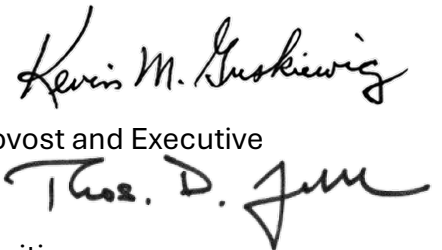


# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

March 31, 2025

**TO:** The Steering Committee

**FROM:** Kevin M. Guskiewicz, Ph.D., President  
Thomas D. Jeitschko, Ph.D., Interim Provost and Executive  
Vice President for Academic Affairs



**SUBJECT:** Secretary for Academic Governance Position

We will soon be launching a competitive search for a Secretary for Academic Governance (“Secretary”). This position plays a critical role in faculty, academic staff, and student governance by facilitating and coordinating the work of its committees, communicating with the Provost, President, and Secretary to the Board of Trustees on governance matters, and by ensuring that its processes run effectively in a shared governance model. It also oversees the Office for Academic Governance. The role is crucial in advocating for and bringing a steadfast commitment to transparency and frequent communication in all settings.

Section 3.5 of the *Bylaws for Academic Governance* outlines key aspects of the role of the Secretary position. Additionally, it briefly touches on the appointment process, noting that, “*The Secretary for Academic Governance shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Steering Committee, and they shall review the appointment at periods not to exceed five years.*”

We write to seek your consultation on the attached position description (Attachment 1) and search procedures (Attachment 2) for the Secretary position.

## The Position Description

With the departure of the prior Secretary, Victoria Nelson, the Office of the Provost engaged in discussions about the needs of the position and the office, including conversations with Faculty Senate leadership. We also examined governance structures and staffing models across the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA). These structures vary significantly by institutional context—ranging from faculty-led models to administrative staff support—underscoring the importance of aligning the position with the operational and cultural needs of the university.



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Over time, this position has evolved. It was once held by a tenured faculty member, then classified as support staff, and more recently as executive management. This progression has yielded important insights into the role's function and effectiveness. The core responsibilities of the position are administrative and service-oriented in nature, requiring someone who can support and execute the priorities of governance leaders. The position is not one of leadership in the traditional sense, but rather one of stewardship—supporting and facilitating the work of governance within the university's shared governance framework.

As such, the position has been reclassified as an administrative staff role to better reflect its intended function and to ensure alignment with its service-driven purpose. The revised structure includes a dual reporting line to the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and the Faculty Senate Chair. While reporting structures have varied in recent years, the position will continue to work in close collaboration with the Faculty Senate Chair, the At-Large Members (ALMs), and the chairs of the standing committees to ensure smooth and consistent governance operations.

We would appreciate receiving your feedback on these documents by noon on Thursday, April 10th.

Cc: Teresa Mastin  
Kara Yermak  
Mike Zeig