

Minutes of 6 August 2007
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MINUTES OF THE SACUA MEETING OF 6 AUGUST 2007

Present: Fraser, Potter, Riles, Smith (chair), Stark, Thouless; Schneider, Carr, Arents

Absent: Friedman, Frier, MacAdam; Lehman

MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED:

1. Draft Agenda
2. Draft minutes of the SACUA meeting of 30 July 2007
3. Provost Sullivan's response and revisions to "Principles of Faculty Involvement in Institutional and Academic Unit Governance at the University of Michigan, 2d ed," Dated 3 August 2007. Draft – NOT FOR CIRCULATION
4. Electronic mail from Keith Riles and Wayne Stark to SACUA regarding the candidates for the Davis, Markert and Nickerson Lecture, dated 2 August 2007
5. Bylaws of the Selection Committee of the Davis-Markert-Nickerson Visiting Professorship on Academic and Intellectual Freedom, dated 29 June 2006
6. Budget Summary for SACUA office, 1 July 2006 through 30 June 2007
7. Letter from Teresa Sullivan and Philip Hanlon to Charles B. Smith regarding the Fall 2008 budget allocation to SACUA, dated 6 July 2007
8. Budget Summary for the Academic Freedom Lecture Fund, 1 July 2006 through 30 June 2007
9. Contribution form and envelope for the Academic Freedom Lecture Fund

Chair Smith convened the meeting at 2:04 P.M. The proposed agenda was approved.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 30 July 2007 were unanimously approved with changes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES

1. Chair Smith discussed the letter he received recently from Professor Nathan Tublitz, Co-chair of COIA (Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics). The letter details the status of the White Paper finalized by COIA in June. The report has received widespread exposure in the press, and members of COIA leadership have given informational presentations to

numerous organizations, including the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). SACUA is currently in the process of approving it; Professors MacAdam, Potter and Smith will give the recommendation at the Senate Assembly meeting in September

2. Chair Smith reported that SACUA received the Provost's revisions to the shared governance document. Provost Sullivan made almost no changes. The only significant change was discussed at the 30 July meeting of SACUA: since the Provost only has authority over academic affairs, she cannot authorize SACUA in other matters. Professor Riles suggested that SACUA ask for feedback from the Shared Governance Task Force before formally approving of the revised document. There was general agreement. The issue will be discussed at the next SACUA meeting.
3. Chair Smith announced that as there is no pressing business, SACUA will not meet on 13 August. The next scheduled meeting, on 20 August, may be cancelled if necessary. Members of the Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty (CESF) will meet in the next week to work out agenda issues, and the Athletic Subcommittee will also meet next week

REVIEW OF SACUA OFFICE AND BUDGET

Chair Smith discussed the changes in the SACUA office in the past few years. In recent years, the SACUA office has undergone many changes in staff, and office climate has changed accordingly. As recent personnel problems have been resolved, the office has achieved a good sense of balance. Tom Schneider and Linda Carr are the primary staff, with work-study students supporting the office, and things are working very smoothly. Although the initial thought was that a third full-time staff position should be filled, Chair Smith said that things are working so smoothly that he does not see a third staff person as an immediate necessity. He recommended that SACUA retain the current staffing situation for a trial period.

Professor Thouless asked how this decision would affect the SACUA budget. Tom Schneider explained that with the addition of Linda Carr in the fall of 2006, the budget was slightly off-balance. But when the office returned to just two staff members, the budget is back in balance, and will continue the small savings that the office has collected. Chair Smith reported that the decision not to hire a third staff member will not affect SACUA's allocation from the Provost.

Linda Carr discussed the details of the Budget Summary of the SACUA office. The "Supplies" category includes room rental and equipment fees for Palmer Commons and Rackham Auditorium.

DAVIS, MARKERT, NICKERSON ACADEMIC AND INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM LECTURE AND PROFESSORSHIP

Chair Smith welcomed the guests: Professor Dan Burns, President of the University of Michigan chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), and Professor Peggie Hollingsworth, President of the Academic Freedom Lecture (AFL) Fund.

SACUA members discussed the allocation from SACUA to support the annual professorship and lecture. SACUA contributed \$384 in 2005, and contributed \$216 in 2006. Mr. Schneider reported that the remaining honoree's travel expenses to the lecture are supported 1/3 by SACUA, 1/3 by the local chapter of the AAUP, and 1/3 by the AFL Fund.

Professor Hollingsworth provided a brief history of the Academic and Intellectual Freedom Lecture and Professorship. The Lectureship was established because the Professors Davis, Markert and Nickerson were never issued an apology for their treatment during the McCarthy era. When asked in the late 1980s, the University administration declined to make a formal apology. When the Board of Regents failed to respond to the request for an apology, the decision was made to establish a regular lectureship/visiting professorship. SACUA approached the national AAUP, which agreed to match any amount up to \$5000. A few years into the Lectureship, to ease financial complications, the AFL Fund was formed and is now a 501(c)(3) organization independent of the University.

The AFL Fund is supported by individual faculty members and some units within the University. Some contributions are given through the President's Fund and designated specifically for the Lecture. The honorarium is \$3000, plus the cost of lodging, travel, and a dinner for the lecturer and honored guests. Most lecturers choose not to accept the fee, although lecturers have tended to do so in the recent past. Early in the lectureship, the audience was primarily faculty and other individuals affiliated with the University during the McCarthy era, and attendance was approximately 150 to 200 people. Now, however, increasing numbers of students, younger faculty and community members attend, and attendance is well over 500. The Selection Committee for the speakers invited to lecture is comprised of the President of the AFL Fund, the President of the local chapter of the AAUP, and the Chair of SACUA.

SACUA and guests discussed the concern raised by Professors Riles and Stark about the lack of ideological diversity of the lecturers who have been invited. Professor Stark said that without a better understanding of the selection and invitation process, he and Professor Riles are prepared to discuss SACUA's support of the Lecture with the Senate Assembly. Both professors noted, however, that they would prefer that the AFL Selection Committee responds to their concerns. In their email message to SACUA dated 2 August, they provided four names of individuals they would support as future lecturers.

Professor Hollingsworth said that she too values political diversity, but disagrees with the assertion that past lecturers have been slanted to the left. She noted that the AFL Selection Committee never knows the political orientation of the individuals they invite. The focus is on the First Amendment in the context of current events; lecturers are asked to discuss intellectual freedom in academia but are given no guidelines about the content of their message. Professor Hollingsworth noted that in some cases, it takes years of preparation before a prospective lecturer accepts the invitation from the AFL Fund. Candidates for speakers are selected from suggestions from SACUA, the Senate Assembly, and community members, especially those who are contributors to the AFL Fund. Periodically, the list of suggested speakers is ranked, and the Selection Committee makes efforts to invite the top five potential speakers.

Professor Riles said that their concern is not that the Selection Committee is deliberate in its attempt to find only liberal speakers, but instead that the natural biases of the members of the Selection Committee have resulted in a lack of ideological diversity. Professor Thouless said that the current selection process appears to be working, as lecturers are decided by those who have an interest in its success, but the problem might be a simple lack of transparency. He

suggested that the Selection Committee share a list of those individuals who have been considered with the executive committees of the AAUP and SACUA.

There was discussion of other possible candidates for the Lectureship, and the criteria for the qualifications of a viable speaker. Professor Hollingsworth said that the Selection Committee would consider anyone, as long as s/he has some connection to academic and intellectual freedom and First Amendment issues, and, in most cases, is a scholar. The focus is academic freedom, not political agenda. Professor Burns noted that the issue is not necessarily diversity, but is instead about whether the selection and invitation decisions are made competently and fairly. There was discussion about the relativity of ideas like “diversity” and “academic freedom.”

SACUA members and the guests discussed the suggestions made by Professors Riles and Stark in their email message. Possible obstacles to some suggestions are budgetary constraints, including increased travel expenses for international lecturers and high fees for high-profile individuals. Professor Riles offered to approach one of the individuals he had suggested as a good candidate for the Lectureship. Professor Hollingsworth invited his inclusion in that request, and discussed the practical details of the event.

Chair Smith thanked the guests for their attendance.

The guests left the meeting at 3:35 PM

Chair Smith recommended a book that might be of interest to SACUA members, especially in the context of the preceding discussion: Reflections on the Revolution in France by Edmund Burke.

NEW BUSINESS

There will be no SACUA meeting next week on 13 August, the following meeting is tentatively scheduled for 20 August, but may be cancelled. SACUA members will be notified of the next meeting as the date is closer.

SACUA members discussed the issue of Chair and Dean selection in various units.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

The meeting adjourned at 3:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Arents
Secretary Pro Temp

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.
