

# The Steering Committee

Draft Minutes

January 6, 2026



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**Present:** K. Guskiewicz, L. McIntyre, T. Cuellar, A. Wilson, J. Aerni-Flessner, J. St. Charles, J. Lipton, E. Gardner, M. Mechtel, J. Alan, A. Robinson, T. Wahl, C. Warren, T. Pham, K. Harding, N. Heilman, P. Kothari

**Absent:** A. Tessmer, K. Douglas, S. Fireberg

A regular meeting of the Steering Committee was held on January 6, 2025, at 3:15 p.m. via zoom with Chairperson Wilson presiding. The agenda was approved as presented. The draft minutes for December 2, 2025, meeting were approved as presented.

## **Verbal Reports**

Verbal reports from standing committees were provided to the Steering Committee for review.

## **Report of Committee on the Institutional Support for Research and Creative Activities (CISR)**

Vice Chair Aerni-Flessner provided an informational update on the work of the Committee on Institutional Support for Research and Creative Activities and reported that the committee's final report has been completed and shared in advance with meeting materials, with broader distribution planned following placement on January agendas for Faculty Senate and University Council. The committee included 13 faculty members and representatives from the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation, University Advancement, and the former Office of Faculty and Academic Staff Development, and surveyed department chairs, school directors, and research deans across campus. Vice Chair Aerni-Flessner noted that the committee's work occurred during a period of significant change, including shifts in the federal funding landscape and internal budget reductions, and emphasized the importance of documenting existing conditions, identifying gaps in research funding and infrastructure, and offering recommendations to support research and creative activities across all faculty appointment types, including tenure-system faculty, fixed-term faculty, and academic specialists.

## **Call for Nominations for ACRI**

Secretary Cuellar provided an update on the call for faculty nominations to serve on the Advisory Committee on Responsible Investing (ACRI), following the

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Board of Trustees' request to establish the committee. She explained that a Qualtrics self-nomination form will be used to solicit interested faculty, after which a slate of nominees will be reviewed by UCAG and then brought to the Faculty Senate for final approval before submission to the President's Office. She noted the timeline is tight, as nominations are due to the President's Office by January 23, with UCAG meeting on January 22 and Senate approval still required. Additional context was provided that ACRI will advise on issues related to possible endowment divestment, and that faculty, graduate, and undergraduate nominations were secured through shared governance advocacy. Faculty were encouraged to participate, particularly by nominating individuals with expertise in investments.

## **Ai- Ad Hoc committee**

The Steering Committee discussed a proposal to establish a University Council task force on artificial intelligence to improve coordination, communication, and visibility of AI-related initiatives across academic and administrative units. The proposed task force would serve as a central forum to identify AI-related opportunities, challenges, and needs; reduce duplication and fragmentation in AI-related courses, training, and initiatives; support ethical, equitable, and responsible AI use in teaching, research, and operations; and assess whether a standing university AI committee is warranted. The task force would be time-limited to 12 months and broadly representative, including faculty, academic staff, administrators, and students, with co-chairs from faculty, academic staff, and administration. Steering members raised questions regarding scope, timing, group size, and coordination with existing efforts in General Education and the Provost's Office. University leadership expressed support for the task force as a means of connecting and aligning ongoing AI work across campus. The Steering Committee voted to advance the proposal for consideration by the University Council.

## **Develop Faculty Senate and University Council Agendas**

By consent, the committee developed agendas for Faculty Senate and University Council with the following new business:

*Faculty Senate- January 20, 2026*

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- Report of Committee on the Institutional Support for Research and Creative Activities (CISR)
- A.I. Policy at Michigan State University
- UCAG Update

## *University Council-January 27, 2026*

- Report of Committee on the Institutional Support for Research and Creative Activities (CISR)
- Update from Council of Graduate Students COGS

## **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

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Teresa Cuellar

**Approved:** [month day, year]