Robert Ziff

Biography:
I have been a professor of chemical engineering at the University of Michigan for 40 years. I grew up in Los Angeles and went to UCLA for undergraduate studies in physics, and then to Rockefeller University in New York where I studied the area of statistical mechanics. I did post-docs at Los Alamos National Laboratory (working on liquid helium problems) and Stony Brook, studying polymerization and percolation. I have returned to the latter subject many times over my career, developing with Mark Newman in Physics and Complex Systems an efficient simulation algorithm that is used throughout the world. I also developed with Erdogan Gulari (Chemical Engineering) a widely-studied model for the understanding of catalytic reactions. Other projects include a collaboration with members of the faculty of the School of Pharmacy on the dissolution of tablets in the gastro-intestinal system, and bio-related projects with colleagues in my department. I am a Fellow of the American Physical Society, and on the editorial board of Journal of Physics A, and was an associate editor of Physical Review E. I have served as the Graduate Chair of the ChE department for many years, and on various College committees. I served as the Engineering College Ombuds person recently. I served previously as a member of the Senate Assembly, and four years as a member of SACUA.

Position Statement:
In my previous experience in the Senate Assembly and in SACUA, I witnessed the transition of leadership of the University from Presidents Coleman to Schlissel, each with her/his own style. I look forward to working with President Ono in this new chapter of the University’s growth. While the faculty Senate has a more advisory role within the University, it provides an important venue for faculty concerns and opinions to be shared with the administration, and also provides a way for the administration’s policies and ideas to be communicated to the faculty. I plan to do whatever I can to facilitate this transfer of information. More than that, I plan to press the administration to further involve the faculty Senate in affairs of the University. For example, committees that are set up to choose important officers of the university (Deans, Provost, etc.) should have representation from SACUA on them. We have numerous important issues to deal with at this university, including student affordability, diversity, equity, inclusion, student health, faculty well-being, teaching excellence, finances, student-athlete issues, etc, and I look forward to representing the Engineering College on these and other issues.