President's Report

November 12 2026

My focus this month is making faculty input useful before campus decisions are finalized and ensuring that committee recommendations have a clear path back to Senate. The November meeting will include budget information, responses to anonymous faculty comments, and several academic-policy discussions. I encourage senators to review the accompanying materials and bring questions from their departments.

1. Campus news and upcoming dates

Budget planning and faculty input

The Chancellor's November 3 message with a target of $10 million recurring savings and revenue planning target provides a route for campus input. I have asked the deans and campus leadership to make opportunities for faculty suggestions visible and to reach out to faculty afterward to explain how those suggestions influence the eventual choices. Alysha O'Neil, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Operations and campus CFO, is scheduled to discuss the budget at our November 12 meeting.

COACHE and follow through

The COACHE town hall is scheduled for November 10, 2–3 p.m., in the Innovation Lab Forum, with a livestream available. The campus summary report is available through Faculty Affairs. COACHE information and summary

I asked the Chancellor and Provost how faculty will see what changes as a result of the survey. The proposed follow-through is to collect comments, work with Faculty Affairs to identify common issues, develop a response plan and bring specific implementation requests to Senate. Leadership supported collecting additional comments after the town hall through Thanksgiving break; the exact submission instructions will be distributed. I will continue to press for a visible connection between faculty feedback and the response.

Dates and opportunities

- November 17 — The Curators' Distinguished Teaching Professors Summit will address academic integrity in a digital age, 3–4:30 p.m., Innovation Lab Room 115. Faculty, staff, graduate students and advisors are invited. Details and registration
- November 23 — Proposals are due for the Innovation in Teaching and Learning Conference, scheduled for March 11, 2027. Consider sharing work on teaching, AI, active learning or related instructional practices. Conference information

2. UM System news and updates

AI literacy

The President's office continues to emphasize AI literacy across all four campuses. The discussion included understanding the technology, critically evaluating outputs, applying it within a discipline and using it ethically. Campus approaches and any curricular changes must proceed through the appropriate faculty processes. Assessment practices and faculty responsibility for evaluating student work remain important parts of that discussion.

Multi factor authentication

System IT is preparing to move users away from voice-call and text-message authentication toward stronger methods, including authenticator applications, passkeys and physical security keys. Microsoft is ending support for those options in February of 2028 due to security breaches associated with their use. Faculty will need clear campus instructions on timing, setup, backup access and alternatives to using a personal phone. Classroom access and student onboarding were raised at IFC. Final S&T transition dates and arrangements were not supplied; this report should not be read as a notice that an existing method has already been disabled.

Teams and AI chat records

System IT described a proposed six-month retention approach for Teams chats and University-provided AI conversations (currently all Teams and AI chat conversations are retained indefinitely). One-to-one, group and meeting chats were distinguished from posts within Teams channels. The January 1, 2027 implementation goal was explicitly uncertain, and the treatment of research conversations that need to be preserved longer remains unresolved.

Faculty should not assume that University-provided chats are private or transient. As university records, they can be caught up in 'sunshine law' disclosures. At the same time, potential discovery or records review does not mean every research record is publicly releasable. We need written guidance on scope, research-record preservation, legal holds and any protected information before faculty receive definitive instructions about what will be deleted or disclosed.

Finance discussion

Ryan Rapp described a cautious outlook broadly unchanged from August, including a possible reduction in state support, research-revenue uncertainty and limited tuition flexibility. Greater clarity is expected around the Governor's budget in January; possible midyear withholding remains a planning concern.

3. Ongoing incomplete referrals

Topic	Committee / route	Current status	Next step / timing
Test-optional admissions	Academic Freedom and Standards (AF&S)	Recommendation in development; a recommendation for three-year extension was reported November 3.	Discussion and vote by Senate; circulate the supporting data separately.
Latin Honors and academic regulations	AF&S and Registrar	Honors and voluntary medical-withdrawal language remain under review.	Obtain a usable redline; clarify the absence problem, existing course arrangements and practices at other UM campuses.
Student Appeals / CARD	Student Appeals Committee and CARD consultation	Student Appeals Committee circulated an initial procedure draft; documented faculty review remains to be finalized.	Establish the undergraduate process before January appeals; address graduate dismissal and residency appeals in spring.
Parking appeals	Parking, Security and Traffic Committee	Committee consideration of the current appeal and broader student concerns is being arranged.	Complete committee review and recommendation.
Bylaws revision package	Ad hoc Bylaws Committee	Draft in process	Complete consultation and return amendment text through the required approval process.
Academic-unit reorganization	Dean and department-chair consultation	Draft circulated; feedback seeks clearer steps, responsibilities and timing. Documentation aligns with the recent UM System process.	Reconcile feedback and resolve local consultation, decision rights and responses to objections before further action.
Administrative review	Administrative Review Committee (ARC)	Staff survey participation, broader review scope and a current review-slate change remain pending.	Gather administrator feedback; resolve eligibility, confidentiality and separate results before participation changes.
Paired-course experimental-course treatment	Campus Curriculum Committee (CCC)	Revised proposal is being prepared for return to Senate.	Present the revised motion for Senate consideration.
Career Fair dates on the Academic Calendar	Public Occasions Committee	Committee approved its recommendation; Senate action remains pending.	Present the motion at the November 12 Senate meeting.
Budget consultation	Budgetary Affairs Committee (BAC), Department Chairs Committee and campus leadership	The campus message has been issued; academic-impact consultation and a visible response to faculty input remain open.	Clarify how faculty suggestions receive a response.

4. New referrals since the October RP&A meeting

A referral on a minimum Learning Management System (i.e. Canvas) use policy has been received from the Registrar's office. Committee assignment is pending. The evaluation should distinguish useful access to course information from requirements that create inaccurate grades, privacy concerns or unnecessary manual reporting.

The Registrar's office has also asked that we consider revising Dual Bachelor's language in the catalog to deter programs from constructing 'questionable' dual degrees.

Advising beginning before usable midterm grades and complete course schedules is also an issue raised with leadership. I am keeping it separate from formally issued referrals while the problem, responsible contacts and appropriate route are clarified.

5. Decisions and input requested from Faculty Senate

Business returning for Senate consideration

- Career Fair dates — Consider the Public Occasions recommendation to add fall and spring Career Fairs to the Academic Calendar. I will present the committee's motion for Pablo. This does not itself create a holiday or a mandatory prohibition on examinations.
- Paired courses — Consider CCC's revised recommendation in the CCC report.
- Administrative-review slate — ARC plans to bring a motion concerning Robin Gore's inclusion in the current review cycle. The existing slate remains in force unless Senate changes it.
- Test-optional admissions — Review the evidence and AF&S recommendation and identify questions requiring further analysis.

Faculty feedback for the Provost

I am organizing faculty input around the topics below and will provide written summaries to the Provost. These are discussion questions, not a package of approved policies or automatic committee referrals.

- Student course evaluations — Would requiring a login with an explicit opt-out improve participation while preserving voluntary responses? Would tying the release of grades to completion of either the opt-out or their evaluations be an option we should consider?
- Doctoral GTA eligibility — What would be gained or lost by directing more GTA support to doctoral students or using qualified doctoral students across departments?
- Workload and research incentives — How should class size, laboratories, separate preparations, service teaching, graduate advising and available support affect the proposed teaching-load framework? Faculty input should test the assumptions rather than treat the proposals as adopted rules.
- Canvas and early alerts — What minimum practices would provide accurate, timely information to students and support staff? Identify necessary exceptions and technical support, particularly where an automatic Canvas average does not represent the actual course grade (Note: this topic has been submitted as a referral by the Registrar's office).

Commencement, Career Fair flexibility, responsible AI use, committee representation and doctoral qualifying examinations remain later consultation topics. We do not need to resolve every issue at one Senate meeting.

Please bring department questions to your senators and use the Faculty Senate website's referral process for issues requiring committee evaluation. I welcome questions on this report. Faculty Senate website