

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

December 3, 2012

Present: L. Beale; R. Brown; V. Dallas; C. Parrish; L. Romano; A. Wisniewski;  
J. Woodyard

Absent with notice: D. Kessel; R. MacArthur; A. Vlasopolos; W. Volz

Guest: Cheryl Kollin, Director of the University Advising Center

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of December 3, 2012.

1. Advising Center: Policy Committee invited Ms. Kollin to discuss advising. The retention report called for increasing the number of advisors across campus. All advisors will be assigned to departments and colleges. The steering committee of the Advising Council decides where the advisors will be assigned and developed the job description, but the departments hire the advisors. The steering committee is the governing body that assists the Advising Council in dealing with issues and setting policy. Over the next three years 45 advisors will be hired. Eighteen were hired this year. The goal is to have a ratio of 250 students to one advisor. When all the advisors are in place, students will be sent to the departments for advising and the University Advising Center will develop other initiatives. The Center will provide support to the advisors in departments.

A Policy Committee member asked if students were able to determine which courses they need to fulfill their general education requirements by looking online. Ms. Dallas said that students are able to check the courses through the Student Tracking, Advising and Retention System (STARS). The Advising Center is trying to develop four-year plans of work for the various programs so students can see what is required. The advisor could use that plan of work, also. The system would help students see what effect dropping a class would have and what happens if they do not take classes in the proper sequence.

A member asked if students' graduations were delayed because they were unable to enroll in classes because they were closed or were otherwise available. Ms. Dallas said, if that occurs, the University Advising Center would not be aware of it because they advise students about the general education courses. The advisors at the department level would know if that was a problem. The member asked if the Advising Council could do a survey to find out. Ms. Dallas said that they could survey the department advisors. Having advisors in departments on general education courses frees faculty to do more mentoring of students and to provide career advice.

From the experiences of some members of the Policy Committee, it appeared that the reporting lines for advisors might have to be clarified. It was suggested that senior academic staff members should mentor newer advisors so they will be able to

attain employment security status. Ms. Kollin said that the Advising Council is developing a professional advising community across campus so the advisors do not feel isolated and so they can develop contacts to assist each other professionally.

A member asked if there was an intervention process for students who receive a low grade in an easy course in their first term. Ms. Kollin said that the early academic assessment (EAS) program identifies students who are having trouble in a course. Advisors look at a student's overall performance and grade point average in a term. It is difficult to identify students who are performing poorly in the first term or in the first year if they have not declared a major. When students apply to Wayne State they may indicate their majors and will then be advised in the department. A member of the Policy Committee believes that students need to be advised about the possible majors they might pursue based on their ACT scores and placement exams.

The University Advising Center, which has twelve advisors and serves 15,000 students, is responsible for all general education advising for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and for pre-medical, pre-nursing, pre-engineering, pre-social work, and pre-health sciences students. The Center is responsible for the orientation of all new and transfer students. The advisors are more reactive than proactive in reaching out to students because there are so few advisors. First Time in Any College Students (FTIACS) are assigned to an advisor at orientation. They are put in a BlackBoard course that has touch points for their advisor to reach out to them during the summer, during the first two weeks of the semester, when EAA grades are available, and when registration begins for the following semester. Ms. Kollin's office is developing a program to help students declare their major earlier, ideally by 30 credit hours or, if not, by 45 credit hours. The advisors see about 1250 FTIACS in addition to other students.

A member asked how long a student has to wait to see an advisor at the busiest time of the year. Ms. Kollin acknowledged that the length of time, two weeks, is a problem. Advising is not mandatory because the Advising Center has not had adequate resources. They are developing the Wayne Advising Management System, a scheduling system from which to get data such as if students are keeping their appointments, why they are seeing advisors, and when they see advisors. The Advising Center is trying to make the process for declaring a major easier for students.

The Center has plans to assist transfer students. The students are able to access STARS to get a sense of how their courses from a community college would transfer to Wayne State and what courses are necessary for a degree. WSU has transfer plans with most of the schools in the state.

A Policy Committee member suggested that a tutorial dealing with the skills students need to get through the system would be helpful. If they have problems they could then be referred to an advisor. While some students can get through the system on their own, for other students this is not possible. Ms. Dallas said an advisor has to know something about a student's life and their goals before they can address their academic program.

The Advising Council is developing training programs for all new advisors. The Advising Center trains the advisors in CLAS and in CFPCA to advise students about general education and STARS. The Center will train all advisors in the general information they need to advise students and will connect them with state and national organizations for professional development. The Center is considering developing training on prescriptive advising, developmental advising, and advising as coaching to help them work with a variety of students. An advising summit will be held at the end of the academic year.

Ms. Kollin mentioned initiatives in her office. The undecided student is the largest population in CLAS, which is a group of students that is at high risk. She would like to develop a program that moves undecided students in a clear direction within the first 30 credit hours. She is meeting with Mark Byrd, Assistant Vice President for Budget, Planning and Analysis, to get information about students who are struggling but whose overall GPA does not indicate that. The Advising Center would reach out to them. The Wayne Reach program is an early intervention program. Initiatives to recruit veterans and provide services to them are being expanded.

[Ms. Kollin left the meeting.]

2. Report from the Chair:

- a. President Gilmour will appoint the Interim Dean of the Law School. He has interviewed the three faculty whose names were submitted. The School has elected the search committee for the permanent Dean. The University will hire a search firm to assist in recruiting the Dean.
- b. The search committee to fill the Coleman Young Endowed Chair has reconvened. The person hired should do scholarship in the broad area of urban issues.
- c. Programs under review this year are the Developmental Disabilities Institute and the Center for Urban Studies.

3. Report from the Senate President: The Senate committee reviewing the proposal to increase funding for the Development Office met with members of the Board of Governors on December 3 and presented its report. This issue is not on the agenda for the December 5 meeting of the Board.

4. Board of Governors Agenda:

- a. Mr. Romano remarked about some items on the agenda of the Board of Governors meeting of December 5. In the *FY2014-2018: 5-Year Capital Outlay Plan* Richard Nork, Vice President for Finance and Business Operations, moved the renovation of State Hall from first priority to the bottom of the list, number 11. The Multidisciplinary Biomedical Research Building is now the first priority and is funded and underway, followed by the renovation of the Student Center Building. The administration does not plan to submit this to the state but instead has proposed that \$1.3 million from the reserve for non-recurring projects be used to fund the design stage of the proposed \$25 million renovation of the SCB. Bonds would be issued for the remaining \$23 million. The debt service would be repaid by increasing the student activities fee, previously known as the omnibus fee. An increase in this fee is an increase in tuition. Third on the list is a Science and

Engineering Lab Classroom Building at the cost of \$28 million. Provost Brown explained that the engineering accreditation board found the laboratories inadequate. The cost to upgrade them was \$1 million. Mr. Nork and Robert Kohrman, the Associate Vice President for Budget, Planning and Analysis, recommended that the classroom laboratories in Physics and Engineering be renovated and that a new building be built in the Physics parking lot at a total cost of both renovation and new construction of \$27 million.

- b. The administration submitted to the Board of Governors a recommendation to award contracts to complete the design for the construction of the Advanced Technology Education Center in Macomb County. The site is on Twelve Mile Road in Warren across from the Macomb Community College campus. Several years ago there had been discussions about tenure and tenure-track faculty being located at such a facility. Mr. Romano asked if that was the plan at this center. Faculty need to interact with other faculty in order to perform research and to succeed.

- \*5. Agenda for the Academic Senate Meeting: Policy Committee approved the drafted agenda for the Academic Senate meeting of December 12, 2012.

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Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of December 17, 2012