

Minutes of 28 April 2008
Circulated 28 April 2008
Approved 19 May 2008

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
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MINUTES OF THE SACUA MEETING OF 28 APRIL 2008

Present: Friedman, Frier, Potter, Riles, Smith (chair), Stark, Thouless; Lehman; Carr, Schneider

Absent: Fraser

Guests: Provost T. Sullivan, K. Gibbons (provost office), K. Bacon (University Record), G. Poe

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

1. Draft agenda
2. Draft minutes of the SACUA meeting of 21 April 2008
3. Memorandum of Understanding, dated 18 April 2008, regarding revision of Davis, Markert, Nickerson Visiting Professorship on Academic and Intellectual Freedom
4. The Distinguished Faculty Governance Award, dated 9 April 2008
5. Draft Regents' Communication, May 2008
6. University of Michigan AAUP Annual Newsletter, April 2008

Chair Smith convened the meeting at 3:03 P.M. The proposed agenda was approved.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 21 April 2008 were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Cary Nelson, President of AAUP, will address the annual meeting of the U-M Ann Arbor chapter on 30 April at noon.
2. SACUA's annual dinner with the executive officers will occur on 5 May.
3. A memorandum of understanding has been signed regarding the Davis, Market, Nickerson visiting professor (distributed item 3). The understanding is that the visiting professor is to be chosen by the same committee that chooses the annual lecturer and that it is possible to have a lecturer without having a visiting professor.
4. Professors Smith and Thouless met with the provost last week and discussed the research faculty tracks. The OVPR is formulating a proposal to revise the research tracks, and the proposal will be transmitted to SACUA soon.

LIAISON REPORTS

Student Relations-

Professor Potter submitted the following report from SRAC:

PRIORITY REGISTRATION

Regarding the issue of priority registration, we will be working with student government to accommodate students who travel on University business and have class conflicts. This includes athletes, music and theater students.

SINGLE PARENT STUDENT PANEL

Melaku explained that Northwood is a very diverse community including undergraduate and graduate students as well as families. There is a group called Parents Without Partners forming. Melaku then introduced Stephanie Oswald and Marty Allen to the committee as two representatives of Parents Without Partners.

Stephanie noted the problems that single parents, and parents in general, have as students?most notably childcare. For many single parents, the idea of even attending college does not seem like an option. Actively recruiting and encouraging student-parents would be extremely encouraging. Also, the isolation and lack of support systems is extremely challenging, so having a section of student-housing specifically for single parents would be helpful for creating a new support system among them. This would help single-parents support each other and share knowledge and resources. It would also be worthwhile to have someone in the University know when single-parents are coming to the University so that information about available resources could then be given to them. Childcare subsidies, WIC etc. are all things that one doesn't necessarily know about. A practical measure the University could take towards making things easier on student-parents is making sure there are changing tables in public restrooms and spaces to breast pump.

Marty had a difficult time navigating resources in the community as well. Ann Arbor was considerably more difficult to navigate than the state of Washington. There was a time when he wasn't sure if he would be approved to child care subsidy, and worried he would have to drop out of school. Having someone on campus that could be a resource to single parents would be extremely helpful. It would also be useful to extend the conditions for emergency childcare to cover situations of illness which last longer than the typical "emergency," instead taking anywhere from 2-3 days. Also, it would be very helpful to have a space in libraries on campus where kids could be present and be able to study.

A committee member noted that libraries currently have a retrieval program which is available to all students. This also drives home the point that housing single parents in the same space might make it easier to get this information directly to those who need it most. The more centralized and visible this group is, the better we as a University will be able to serve them. Perhaps there could be a

work-study office where there would be peer counselors who could staff, give advice and/or baby-sit, while earning work-study funds. Are there any situations in which being an undergraduate puts you at a greater disadvantage than a graduate student? Marty noted that he wasn't certain what graduate students receive, but that all of his support comes from the state. Susan Wilson will be able to help the group get started and possibly collect that information and put it together on the internet.

Melaku noted that childcare is a very important service to the entire campus community. A few years ago, there was an initiative to help certify some North Campus residents to provide in-home childcare, which is currently being provided by about 5 families on North Campus.

LGBT STUDENT PANNEL

Jackie informed the committee that education, advocacy and support are the main goals of the Spectrum Center. They work with students as well as faculty and staff. Speaker's Bureau is one way in which student can engage in the Student Affairs side of things.

Jackie introduced Andrew McBride, Amy Dickinson and Vikram Shah to the committee.

Andrew shared that he was lucky to find an academic program which is very affirmative and supportive of student's sexuality, gender identity and gender expression. However, the vast majority of academic departments are not as supportive. This is very difficult for students who deviate from the norm. One way the environment could be more welcoming is to ensure that professors and staff are well-educated on appropriate ways to handle LGBT issues

Andrew trained to be an IGR facilitator, and students in that program openly expressed homophobic sentiments and supported those with their religious beliefs. Residential Advisors as well as other student leaders are allowed to hold discriminatory or prejudiced views against LGBT students. Those views, even if not expressed, can make students extremely uncomfortable not only in student groups or class spaces, but even in their own residential situations.

Amy, co-chair of the LBGT commission for MSA and co-founder of the student group Bilateral, then shared her experiences transferring from Grand Valley State University. She found the LBGT community here extremely welcoming and open. The LBGT commission and office were also a very social space, and was not at all isolated as she initially expected. In terms of campus life, yearly there are publicity boards slashed, and protesters against the annual Coming Out rally, etc. Education and visibility efforts are extremely important in the office. However, in Speaker's Bureau sessions, there are quite often responses that focus on religious issues and suggest there is still a strong prejudice against the LGBT community in terms of religious beliefs.

Vikram is a sophomore political science major and is involved in planning the annual South Asian Awareness Network Conference (SAAN). For him, problems occur with faculty, staff and students. Educationally, he found one way to address this, by offering a SAAN session on the Transgender community in South Asia. By helping one community address the issue from within itself, the office did a lot to further LGBT education in spaces it doesn't often reach.

What were your experiences in housing here? Should there be facilities or options in roommate situations? Andrew noted his own personal situation was fine, but other's were more difficult. One solution would be for every RA and housing employee should go through the office's Ally Training Program. This is not only sensible, but essential to creating a more welcoming environment. One committee member expressed that excluding people based on their beliefs for RA positions would be unfair; that accepting people based on their beliefs is different than accepting people based on their ability to be sensitive to all residents needs. All students should feel safe in their housing situations, and RAs should be a sensitive and a positive resource to all students. Is there any partnership between the Spectrum center and the Athletic Department? NCAA is now requiring education for athletes and talks are beginning in order to explore how that will take place.

In terms of suggestions for things the committee can do to help, Jackie noted that for faculty, when creating committees, keeping gender identity and expression in mind would be helpful. It would also be extremely beneficial to make sure that the faculty and staff of the University have the necessary knowledge and access to resources in order to make sure that they are sensitive to all students' experiences.

Government Relations-

Professor Potter submitted the following report:

Higher Education Appropriation Update:

Cynthia Wilbanks updated the Committee regarding the 2008-09 state HE appropriations. The Governor's proposed budget includes a 3 percent increase in support for state universities and, like last year's final bill, her proposal contains a separate bill section for the University Research Corridor institutions (U-M, MSU and WSU). Cynthia points out that the 3 percent increase is a 3 percent increase from the final amount received by institutions last year following the hard cuts that occurred during the year. Cynthia anticipates changes but is hopeful U-M will realize at least a 3 percent increase: approximately \$10 million.

The presidents of the three URC institutions testified before the Senate Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee on February 19, 2008. They stressed the important ways that the state can leverage the URC to aid in the state's recovery. Their testimony can be found at: <http://www.urcmich.org/news/senate.html>

The Senate is expected to pass its version of a HE appropriations bill before leaving for its Spring Break on March 28. There appears to be a renewed effort at collegiality in Lansing and insiders are saying we will have a budget by the end of May. That is seen as a good sign. Knowing the state appropriation earlier could also be helpful as the administration plans to take a FY 09 University budget and a tuition recommendation to the Board of Regents at its June meeting, rather than July. Provost Sullivan has suggested that this earlier time frame gives more time to students and parents as they plan for the fall expenses.

Discussion followed about how difficult it is for the University to prepare budgets and make decisions when the revenue can't be counted on and the trickle down affect this has on everyone. There was agreement, however, that the hard work of review and reallocation of resources has made us stronger.

RPC-

Professor Thouless reported that the committee is receiving survey responses about the research track.

AAAC-

Professor Riles reported that the provost has asked the AAAC to advise her about improved ways to evaluate faculty teaching. The provost also pointed out that a state legislator has introduced a bill that would grant automatic admission to one of Michigan's public universities for the top 10% of each public high school graduating class.

Grievance Task Force-

Professor Smith reported that the task force will review a draft of its final report on 8 May.

REGENTS' UPDATE

SACUA reviewed a draft Faculty Governance Update for May 2008 (distributed item 5).

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY GOVERNANCE AWARD

Deliberation was postponed pending circulation of candidate information by e-mail.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

This item was postponed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The meeting entered executive session at 4:00 P.M. to receive a report on the progress of a Regents' Bylaw 5.09 proceeding. The meeting resumed open session at 4:15 P.M.

VISIT OF PROVOST

The provost and K. Gibbons arrived at 4:15 P.M.

Commencement-

Commencement was successful; 5300 graduates attended. However, the activities introduced damage to the sod and stress to the trees.

Budget-

Budget preparations are underway, and will be presented to the Regents in June. At that time, however, the state appropriation will remain unknown. The acceleration in budget timing is predicated on getting news about tuition costs to the students sooner than in the past. The current assumption is that state funding will be flat. The state appropriation comprises 25% of the general fund. Interest income will be lower than in the past owing to changes in the financial markets. Professor Friedman suggested that it might make sense to hedge the U-M's interest income through investing in interest futures.

Searches-

Searches underway include dean of Social Work, director of Clements Library, director for Center for Global Health, chancellor at U-M Flint, dean of Kinesiology, dean of Architecture, and Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs. In almost all cases, the names of candidates will be shared openly with the faculty in the relevant units.

Campus-wide Notification-

E-mails were delivered within 2 hours, and improvement over past trials. Another practice is being planned.

Interdisciplinary faculty positions-

Initial decisions have been made, and units have been notified with requests for additional details; 25 positions will be funded in the first round.

Rackham proposal for continuous registration-

Any decision is still under discussion. The provost explained that continuous enrollment at Texas Tech shortened the average time to degree, and that in some circles it is regarded as a best practice. Professor Poe said that she had attended a student meeting on the subject and that the students were strongly opposed to the punitive aspects of the proposal. The provost replied that students can take leaves of absence to attend to family matters, and could pay only pro forma registration fees for study abroad. She added that although the proposal is revenue-neutral overall, it is not revenue-neutral with respect to the general fund.

Professor Stark asked whether graduation rates are significantly different at the U-M compared to peer universities. Professor Potter pointed out that the Rackham report was meager with respect to data. The provost replied that she thought it was fair to ask for additional data. She suggested that SACUA consider asking for a joint meeting with the Rackham Board.

The guests left the meeting at 4:50 P.M.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

SACUA discussed the possibility of meeting with the Rackham Board.

Professor Thouless made a motion commending the chair and vice-chair for their service to faculty governance. The motion was approved by acclamation.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

John Lehman
Senate Secretary

University of Michigan Bylaws of the Board of Regents, Sec. 5.02:

Governing Bodies in Schools and Colleges

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.
