

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
 REGENTS COMMUNICATION
 Items for Information**

SUBJECT: December 2024 Faculty Governance Update

Faculty Senate Meeting and Motions

The Faculty Senate presented and discussed four motions at the Monday, November 4 meeting. Following the meeting, the faculty voted on four motions sent in advance.

Motion 1: Call to Pause Implementation of the Revised Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities (SSRR)

Motion 2: Motion on the Creation and Review of SPGs

Motion 3: Motion to Censure the University of Michigan Regents

Motion 4: Motion on Accountability for the Handling of Gender-Based Violence and Discrimination at the University

The Faculty Senate approved all four motions. The vote results are:

| Motion | Vote | Pass/Fail |
|--|--|------------------|
| 1. Call to Pause the Revised SSRR Sponsored by: SACUA | Yes: 1599 (80.2%) No: 394 (19.8%) Abstain: 178 (8.2%) | Pass |
| 2. Creation and Review of SPGs Sponsored by: Marquis, Siegel, Giordani | Yes: 1688 (86.5%) No: 263 (13.5%) Abstain: 220 (10.1%) | Pass |
| 3. Censure the U-M Regents Sponsored by: Toyama, Boland, Ward | Yes: 1387 (71.3%) No: 559 (28.7%) Abstain: 225 (10.4%) | Pass |
| 4. Accountability Gender-Based Violence Sponsored by: Siegel, Giordani, Marquis | Yes: 1476 (80.2%) No: 364 (19.8%) Abstain: 331 (15.2%) | Pass |

Participation in the vote

Turnout in this election was similar to other recent votes, with an increase in the Senate size

reflected due to a recent Senate expansion. In 2020, 2,094 of our ~4151 Faculty Senate members voted on a motion of no confidence in President Mark Schlissel's leadership. In 2021, 1078 of our 4263 Faculty Senate members voted on five motions. In 2023, 1671 of our 4270 Faculty Senate members voted on a resolution on whether to expand the Senate. In 2024, 2171 of 7596 members voted, with the Senate reflecting an increase of approximately 3,326 members. For the 2020 vote of no-confidence in President Schlissel, 50.1% of faculty voted in favor (957 votes in support of the motion of no confidence, 953 votes in opposition to the motion, and 184 abstentions). In comparison, this year's vote to censure the Regents was approved by 71% (1387 votes in support, 539 votes in opposition to the motion, and 225 abstentions).

Regarding Motion 4, President Ono and Tami Strickman (Director of the ECRT) have already reached out on Friday, November 8 to acknowledge the motion's approval and to indicate their commitment to working on these issues with faculty.

Regarding Motions 1, 2, and 3, the SACUA Chair [wrote to the Regents](#) on Friday, November 8 to provide information about all motions and to invite the Regents to work together with SACUA toward shared goals. President Ono indicated he wrote to the Regents endorsing the Motion's requests and the proposal put forward in my letter. He wrote: "At the University of Cincinnati, the Chair of the Faculty Senate has a non-voting seat at Board meetings and gives a report at each meeting. My experience has been that giving faculty such a voice is a net positive for the institution and that it is important to hear faculty voices when making institutional decisions."

DEI

The NY Times' tendentious attack on U-M's DEI programs should compel a public statement from the University affirming our commitment to DEI. What's missing in *The NY Times* article and in much of the anti-DEI discourse is discussion of the fact that not everyone has the same opportunities and access in the United States. Diversity, equity, and inclusivity are imperative to address systemic and structural inequities. Diversity, equity, and inclusivity are stated core values of the University of Michigan. Also missing from the article, as pointed out by Vice Provost Chavous in her response in the [Michigan Chronicle](#), is an evidence-based account of the numerous and diverse communities that would be harmed by partial or sweeping defunding, including first-generation students, community members of diverse racial or ethnic backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, veterans, religious minorities, and non-traditional students. Further, many faculty are concerned that decisions about DEI stretch beyond the regental charge (financial oversight of the University) and encroach upon our educational and research missions, negatively impacting students, staff, and faculty and the core values of the University.

Campus Safety and Speech

In light of the University of Michigan's overreliance on surveillance technologies, increased police presence with private security and K9 dogs, outsourcing of disciplinary work to external companies, and series of campus bans and employment bans against students by DPSS and Academic HR without notifying students what charges have been made against them, without providing students with police reports, without first providing students with a hearing of peers and a verdict, and without notifying or consulting with faculty, SACUA met with a Michigan ACLU attorney. We are concerned that students' educations are being severely obstructed, their scholarships are at risk, and their rights are being violated.

The ACLU attorney noted that the University of Michigan is the state's premiere public institution of higher education and, thus, the core principles of academic freedom, speech, and debate must be upheld to educate students prepared for citizenship. He also noted that campus Diags should be our version of the town square with debate and protest, that protests are disruptive by their very nature as speech is meant to land on unwelcome ears, and yet, U-M is using student disciplinary processes to scare students into compliance. A pre-deprivation hearing is a constitutional right. All students, faculty, and staff should be brought in for a fair hearing before there is a decision to sanction. Universities should be going above and beyond to protect the right to assembly and speak and should be promoting these rights. The University of Michigan has obligations under Title VI to provide a safe and secure campus and many communities. Security cameras, such as at the Edward Said Multicultural Lounge, fail to make campus welcoming for some communities. At the same time, he said that the First Amendment reigns supreme over Title VI and we should not conflate speech that's uncomfortable with speech that's harmful to racial and ethnic minorities.

In short, the University leadership is losing sight of the fact that these are our students and we shouldn't be on opposite sides. Disciplinary procedures are meant to be a tool for students to feel safe, not a tool to punish students, and only one group of students - those who are Muslim and pro-Palestinian, for protest activities and speech. The burden on faculty has also been felt as professors are scrambling to provide virtual instruction and faculty are discovering that student research assistants have been purged from employment records without faculty or students being notified, impacting research.

34th Annual Davis, Markert, Nickerson Academic and Intellectual Freedom Lecture

On November 14, 2024, Dr. Judith Butler, Distinguished Professor in the Graduate School at University of California-Berkeley, presented a lecture entitled "Academic Freedom in a Time of Destruction: Reconsidering Extra-Mural Speech." Dr. Butler described the peril to the educational mission of the university when the right to assemble, open debate, and the ideals of academic freedom are replaced by a prioritization of risk management, donors, and right-wing

politicians. They integrated our University's recent policy changes and faculty votes into their remarks, speaking to our present situation, as well as to national conditions. In the first week that the [video of the lecture](#) has been online, there have already been more than 1200 views.


The DMN Committee is a jewel of the Faculty Senate governance. A special thank you to the DMN Committee chairs, Michael Atzmon and Nick Tobier, and to last year's co-chair, Melanie Tanielian, and to present members (Samer Ali, Marcy Epstein, Pauline Jones, Victoria Langland, John Cheney-Lippold, Seda Saluk, Suleyman Uludag, and Basit Zafar) for your vision in inviting Dr. Butler.

Of course, this lecture series is named for Dr. Chandler Davis (mathematics), Dr. Clement Markert (biology) and Mark Nickerson (pharmacology), who were all suspended by President Hatcher and the Regents for declining to answer HUAC's questions about their political affiliations. We are now in a new era where politicians seek to scapegoat academics for political gain.

Faculty On-Campus Work Retreats

Faculty research and creative work time often gets suppressed by the demands of teaching and service. To prioritize and support scholarly and creative work, the Faculty Senate Office, with support from the Provost's Office, hosted six on-campus work retreats for faculty this semester. Each retreat offered 2 hours of quiet work time followed by lunch learning about colleagues' research and creative work. Participants said that the two hours of dedicated time, in the same space as other faculty, was extremely effective. They worked on papers, book drafts, exhibition proposals, grants, stencil-making and a vast range of disciplines from nursing and medicine to kinesiology, music, the visual arts, history, sociology, among others. The FSO will offer the work retreats in the Winter term.

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Rebekah Modrak
SACUA Chair