

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC SENATE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

December 8, 2014

Present: J. Artiss; L. Beale; V. Dallas; R. N. Frank; D. Kessel; C. Parrish;
L. Romano; A. Sankar; W. Volz; M. Winters; A. Wisniewski

Guest: Gloria Heppner, Associate Vice President for Research

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of December 8, 2014.

1. Recommended Changes to WSU's Indirect Cost Return Policy: Ms. Heppner met with the Policy Committee to inform the members of the recommendations to change the allocation of indirect costs. The recommendations are part of the attempt to reverse the decline of our research ranking.

Several consulting firms have reviewed our research activities. They were close to unanimous in their conclusions that we need to focus on our research strengths and to develop a more programmatic approach based on team science principles, multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research recognizing that the external funding climate is now heavily focused on these types of collaborations. Many of the programs to which faculty want to contribute relate to urban health and to sustainable environment and require team science approaches.

The University needs more money to invest in faculty so they are able to develop the preliminary data that will make them competitive for multi-disciplinary grants. We need data that show faculty are collaborating. Researchers have had some success in obtaining these types of grants.

The consultants recommended that we examine our indirect cost return distribution to identify additional funding for research. Such re-distribution would not solve the entire problem; other resources are needed. There is a research facilities fund that has received a portion of indirect cost funding. This fund was established for research facilities but has been used to pay the debt service on the bonds for the renovation of the Chemistry Building and Scott Hall. The University needs more money to meet the debt service; the amount of money allocated to the research facilities fund has been increased.

President Wilson formed a committee and charged it with examining the current allocation of indirect costs and with making recommendations for altering the ICR allocation to faculty, departments, colleges, the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), and the University's general fund. The current policy for distribution of ICR funds has been in place for 11 years.

The committee gathered information from other universities to learn how they allocated their indirect costs. Most universities allocate substantial portions of the money to their central fund. About one-half of them give money to departments and

only one-third give money to investigators. Of those that give money back to the investigators, WSU had the highest percentage, tied with Temple University.

Ms. Heppner noted that changing to team science is not just a matter of money. Also needed are administrative support and training people to work together in this type of research environment. Faculty need to be rewarded for team science in the promotion and tenure process and in the awarding of merit pay. However, she said, we also need to preserve academic excellence within the disciplines.

Currently 57% of the cost recovery is allocated to the central pool, 10% to research stimulation, which funds the internal programs, 7% to the research facilities fund, 11.4% to the department, 7.5% to the school or college, and 7% to the investigators. The suggested re-allocation would be 49% to the central pool, 24% to research stimulation, 9% to the research facilities fund, 8% to the department, 5% to the school or college, and 5% to the investigators.

Ms. Heppner laid out the timeline and details for implementation. Implementation would begin October 1, 2015, the first day of the 2016 fiscal year, but would only affect new or competing renewal grants.

She responded to questions. Asked about the iBIO building, she said that Vice President for Research Stephen Lanier plans to house the following in the iBIO building: some integrative research teams; a clinical research center; and Henry Ford Health Systems bone research program. About one-half of the building will be reserved for new science faculty. The OVPR will work more closely with departments in the recruitment and retention of faculty.

A member of the Policy Committee questioned how the University would incentivize faculty to apply for program projects because preparing the grant application is extremely difficult and very time consuming. Ms. Heppner said that faculty are working on developing such research teams. One incentive is the seminar series sponsored by the Research Office, which brings in researchers from other institutions. Another incentive would involve recognizing the value of multi-disciplinary research in the awarding of promotion and tenure and in merit raises, but those are beyond the scope of the Research Office.

Ms. Heppner turned to the issue of recouping indirect cost money from researchers who are stockpiling ICR funds and are not actively engaging in research. The OVPR is considering establishing a cutoff point for the amount of money that a researcher is not using. Policy Committee members made some suggestions about whom should be targeted. Researchers who receive ICR funds and are using them will not have the money taken away.

[Associate Vice President Heppner left the meeting.]

2. Report from the Chair:
 - a. Commencement ceremonies were held December 6. Provost Winters thanked Mr. Frank, Mr. Volz, and Mr. Romano for representing the faculty at the ceremonies.
 - b. The Provost's Office has submitted the slates of nominees for most of the Article XXX committees. The members of the committees will be selected at Policy Committee's meeting on December 15.
 - c. The Board of Governors met on December 5. At that time, the Department of Clinical and Translational Science was dissolved. Both Eugene Driker and Debbie Dingell completed their terms. In January Marilyn Kelly and Dana Thompson will begin their terms as Board members.

3. Report from the Senate President: Mr. Romano raised the need for consultation with faculty and Deans when capital projects are planned that involve the departments within their colleges. He serves on the search committee for the Vice President for Finance and Business Operations and will question the candidates on this issue.

- *4. Proceedings of the Policy Committee: The Proceedings of the Policy Committee meeting of November 24, 2014, were approved as modified.

5. Reports from the Battelle Group: The Battelle Group is one of the consulting firms that reviewed our research activities. They submitted their reports, which are:
 - a. Advancing Manufacturing Systems & Digital Design;
 - b. Advancing Urban Health Disparities Research; and
 - c. Advancing Precision Medicine through Imaging and Diagnostics into Clinical Settings.Policy Committee members commented on the reports.

6. Academic Senate Meeting: Policy Committee reviewed topics for the agenda of the next Senate meeting.

Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of December 15, 2014