

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION
Items for information

SUBJECT: September 2025 Faculty Governance update

1. Presidential Search

On 3 September faculty government convened a town-hall meeting titled “The Next U-M President” to discuss the presidential search process and to zero in on qualities that faculty would like to see reflected in the next Michigan president. The meeting was attended by 80 people in person and over 200 online. The leading presenter—Judith Wilde, of George Mason University—presented research suggesting that presidents chosen in secret are less attached to their institutions, because they lack the support of faculty, staff and students. The other presenters—Derek Peterson, chair of SACUA; Nathan Sadowsky, treasurer of University Staff United; and Eric Veal Jr., president of Central Student Government—were unanimous in their hope for a president who was principled and unafraid in their defense of our institution’s core values. The general discussion that followed was wide-ranging. Perhaps the most interesting suggestion was that the University should conduct a ‘post-mortem’ of the last two presidencies, in order to determine where and why both had ended in scandal and acrimony.

Reports on the town hall have been [published in the University Record](#) and [in the Michigan Daily](#), and notes kept by the Faculty Senate Office have been relayed to the Regents and the search committee. The event was recorded and can be watched on the Faculty Senate’s [YouTube channel](#).

2. SACUA Composition

In August SACUA member Prof. Alex Yi was obliged to resign from faculty government, as he has taken up a job at another institution. Dr. Yi had been Professor of Electrical Engineering at UM Dearborn. He’d served faithfully in SACUA for two years and had greatly advanced our understanding of the challenges that Dearborn faculty face. Faculty government will shortly begin the process of electing a new representative to replace Dr. Yi on SACUA.

3. Surveillance on Campus

On 18 June [SACUA adopted a resolution](#) expressing disquiet at the proliferation of high-powered security cameras on the Ann Arbor campus. We noted that the Faculty Senate has expressed, in an overwhelming vote, a conviction that the [University should not share information](#) that would allow immigration authorities to identify, locate, or harass University

of Michigan students, faculty or staff; and we called for the creation of an oversight committee to regulate the use of these new cameras.

In the weeks since this resolution's adoption DPSS has [published a new website](#) with information about the use of security cameras. And the Office of the President is presently constituting a new ad-hoc committee that will look over the University's use of cameras and other security approaches across campus. SACUA has nominated six faculty members to serve on this committee; we are told that it will include three members of the faculty, two deans, two students, and two staff. We look forward to working with this committee to ensure that security measures do not intrude upon the space for free expression.

4. Protections for Faculty Working Group

In recent months a number of members of the faculty have been subject to unwonted and unwelcome attention from aggressive and angry outsiders, many of them fueled by an Internet-born sense of grievance. While the Office of the Provost [maintains a website with resources supporting faculty](#) who face doxing and other forms of harassment, many colleagues find these resources to be limited. Faculty government has therefore formed a Protections for Faculty Working Group, convened under the chairmanship of Dr. Jonathon Kuuskowski of the School of Music, Theater and Dance. The working group will prepare a report identifying further remedies and supports that the Provost might offer to endangered members of our community. It will also work with faculty government to convene a series of public events that will call attention to the problem and open up discussions about how to manage it. Our aim is to impart to faculty working on controversial subjects a sense of security that will enable them to do their work.

5. New Travel Policy

On 1 July the administration adopted a [new rule obliging UM employees](#) travelling on University business to use Collegiate Travel Planners to book flights. On 24 June SACUA [adopted a statement](#) calling on the University to slow the implementation of the new policy, in order to allow time for faculty feedback and proper evaluation. In the weeks since this policy's implementation faculty government has heard from a large number of colleagues with complaints. Faculty government has therefore formed a CTP Task Force under the chairmanship of Dr. Jesse Capecelatro of the College of Engineering. The new task force is presently eliciting information about their experiences with CTP from members of the faculty. We are pleased that the Vice President for Finance has agreed to meet with the Task Force on a once-every-three-months basis to share data about CTP usage and to discuss, in general, the nature of the complaints we've received.

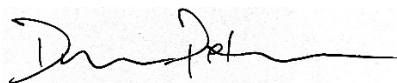
6. Upcoming Events

The Faculty Senate Office has organized a range of public events for the coming semester. Our aim is to foster a sense of community and common purpose among our colleagues, so better to build consensus and defend our institution. We have put together four free speech events under the title ‘Political Speech and the Public Square’, wherein faculty, students and staff will offer reasoned opinions about controversial subjects on the Diag over the lunch hour. We’re organizing four two-day faculty work retreats, which will bring faculty together for a morning of writing and research, followed by a collegial lunch. There is a faculty mixer coming soon, and a range of other events that are meant to promote community and solidarity in a time of great stress.

7. Senate Assembly Committees

Faculty government convenes 18 committees of the Senate Assembly that advise executive officers in their work and address issues of importance to the faculty. Over the later months of summer the composition of these committees was ironed out and committee chairs met with faculty government leadership to discuss the work that lies ahead. These committees do the hard, nitty-gritty work of analyzing and assessing the work that administrators do, and we thank members for their service.

Submitted: September 2025



Derek R. Peterson, SACUA Chair