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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs

6048 Fleming Administration Building
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1340
Phone: (734) 764-0303
Fax: (734) 764-6564

Internet Address: <http://www.umich.edu/~sacua/>

Approved minutes: <http://www.umich.edu/~sacua/sacmin/sacuaminutes.html>

MINUTES OF THE SACUA MEETING OF 6 APRIL 2009

Present: Fraser, Frier, Navvab, Potter (chair), Riles, Stark, Thouless; Lehman; Carr, Schneider

Absent: Frost, Poe

Guests: President Coleman, *Daily* reporter, D. Gershman (*Ann Arbor News*), K. Brown (*University Record*), M.J. Frank (UM News and Information), E. Rothman, M. Gyetko (Medical School), N. W. Lukacs (Medical School)

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Proposed agenda
2. Draft minutes of 30 March 2009
3. ["Competition for retiree health benefits," by Scott Jaschik, *Inside Higher Education*, 1 April 2009](#)
4. University of Michigan Medical School profile: Margaret Gyetko, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs
5. University of Michigan Medical School profile: Nicholas W. Lukacs, Assistant Dean for Research Faculty
6. UMMS concerns regarding changes to the Research Track
7. Senate Assembly draft agenda
8. Distinguished Faculty Governance Award Nominations 2007, 2008, 2009
9. The Distinguished Faculty Governance Award
10. Letter to D. Potter from C. Cohen, dated 13 February 2009, regarding Distinguished Faculty Governance Award
11. Three Year Listing of Nominees: Regents' Award for Distinguished Public Service 2007, 2008, 2009
12. Regents' Award for Distinguished Public Service

Chair Potter convened the meeting at 3:00 P.M.

VISIT OF PRESIDENT COLEMAN

The guest arrived at 3:00 P.M.

State Budget-

The situation remains fluid at the state level, and there is no strong indication of how budget matters will resolve. The U-M is continuing to work through the Presidents' Council, and has advocated strongly that the universities be spared from further cuts.

Unit Budgets-

The units are working with the provost's office to identify additional savings. The administration still anticipates bringing its budget recommendations to the Regents in June. Building projects are still on target. The U-M maintains good liquidity of its assets.

Student Applications-

Applications at undergraduate and graduate levels are strong this year on all campuses. However, there is increasing need for financial aid. The mix of in-state and out-of-state applicants is similar to past years, but the yield is unknown at this time.

Fundraising-

Fundraising has been successful, and that adds to the fiscal security of the university. Management of the funds has been conservative, but not too conservative, with the result that the U-M avoided some of the pitfalls that beset other universities.

IT operations-

A decision has been made to merge the administrative and academic IT operations.

Michigan Press-

Changes are underway at the Press, and the president asked for input from SACUA. It appears that all existing contracts will be honored by the Press, but that some publication in the future might be entirely, or primarily in electronic form. Individuals responded that significant value is added to Press publications through the review and vetting process. SACUA members expressed concerns about the unsettled future of initiatives, and whether authors would wish to publish in an electronic format. Professor Frier raised the case of a distinguished lecture series at the Press, noting the importance in some areas of the continued use of traditional print format, pointing out that some lecturers might be unwilling to work with the press without traditional print format, and that there were very significant issues with permissions for photographs from museum collections for web publication (and that the series as a whole had a contract). Chair Potter pointed out that some hearsay on campus about how well books sell was inaccurate and that the Press had published books that sold very well by Michigan faculty, and that acquisitions editors had been put under significant pressure to explain the changes to prospective authors. At a recent archaeology conference, he noted that some were interested in books that combined traditional print format with digital content and that these initiatives could prove very valuable in attracting authors.

Pfizer-

There have been no surprises so far. The president thinks this is an opportunity to make some careful strategic investments to advance the university.

NRC Ratings-

The long-awaited report about academic unit rankings seems highly contentious, and the algorithms used are not transparent. Release of the ratings has been delayed indefinitely.

The guest left the meeting at 3:30 P.M.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 30 March 2009 were approved.

SACUA CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR ELECTIONS

Chair Potter explained the election rules. Voting is by secret ballot, and winning candidates must garner a majority of votes cast. Proxy votes are not allowed. If no candidate achieves a majority on the first ballot, a runoff is held between the two candidates with the greatest pluralities. Election of chair is first, followed by election of vice-chair. The position of chair carries with it 50% release time or a negotiated supplement to salary. The position of vice-chair carries with it a \$5000 research supplement. The vice-chair also serves as the faculty grievance monitor. Regular members of SACUA will receive \$3000 research supplements starting this year.

The chair reported that Professor Poe has declined to stand for officer election. He said that the position of Professor Frost, also absent, was unknown. Professor Stark announced that he, like Poe, declined to stand for election. Dr. Fraser said that he was unwilling to stand for election to chair.

Blank slips of paper were distributed to SACUA members. Lehman and Schneider served as tellers.

Tellers' Report for Chair Election-

Professor Thouless won election to chair with 7 votes.

Blank slips of paper were again distributed to SACUA members. Lehman and Schneider again served as tellers.

Tellers' Report for Vice-Chair Election-

Dr. Fraser won election to vice chair with 5 votes.

VISIT OF MEDICAL SCHOOL DEANS GYETKO AND LUKACS

The guests arrived at 3:40 P.M. Associate Dean Gyetko called attention to distributed item 6 and said that the administration of the Medical School opposes the changes to research track appointments that have been proposed by the Vice President of Research. She said that the medical school eliminated the title of research scientist and has replaced it with research professor owing to the perception of federal agencies and referees that research scientists enjoy no institutional commitment.

Professor Thouless inquired whether assistant research professors are provided the time and money to write proposals, given that such activities may not be charged to research grant budgets. The associate dean responded that such would be an expectation, but she did not know if it was the practice in every laboratory. Chair Potter pointed out that in their written materials there was no statement about providing research faculty the time to write proposals. He asked whether it was the deans' expectation that such time and associated salary be provided. Gyetko replied "Yes." Chair Potter how much time that should be, according to best practices in the medical school. Gyetko replied "about five percent."

In response to a comment that all medical school faculty are comparable, Professor Thouless pointed out that the medical school would be under no obligation to hire in the research scientist track under the new rules. Assistant dean Lukacs replied that there are time in rank concerns. Professor Thouless said that the new rules propose an external review after 6 years. There are multiple outcomes possible: promotion, non-renewal, or status quo. Gyetko replied that many people will not be promotion-ready at that time, and that the medical school would therefore be forced to seek additional letters at expense of people's time, and it might be embarrassing to the institution to make these requests. She asked why it is bad for someone to stay an assistant professor in the research track indefinitely. She noted that the OVPR says that should not happen very often. Yet, she said, some people remain clinical assistant professors for life. Chair Potter asked whether assistant research professors were fully aware of their situation. He asked if they are assured that they will receive raises and periodic reviews. Lukacs replied sometimes not, but now the medical school has implemented a 3 year review. He said that in the research track there is a sense that reviews are all stick and no carrot. He said that they were soft money positions.

Professor Riles asked how salary costs were recaptured in the medical school. The associate dean said that it depends. Some cases are more clinically based, and some are in the instructional track. She said that typically 60% of salary is raised from grants.

In response to a comment by Prof. Gyetko that tenure-track faculty had eight years before review, compared to the proposed six for research faculty, Professor Thouless commented that a recent Senate Assembly study discovered that the median time to tenure in the medical school is about 5.6 years. Chair Potter added that the study revealed that the overwhelming number of reviews were performed in year 6 or before. Associate dean Gyetko said that it is more like 6.5 years. She said that research professors are expected to teach within the laboratory setting. Didactic teaching is concentrated in the first two years of the medical school curriculum, whereas teaching in the third and fourth years occurs in small groups. Chair Potter asked what proportion of tenure-track faculty are teaching in the lecture courses. Gyetko replied that it was hard to say. She said it was unusual for a faculty member to teach an entire course, She added that it is true that it can take more time to team teach than to teach a course on your own.

Professor Frier remarked that there is concern about exploitation of people who remain in an assistant position for long periods of time. The associate dean replied that her perception was that a research appointment is a faculty member. Professor Lehman recalled her original statement about use of the research professor title to counteract concerns that research scientists

lack institutional commitment, and he asked whether there was now more institutional commitment to research professors. The associate dean replied no, but that perception is important.

Chair Potter asked the assistant dean to describe the ideal working relationship between an assistant research professor and a tenure track faculty member. He responded that the relationship should be as colleagues, and in the best case there would be mentoring and collaboration, including collaboration on grants. Chair Potter asked if he would recommend that tenure track faculty treat an assistant research professor as a peer. Professor Thouless asked what would happen in the worst case scenario. Assistant dean Lukacs replied that they would intervene. Chair Potter pointed out that in exploitative interactions there is danger of careers being badly damaged. He asked what responsibility she recognizes and what steps she takes to prevent such damage. The associate dean replied that assistant research professors have the opportunity to raise concerns during their third year reviews. She added that unfortunately mentoring relationships can be exploitative.

Chair Potter asked the guests to articulate best practices for mitigating the exploitative nature of such relationships. Assistant dean Lukacs said that mentoring requires participation of both parties. Chair Potter asked whether there is a training program for mentors at the medical school. Lukacs replied that there are training sessions available on campus, and that he keeps books for mentors in his office.

Professor Rothman remarked that ignoring even rare events when an assistant wants to come up for promotion could create a steep administrative burden. He suggested that it could be helpful to have a third party who could mediate in these cases. Assistant dean Lukacs said that medical school administration has made some alternative proposals to the OVPR. He added that they are thinking about this in terms of the faculty members.

Professor Thouless remarked at how the medical school culture of billable hours permeates distributed item 6, particularly the suggestion that writing letters of review or evaluation should be billed at \$70 per hour. Gyetko replied that her office assessed the impact of reviewing junior faculty at the level of the medical school, and that money is tight. Professor Rothman suggested that there is a cost on the other side that has not been factored in. That is the cost that people will grieve because they have been ignored or mistreated. Chair Potter asked what the claimed incremental cost of \$450K for performing reviews represented in terms of the overall medical school budget. The associate dean replied that the administration conducts a faculty satisfaction survey every two years, and that everyone seems content with the status quo. Professor Riles asked how the survey was done. She replied that it was web-based, but anonymous.

Professor Potter asked whether a one-year delay in implementation would help. Associate dean Gyetko responded that it would certainly spread things out and would be helpful.

The guests left the meeting at 4:25 P.M.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

RECREATIONAL SPORTS REPORT

Professor Stark has drafted a response. SACUA discussed the report and Professor Stark's response, and approved a modified version of the text. It would be useful if a list of affiliated exercise facilities was better publicized.

SENATE ASSEMBLY AGENDA

The proposed agenda was modified to include a report from AAAC from 4:30 to 4:45. The final remarks of the Assembly chair will follow.

FACULTY AWARDS

Award nominations will be discussed in executive session at a future meeting. Nominations will be solicited from chairs and assembly members.

LIAISON REPORTS

Secretary Advisory-

Dr. Fraser reported that the medical center maintains its own security force that reports to a different authority than the campus police.

Residency Status-

Chair Potter said that the issue of in-state residency seems to be relatively easy to resolve. The chair has been in discussion with Lester Monts about the subject.

CLASSROOM LOCKS

Professor Riles asked SACUA members to share their views on the subject of lockable doors to classrooms. He said that any solution will have to pass the fire code. Professor Thouless said that all local faculty should have keys to the classrooms. SACUA expressed support for Riles to continue to pursue the matter with the Plant Department.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The meeting entered executive session at 4:45 P.M. Discussion included (1) nominations for faculty awards, (2) information provided by an aggrieved faculty member, and (3) an appeal from a faculty member in a tenure case.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John Lehman
Senate Secretary

University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 5.02:
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In each school, college, or degree granting division of the University, including those at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and at the University of Michigan-Flint, the governing faculty shall be in charge of the affairs of the school, college, or division, except as delegated to the executive committee, if any, and except that in the School of Graduate Studies the governing board shall be the executive board, and in the Medical School shall be the executive faculty.
