

The Steering Committee

Draft Minutes

May 27, 2025



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Present: H. Pineda, A. Wilson, J. Lipton, J. St. Charles, A. Tessmer, J. Aerni-Flessner, E. Gardner, V. Wensloff, S. Barman, T. Smith, L. Wolff, C. Warren

Absent: K. Guskiewicz, T. Jeitschko, J. Alan

A special meeting of the Steering Committee was held on May 27, 2025 at 1:00pm via Zoom with Chairperson Angela Wilson presiding. The agenda was approved as presented.

Remarks

Chairperson Wilson provided remarks to the committee.

Resolution on University Budget Cuts

At-Large Faculty Representative Aerni-Flessner moved to approve the resolution. Following a presentation from Vice Chairperson Lipton on the increase in Executive Management compensation over the past three fiscal years, At-Large Faculty Representative John Aerni-Flessner moved to allow for participation for voice from nonmembers of the Steering Committee based on who signed up on the list¹ and limit each speech to two minutes. The motion was approved by a show-of-hands vote. Following debate on the main motion, the resolution was approved by a unanimous vote.²

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:41pm.

Heidi Pineda

Heidi Pineda

Interim Secretary for Academic Governance

Approved:

¹ The list of nonmembers was made available through the Steering Committee webpage.

² See page 2 for the full resolution.

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Resolution

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- Whereas,* Michigan State University (MSU) announced that Major Administrative Units (MAUs) need to provide, by June 6, 2025, plans for a base reduction in University-wide general funds of at least 6% for FY26, and 3% for FY27, resulting in a 9% reduction through the “termination of programs, services, or activities (in part)”;
- Whereas,* The MSU community was not informed of the need to suddenly enact deep cuts – despite structural deficits being known to MSU leadership – until the end of the academic year, providing a short turn-around time for consequential MAU decision making;
- Whereas,* The national conversation around higher education has long focused on the rapid growth of central administration at the expense of the core missions of universities—teaching, research, and outreach;
- Whereas,* Based on available data, the disproportionate growth in compensation among Executive Management at MSU has averaged ~8.3% per year over the past three fiscal years;
- Whereas,* The President and Executive Management Team should lead by example, disclosing their plans for force reductions including both executive managers and their staff within the central administration prior to asking MAUs to cut programs;
- Resolved,* That the faculty members of the MSU Steering Committee, acting on behalf of Faculty Senate, request that executive management compensation, which totals ~\$55M in salaries and fringe, and who serve “at will”, be reduced by at least 9%, or at least \$4.9M as part of its plan to lead by example;
- Resolved,* That prior to acceptance of MAU budget reductions, the MSU President and Executive Management Team provide a detailed financial plan of their own two-year force reductions and program eliminations to the Steering Committee, to be disseminated throughout the MSU community, to ensure equity and fairness in impacting people’s livelihoods in service of institutional financial solvency in these austere times;
- Resolved,* That in lieu of these steep and sudden cuts, that the President and Executive Management Team recommend to the Board of Trustees an extended, multi-year implementation plan, with a longer planning runway for MAUs to provide well-considered restructuring to programs and accompanying force reductions, being particularly mindful for those in academic roles, where new positions take longer to secure than 90 days.