

Minutes 3 December 2018  
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA)  
Monday, December 3, 2018 3:15 pm  
4006 Fleming Administration Building  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1340

Present: Atzmon, Beatty, Carlos, Conway (Bluejeans), Lippert, Malek, Marsh (chair), Schultz, Spencer, Potter, Schneider, Snyder

Absent: none

Guests: President Schlissel, Erika Hrabec; Robert Sellers, Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer

3:15: Call to Order/ Agenda Approval

The Agenda was approved. The Minutes for November 12 were approved.

3:18: Discussion on Student Resolution on Climate Change

Chair Marsh introduced the Resolution in Support of the University of Michigan Achieving Carbon Neutrality in support of CSG's resolution on Carbon Neutrality (<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1W5mwgvljRSPyanevDcXmvTBrtTTyoKgu>):

SACUA joins with the broader University community in recognizing the existential threat posed by climate change and global warming, which is driven by the continuing increase in greenhouse gases generated from burning fossil fuels. SACUA therefore supports the goals of the resolution recently passed by Central Student Government: *In support of carbon neutrality at the University of Michigan by 2035*. SACUA considers that the University of Michigan is uniquely positioned to play a leading role in the challenge of combating global greenhouse gas emissions and calls on the University to redouble its efforts to reduce its carbon footprint and achieve carbon neutrality at the earliest possible date.

The resolution was passed with one abstention.

3:21: Davis, Markert, Nickerson Academic Freedom Lecture (DMN)

Professor Beatty proposed the appointment of a Senate Assembly standing committee to select the speaker for the DMN lecture (logistics would continue to be handled by the Faculty Senate Office). Professor Atzmon suggested that members be appointed for terms longer than the standard three-year term for a Senate Assembly committee. By taking responsibility, through this committee, for the selection of a lecturer, the current SACUA will be making a commitment for future SACUAs and there has been a perception on the part of the Academic Freedom Lecture Fund (AFLF) that SACUA commitment to the lecture has been inconsistent. Professor Beatty

said the creation of the committee will convey SACUA's high level of commitment to the DMN lecture to AFLF. Professor Carlos suggested that the membership of the committee be staggered to provide continuity.

3:30 Guest President Schlissel

President Schlissel said that he is looking forward to his appearance with the faculty as a whole next week, he has pushed out through messages to department chairs to enhance attendance. He plans to lay out a high-level vision for the direction of the University before taking questions from Senate Assembly members. He hopes that SACUA members will offer questions to break the ice.

Professor Conway asked about the agenda at the forthcoming Regents' meeting, which will be the last for two long-serving regents. President Schlissel replied that the meeting consists of both an informal and a formal (public) session ([http://www.regents.umich.edu/meeProvostcommittee student faculty relationstings/12-18/index.html](http://www.regents.umich.edu/meeProvostcommittee%20student%20faculty%20relationstings/12-18/index.html)). Informal session and that topics will include discussion of the University's sexual misconduct policy, specifically examining reporting support for victims, and compliance with the ruling by the US 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals which held that when credibility is at issue in student sexual misconduct cases, a public university must give the accused student an in-person hearing with the opportunity for the accused student or their adviser to cross-examine the accuser and witnesses (<https://record.umich.edu/articles/student-sexual-misconduct-policy-include-person-hearing>). Another issue that will be discussed is the establishment of a committee by the Provost to look at faculty student-relationships. There will also be discussion of facilities projects and issues connected with the Health System issues (especially those connected with patient wait time). It will be the last meeting for Vice President of Development, Jerry May, who will present in the public session on the results of the Victors for Michigan campaign. There will be comments from community members on the subject of global climate change and letters of recommendation (in particular the question of whether or not the latter is an academic freedom issue).

Professor Schultz asked how the University helps new regents prepare for their service on the Board of Regents. President Schlissel said that the 25% board turnover represented the loss of a great deal of experience, and that there will be events to thank the outgoing regents. Vice President Sally Churchill's office has been running an "onboarding process" to help new regents, who are full of enthusiasm and recognize they have a lot to learn, gain a picture of the institution as a whole and to meet with executive officers. He said the new regents should also meet with SACUA.

Professor Lippert expressed the view that there was insufficient discussion of the guidance provided by the Regents' Bylaws with respect to the working of shared governance. She expressed the hope that the new regents will embrace the spirit of the Bylaws. President Schlissel said that the regents agree that the Bylaws are empowering of good leadership, and that he has the support in moving forward to strengthen faculty governance on all campuses.

Professor Schultz noted that Provost Philbert had asked SACUA for advice on the membership of a new committee that will discuss student-faculty relationships, said that it would strengthen the institutions of faculty governance if more people who are active in those institutions are included on such ad-hoc committees. We would like more faculty governance membership on these committees. The Provost did ask faculty governance for advice about membership. President Schlissel said he thought it 100% appropriate to ask for faculty governance input given that recommendations from the committee will be the basis of a campus-wide discussion in which SACUA will be included.

Professor Beatty observed that this is the point in the academic year during which Promotion and Tenure cases are decided and UM-Dearborn's use of the same format and wording

for letters sent to external evaluators as that employed on the Ann Arbor campus was challenging because letter writers from universities with the highest level of research activity will often respond to the question “would this person get tenure at your institution” in a negative way. She also noted that it can be difficult to get people to engage in the “public service” of letter writing because it is time consuming and invisible work. President Schlissel observed that all members of the academy have depended on letter writers to advance their careers and have a moral obligation to provide such letters. He is sympathetic with the issue concerning the question “would this person get tenure on your campus” and will discuss rewording the letter used for the branch campuses. While there is an expectation that people getting tenure at UM-Dearborn and UM-Flint will meet high standards, faculty members on those campuses are asked to do different things than people working on the Ann Arbor campus. In his view, people should be compared to people with similar responsibilities. He invited SACUA members to send him a different version of that question. Professor Conway asked if the question is needed at the Ann Arbor campus. President Schlissel replied that he finds the question valuable because of the different levels at which reviews are carried out. The expert level review is at the department level, but when he is asked to sign off on a lateral hire he finds it helpful to get context for the appointment from external sources. He regards a negative response to that question as cautionary, and the external letters give him a sense of the strength of departments on campuses. He added that, as he reads the complete appointment and promotion files, he is comfortable with comparing the University’s faculty here with that at any university in the country and has observed that the external evaluations almost always agree with the internal review.

Professor Lippert said that she feels that a need for more training on regional campuses as not all faculty are trained on how to evaluate letters from external reviewers. President Schlissel agreed that this is a fair point.

Chair Marsh agreed that the questions are critically important, noting that he has seen promotion cases dependent upon the way questions have been worded. President Schlissel said he is disturbed that department tenure and promotion votes are almost always reported as unanimous, perhaps reflecting a mistaken belief that unanimity is important for the success of the case. Chair Marsh noted that there can be a huge amplification of individual votes in cases where certain faculty are thought to have particular expertise; if an expert faculty member expresses highly favorable or unfavorable views, it can sway others’ votes. President Schlissel noted that mentoring is strong, and that faculty members who are unlikely to get tenure often get counselled out before the tenure process begins, with the result that it is unusual for a case to be turned down.

Chair Marsh asked about the timeline for the external report on the Office of Institutional Equity. President Schlissel replied that the public document will be available in the new year, that the intended result of this review is to make policies more consistent, and for the practices based on those policies to be clear and consistent. He expects to implement the recommendations from the outside group that make sense within the University context.

4:00 Robert Sellers, Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer

Chair Marsh told CDO Sellers that SACUA is interested in having a discussion with his office about initiatives connected with faculty governance. Professor Beatty drew attention to the Senate Assembly’s Committee for Inclusive University (CIU). Katrina Wade-Golden and Ellen Meader from the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) had joined a lightly attended CIU meeting on November 28, but the CIU has been adrift because it lacks a direct link to the DEI office. And, in the 2017/18 academic year, committee members had been uncertain of their function and were therefore discouraged. Professor Beatty asked if the committee should be disbanded because CDO Sellers has his own advisory committee. CDO Sellers said there is a role for CIU in representing faculty governance, and, through it, the faculty perspective on where

the university should be with respect to DEI. He does not see administrative functions and faculty interests in DEI as being completely different. He suggested the CIU look for areas that are of particular interest to faculty. Professor Beatty noted that the CIU is multi-constituency body consisting of faculty, students and staff who have different interests. CDO Sellers suggested that the committee advise SACUA to ensure that DEI issues remain on SACUA agendas, adding that there is often a DEI component to issues with which SAUA deals. He said he would be happy to meet with the committee, which he feels should remain independent of his office.

Professor Beatty asked CDO Sellers about his expectations for his own advisory committee. CDO Sellers said his advisory committee provides him with frank feedback and advice, that his work in the Fleming Building has provided him with a different perspective from that which had in the past, but this change in perspective also means that he misses things. The advisory committee has also been engaged in developing statements around freedom of speech. The advisory committee worked with CIU on these statements, at which time CIU did not feel it had SACUA's support. CDO Sellers hopes SACUA will be informed by CIU when making policy decisions. Beatty will check availability so CDO Sellers can meet with the CIU.

Professor Lippert said that while required sexual harassment training will be coming for faculty on all three campuses and The Committee on Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence (STRIDE) has developed procedures for hiring, she is concerned that training for faculty who make decisions about other faculty (e.g., members of executive committees or those doing evaluations within departments) is insufficiently robust. She asked if there are resources in use at Ann Arbor that could be extended to other campuses. CDO Sellers said he hopes to provide more professional development opportunities for faculty leaders, but that presently the main form of faculty development comes through STRIDE which does have some components that are relevant to promotion and tenure (e.g., unconscious bias and structural inequality). He is looking to develop leadership opportunities for faculty with interests in promoting the goals of diversity, equity and inclusion, and in supporting fellowship opportunities in partnership with the African Heritage and Humanities Initiative (AHHI) (<https://ii.umich.edu/asc/ahi.html>). There were six fellows in each of the first two years. For 2018/19 the number has been increased to a dozen by partnering with schools and colleges. While providing some leadership efforts with program chairs, he is looking to develop a core group of faculty members who will become faculty leaders and administrators. To this end he is convening a group to look at expanding STRIDE by focusing on topics such as the problematic effect of a social scientist using short cuts that instantiate serious differences (e.g. using citation indices as if they are objective when most innovative breakthroughs will not initially be published in the top journals because those journals tend to be more conservative), or in requiring evaluation letters from the top institutions, even if top institutions tend to be more conservative and the best person in a field might be at an institution that is not seen as a peer institution.

CDO Sellers said that his office has been funding the University's membership in the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity for the past 4 years (<https://odei.umich.edu/national-center-for-faculty-dev-and-diversity/>), which he regards as a helpful resource. He is looking to partner with Flint and Dearborn to subsidize their memberships. This is a web-based service.

Professor Carlos asked what the current metrics are for evaluating the success of DEI initiatives. CDO Sellers said he is looking at multi-level and multi-phase metrics. For faculty the largest program is the LSA Collegiate Fellows Program (50 faculty lines over a five-year period) (<https://lsa.umich.edu/lsa/about/diversity--equity-and-inclusion/lsa-collegiate-postdoctoral-fellowship-program.html>). About half the appointments will be immediately to tenure track positions, the other half are to two-year post-doctoral positions (backed up by guaranteed tenure track positions). His office is tracking the numbers of offers made and accepted as well as

seeking information about experiences on campus, the impact of those programs, as well as overall hiring and promotion, and campus climate. His office is seeking data with respect to DEI related scholarship, and data about ratings of DEI items in classroom evaluations.

Professor Carlos asked what success will look like given the many data points that are being collected. CDO Sellers said he does not have a top one or two indicators because he is interested in changing culture generally, and that DEI is an enduring quality of every aspect of the University. He is happy everyone throughout the university community knows what the acronym DEI stands for, that there are processes in place relating to diversity. He contrasted the present situation with that three years ago when discussions were variable but tending towards the generic; now units have to talk about progress towards specific DEI goals. The conversation used to be limited to the section with his questions, now DEI is throughout their plans.

4:30: Executive Session

[grievance]

[Appointment of Faculty Review Committee Conway, Malek, Atzmon]

4:55 Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,  
David S. Potter  
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."