

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

December 6, 2010

Present: R. Brown; V. Dallas; R. MacArthur; C. Parrish; L. Romano; A. Vlasopolos;  
W. Volz; A. Wisniewski; S. Wolfson; J. Woodyard

Absent with notice: D. Kessel

Guest: Mark Wardell, Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of December 6, 2010.

- \*1. Proceedings of the Policy Committee: The Proceedings of the Policy Committee meeting of November 22, 2010, were approved as submitted.

[Provost Brown arrived.]

- \*2. Multi-purpose Indoor Athletic Facility: At its March 24, 2010, meeting, the Board of Governors authorized the construction of a multi-purpose athletic facility at the Matthaei Athletic Complex at a cost of \$1.4 million. After that public meeting, the Board reviewed the plans and changed them, expanding the use of the facility and improving the appearance of the building. The changes increased the price by \$1 million. The Board of Governors approved the increase in funding in an executive committee meeting. The Academic Senate Budget Committee had not been aware of the change until some months after the increase was approved. The Chair and a member of the Academic Senate Budget Committee sit as faculty representatives on the Board of Governors Budget and Finance Committee. Ordinarily such a change would have been brought to the BOG Budget and Finance Committee for action and then taken to the full Board at a public meeting. The Senate Budget Committee objected to the fact that the proposal to increase the funding was not discussed at a public meeting. The Budget Committee approved a memorandum in which it asked that the Board of Governors "address such issues in the future in accordance with its usual procedures for significant budget matters," and asked the Policy Committee to convey to the Administration and the Board of Governors its concerns about the procedure followed in approving the upgrade to the multi-purpose athletic facility. Policy Committee approved the memorandum and forwarded it to the Board of Governors and to President Gilmour.

3. Report from the Chair:

- a. Provost Brown and Vice President for Research Ratner are looking for funds to cover tuition for graduate research assistantships.
- b. An issue has arisen about the University's providing to a faculty member the reference letters it received when the faculty member was denied tenure. Provost Brown believes that if faculty members want to see the letters, they should be able to get them from their Dean. The names of the reviewers and their institutions and any references that could identify the reviewer would be redacted.

Some Policy Committee members thought the faculty member should have the option to waive his/her right to the letters. They thought the reviewers would be more honest if the person being reviewed were not able to see the evaluation. Mr. Parrish, the liaison from the AAUP-AFT, said that the Agreement between the University and the AAUP-AFT states that faculty have access to all records in their personnel files, including the redacted letters. Provost Brown will consult with the General Counsel.

- c. As reported in the press, the University has discontinued the Helen Thomas “Spirit of Diversity in the Media” Award.
4. University Graduate Research Fellowships: On September 27, 2010, Dean Wardell and some graduate directors met with the Policy Committee to discuss the new program for awarding University Graduate Research Fellowships (UGRF). As a result of that meeting, a committee was formed of the Deans or their representatives and changes were made in the program. The Council of Deans unanimously supported the document. However, Provost Brown spoke with two department chairs who have reservations about the program.

The proposal includes both recruiting and dissertation graduate fellowships. The members of the Graduate Council were supportive in their review of the program. The Executive Committee of the Graduate Council unanimously endorsed the document with a minor change, moving the date for closing the recruitment awards from February 28 to March 14 and opening the competition for the dissertation fellowships on March 15.

Provost Brown sought comment from the Policy Committee. Some programs were successful in recruiting highly qualified students with the UGRF program, but others were not, and resulted in losing some otherwise highly qualified students. Some programs were as successful in recruiting students as they had been in the past but found the procedures onerous.

A compromise was reached. It was decided that 25 of the UGRF awards would be distributed through the University-wide competition as modified this year and 20 more would be awarded to departments to distribute.

Dean Wardell informed the Policy Committee about the membership of the committee that will review the applications for fellowships awarded through the University-wide competitive process.

[Dean Wardell left the meeting.]

- 5. Report from the Senate President: At its meeting of November 17, 2010, the Graduate Council approved the proposal to change the time period in which a student must complete the Ph.D. from 15 years to 12 years.
- 6. Masters Programs: Provost Brown raised the possibility of returning control of the professional Masters programs to the colleges.

A Policy Committee member noted that there has been a large decline in the number of students enrolled in Masters programs at WSU. The Policy Committee briefly discussed the possible reasons for the decline.

7. Centers and Institutes Advisory Committees: Board of Governors Statutes regulate the creation, review, and discontinuance of centers and institutes. The membership of the Centers and Institutes Advisory Committees is not up-to-date. Policy Committee received the review of the Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute, but decided not to act on it until the problems with the membership of the Type II Centers and Institutes Advisory Committee are resolved.
8. Purchasing: Joan Gossman, Director of Purchasing, attended the December 1, 2010, Academic Senate meeting and responded to issues raised by members of the faculty and academic staff. However, problems remain, and Policy Committee members believe that changes have to be made so that the Purchasing Office is more responsive and provides better service.
9. Travel Reimbursements: Provost Brown is meeting with Disbursements Office personnel to improve the service that office provides.

[Provost Brown left the meeting.]

10. Board of Governors Meeting: Policy Committee received some of the documents on the agenda for the December 8, 2010, meeting of the Board of Governors: the Status Report on Accreditation; the FY2012 Capital Outlay Request and Five-year Capital Outlay Plan; the Annual Report on the Long-Term Investment Program for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2010; the 2009 Affirmative Action Status Report; the Grants and Contracts Report for Fiscal Year 2010 – Fourth Quarter; the Development and Alumni Affairs Donation Report for the months of August and September 2010; the Capital Campaign Report from 1/1/2009 to 9/30/2010.
11. Pictures of Students: A faculty member asked that the University provide pictures of students for instructors. Mr. Wolfson will write to Chief Information Officer Joseph Sawasky to ask how the pictures might be made available to instructors.
12. Agenda for the January Senate Meeting: The Policy Committee reviewed the agenda for the January 12, 2011, meeting of the Academic Senate.
13. Scheduling of Classes: Some time ago the University Registrar Linda Falkiewicz and Howard Shapiro, the Associate Vice President for Student Services and Undergraduate Affairs, mentioned revising the scheduling matrix. Policy Committee thought that, if students were to pay upfront for parking and did not pay upon each entry, the schedule of classes might have to be changed to accommodate a possible increase in the number of cars on campus. Mr. Wolfson will contact Mr. Shapiro to find out whether the matrix will be revised.
14. Banner: Members mentioned some limitations in Banner. First, Banner does not allow a department to designate three sections for a course, i.e., a lecture, a lab,

and a quiz. Only two sections per course can be listed. Second, Banner does not distinguish between undergraduate and graduate students. If undergraduates have to meet a prerequisite to take a 5000 level class, graduate students also are blocked. Third, Banner does not allow students to register for the subsequent course in a series if they are currently taking the prerequisite because it does not recognize that the student is taking the prerequisite. The last issue had been brought to Mr. Wolfson's attention earlier and he has written to Mr. Shapiro and to the Provost.

15. The University Foundation: As President of the Academic Senate, Mr. Wolfson is a member of the University Foundation Board. He is unable to attend meetings because of his teaching schedule. He is considering resigning from the Board for that reason and because he disagrees with some of the investments being made to which he has no input.

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Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of December 13, 2010