



# Student Advisory Committee amplifies student voices at MSU Libraries

By Emma Dressler, MSU Libraries Communications Coordinator

In March 2025, the first Student Advisory Committee meeting marked a new era of student involvement and influence at Michigan State University Libraries. The Libraries serves a wide range of patrons, many of whom are undergraduate and graduate students on campus. With representation through this newly formed committee, students now have a direct opportunity to share their perspectives and help shape the services, spaces and resources that support their academic success.

Dean of MSU Libraries Neil Romanosky was a key figure in the formation of the committee and strongly supported the idea of creating a structured space for student input.

“The MSU Libraries is primarily a student space, and as such, it’s essential that we create opportunities for students to share their perspectives on how we can best support them,” Romanosky said. “The Student Advisory Committee has been an important connection point in the past year in helping to guide decisions that impact students, from furniture considerations to our social media.”

The idea for a student advisory committee had been in motion for several years ahead of its establishment. Early conversations began when former Music Librarian Grace Haynes researched advisory committees at other academic libraries. Plans to launch the initiative were ultimately paused during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When Romanosky joined MSU Libraries, the concept regained momentum. Outreach and Engagement Librarian Holly Flynn and colleagues in her unit began working with the dean to develop a plan, starting with research into how similar groups operate both at other academic libraries and across MSU.

After conducting an environmental assessment of student advisory committees both at other academic libraries and various colleges at MSU, the Outreach and Engagement team drafted a formal charge and began building a membership that reflected the diversity of the student body. Their goal was to include a broad range of perspectives, inviting undergraduate and graduate students from different majors, programs and backgrounds to participate.

To achieve this, organizers identified Registered Student Organizations whose members could represent different

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academic and campus communities. The proposal and membership structure were reviewed by several internal groups, including the Libraries' Executive Committee, Steering Committee and Advisory Support Staff Committee, before invitations were sent to student organizations across campus. Today, students on the committee represent a variety of organizations, including Tower Guard, ASMSU and the International Students Association, among others.



The committee officially convened for the first time in March 2025 in the Green Room at the Main Library. During that inaugural meeting, students discussed concerns about the availability and accessibility of study spaces before touring the newly renovated Special Collections area on the building's third floor.

Since then, the committee has continued meeting throughout the academic year, gathering regularly to discuss topics ranging from library communications and artificial intelligence to accessibility, textbook affordability and open educational resources.

For student members, the experience has been both impactful and empowering.

Trinity Amalraj, a biology major representing Tower Guard, provided insight into her experience on the committee. "Through my involvement, I hope to not only share my student experiences, but I hope our feedback is actively implemented in how the library serves both MSU students and the Lansing community," Amalraj said. "I remember during our first meeting, we were encouraged to openly share our ideas for improving the MSU Libraries, which led to a discussion about the various seating options in the different libraries on campus, and how some options can be uncomfortable or inaccessible for many students. It was motivating to see that details that may seem small to some were taken seriously by MSU Libraries staff, which makes me eager to see how our involvement in this committee can facilitate positive change."

Romanosky has made it a priority to closely take into consideration student feedback and explore meaningful ways the Libraries can respond to their needs. "Neil really listens to these students and actively works to make changes based on their suggestions," Flynn said.

For Flynn and others involved in organizing the committee, the goal is to create an ongoing dialogue between students and the Libraries — one that ensures services and spaces continue to evolve in step with the needs of the campus community.

As the committee continues its work, MSU Libraries expects the group to remain a valuable forum for collaboration, ensuring that student perspectives play a central role in shaping the future of the Libraries. [↗](#)

Members of the MSU Libraries' Student Advisory Committee get a behind-the-scenes tour of Murray & Hong Special Collections with Head of Special Collections Leslie McRoberts.

