending the "Code" (from the Regents) to the President. SRAC was assigned a direct and key advisory role to the president on "Code" amendment proposals.

Discussion then focused on the character and format of a "Code" amendment process which SRAC would use in providing timely and informative advice to the president. SRAC's plan or procedures for carrying out its role and responsibility in the code amendment process will be discussed further at its next meeting on November 19, 1999.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting formally closed at 1:35 p.m. with a reminder that the next SRAC meeting will be on Friday, November 19, 1999.