Student Relations Committee  
Draft Minutes  
November 14, 1997

I. CALL TO ORDER/ATTENDANCE
PRESENT: Alphonse Burdi, Poonam Desai, Damon Fairfield, Martin Gold, Maureen Hartford, Philip Meyers, Gerhard Olving (Chair), Susan Pritzel, Brett Schulman, Ann Sprunger, John Su, Phyllis Valentine
ABSENT: Robert Greebel, Royster Harper, Bruce Karnopp, Barbara MacAdam, Micheal Nagrant, David Rosen, Leigh Woods
GUESTS: Deb Moriarty, Asst. to the Vice President for Student Affairs; Frank Cianciola, Associate Dean of Students

Chair Olving called the meeting to order at 12:17pm.
MSA representatives, Poonam Desai and Brett Schulman were introduced to the committee as new members.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Minutes from the May 2, 1997 meeting were approved with no changes. Minutes from the October 10, 1997 meeting were approved with a small correction.

III. DISTRIBUTED MATERIALS
A Michigan Leadership Initiatives packet was distributed as part of a leadership presentation by Deb Moriarty and Frank Cianciola.

IV. STUDENT GOVERNANCE
A presentation by MSA President Micheal Nagrant concerning student governance was postponed until the December meeting. Maureen Hartford updated the committee about a proposal from Rackham to form a separate governing structure for graduate students. This idea is still being researched and they are looking to other universities for models of this type of governing system. Discussion concerning these events was also postponed until Nagrant’s presentation at the next meeting.

Martin Gold proposed to reinstate a student governance subcommittee which would help to involve students and get student feedback about the governing structures and groups. Alphonse Burdi volunteered to be on this subcommittee, Gold asked Poonam Desai and Brett Schulman to be student representatives on this committee.

V. STUDENT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES
Deb Moriarty and Frank Cianciola gave a presentation about Michigan Leadership Initiatives, a leadership opportunity program involving students and faculty. MLI offers different leadership programs geared to help students develop all types of leadership roles and skills. MLI began these programs in 1992 and since have expanded their range of participants, diversity of programs and involvement in the community.
MLI’s vision is one of leadership education being woven but not glued into a students way of thinking. They teach the importance of teams, community and collaborative efforts in order to promote more active classroom learning. Another goal of this leadership education is to get students to do a better job of making connections both in their community and in the corporate world.

Gold asked about what types of students enrolled in these programs and also if the graduates of these programs had demonstrated their learned skills. Moriarty explained that these programs are open to all students, and generally attract students who are already involved in leadership-type activities. These programs build on the students’ existing talents. Students are also introduced to a diverse network of corporate and community sponsors. Maureen Hartford asked whether those sponsors would be interested in providing funding and/or support to these students or other leadership programs.

Faculty involvement in these programs is scarce. Maureen Hartford talked about other engineering schools with similar leadership programs and their results. Schools whose faculty were very involved in these programs experienced very powerful results for both faculty members and students. Still, it is difficult to get faculty members involved in these programs. Many committee members expressed interest in the idea of a similar leadership program designed for faculty, perhaps to heighten faculty interest in these student opportunities as well as an educational opportunity for faculty.

MLI’s 2017 program, a summer internship program designed for experienced student leaders has been both commended and questioned for its sponsorships. Student participants in this program are introduced to a network of corporate sponsors and other leadership opportunities. This program has also been criticized because it is a both a paid internship and a university program. Despite these arguments, the 2017 program and other MLI programs have been very well received by students and their families. Burdi suggested that MLI and its programs be more widely showcased to current and future students so as to spark more students’ interest and have the opportunity to educate more future leaders.

The discussion turned to specific leadership activities within the University, specifically MSA officers. Gold commented that the President of MSA has many responsibilities outside of his leadership role that he is perhaps inhibited to perform his job as President. Gold suggested creating a contract with students such that the MSA President would be enrolled for five years instead of the traditional four, giving him the opportunity to devote more time to his role as President. Gold also proposed that the University subsidize this extra year. Maureen Hartford explained that this option was proposed and rejected by MSA last year, but could perhaps be brought up again. John Su was opposed to this five year option because it contradicts MLI’s goals to encourage leadership in all levels, not just the apex of leaders. He felt that if the University subsidized MSA’s President, students would be getting the wrong message, one of University control as well as encouragement of only certain leadership roles. Frank Ciacciola elaborated on this
proposal, citing the University of Western Ontario as a model school for five year student government terms. He also warned everyone of the dangers of monotony and lack of change in student government. Students are at a developmental stage and the turnover of student leaders is an important aspect of their college careers. Cianciola also reminded us that MLI is a University sponsored program and any type of student subsidization could be viewed as inappropriate influence on student opinions.

Conversely, many committee members felt there should be a way for more students to participate in these programs and leadership roles without having to worry about financial constraints. A concern was that our student leaders mainly come from the "upper crust" of our community, meaning they do not have to work to support their education and therefore have enough time to take on a hefty leadership role. Along similar lines, the possibility of students receiving course credit for their efforts in organizations such as MSA or The Michigan Daily was discussed. Many committee members felt that those students who devote their efforts wholeheartedly to these types of organizations deserve academic credit for their efforts.

VI. THE REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE OF CAMPUS SAFETY AND SECURITY
This report, also known as The Boylan Report, was distributed to committee members FYI. The report must also be distributed to students.

VII. THE PROPOSAL TO BAN ALCOHOL IN FRATERNITY RESIDENCES
Maureen Hartford iterated that the alcohol issue is continuously under discussion, the health concerns being an important aspect of late. Martin Gold commented that fraternities are not the only places where students are abusing alcohol. He suggested instating some type of ordinance or statement that makes students responsible for people drinking on their premises. Concern was raised about how this could be enforced. Hartford said that a rule like this would most likely just make students more aware of their drinking habits.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT.
The meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.