

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC SENATE  
PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

February 18, 2013

Present: L. Beale; V. Dallas; D. Kessel; C. Parrish; L. Romano; W. Volz; P. Vroom;  
A. Wisniewski; J. Woodyard

Absent with notice: R. MacArthur; A. Vlasopolos

Guests: Joseph Rankin, Interim Associate Provost for Academic Affairs; Corinne Webb,  
Associate Vice President, Enrollment Services

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of February 18, 2013.

1. Procedures for Higher Education Opportunity Act Compliance: The federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) was passed in 2008. One aspect of the law covering textbooks that took effect on July 1, 2010, requires public universities that receive Title IV federal money for student scholarships to comply with the law. The intention of the law is to make textbook pricing transparent so students can shop for the best price. A link on the online course schedule will take students to the Barnes & Noble Bookstore that will show the books and course packs required for the course. The law works best if the University has the information on the website when registration begins. In 2014 the federal government will check compliance. Mr. Rankin expects Wayne State will be found in compliance if it has a policy in place and a high proportion of faculty submit their book registration in a timely fashion.

Mr. Romano thought the University ought to have a policy to minimize the cost of textbooks for students. In the sciences, publishers release a new edition every two years with minor changes. Many faculty are not aware that the differences between the old and new books are minor. Notifying faculty that they do not have to upgrade the text unless they want to do so would save students money.

Mr. Rankin did not think the administration would want to tell faculty which edition of a text to use but he offered to add a statement to the Procedures for HEOA Compliance informing instructors that to save students money they could use an older edition of a text. The earlier the University Bookstore receives textbook orders the more likely it will be able to get used books.

The Curriculum and Instruction Committee will be charged with developing a statement about the acceptable editions of textbooks to use in classes. It was suggested that the instructor use a form to inform students which editions are acceptable.

[Mr. Rankin left the meeting.]

2. Report from the Chair:

- a. Leonard Kaplan, Emeritus Professor of Education, established an endowed professorship and had talked with the College and the Development Office about turning the professorship into a center. Professor Kaplan died recently. The College of Education consulted with the Development Office to see if Professor Kaplan's plan still could be carried out. The Development Office determined that the College could establish the center. The Executive Committee of the College of Education recommended that the Leonard Kaplan Educational Center for Critical Urban Studies be established and be forwarded to the Academic Senate. Deputy President Vroom brought the issue to the Policy Committee.

Members of the Policy Committee pointed out that the account did not have enough money to cover the expenses of a center over a long period of time. The center would become an obligation dependent upon money from the general fund. One member noted that an endowed professorship would be more valuable. A named professorship is prestigious for the holder and is good for the University. Policy Committee will discuss the issue at its next meeting.

- b. The group that Deputy President Vroom formed to study the retention of students of color, students of low income, and students who are the first members of their families to attend college met last week. Two points of view emerged. One was that the University only needed to follow the recommendations in earlier studies to assist students. The other view was to follow those recommendations but also to set up a multi-cultural center. The group will explore what a multi-cultural center within a comprehensive approach might look like. They will look at the recommendations in the earlier reports to see which have been achieved and which are still in process.
- c. Asked about the process for hiring an Interim Provost, Dr. Vroom said that she would discuss the process with the President.

[Corinne Webb, Associate Vice President, Enrollment Services, joined the meeting.]

3. Enrollment: Ms. Webb reported on enrollment for the fall term 2013 and informed the Committee of a new initiative to increase the six-year graduation rate. She compared the winter 2013 enrollment with the enrollment for 2012. There was a 3.11% drop in headcount as well as a 1.72% decline in student credit hours. There were about 28,938 students in the fall; 1,409 students graduated.

When students who receive Title IV financial aid withdraw from all of their classes in a semester, the federal government exacts a penalty. When a student drops all credits, Financial Aid notifies the student that they have to calculate and review with the student how much aid they can keep and how much the University must return to the government. The University returns the money and puts a hold on the student's registration; the student must repay the University. Last fall approximately 500 students dropped all of their classes and the University had to return \$752,000 to the federal government. The University also has to check for unofficial withdrawals. The

University must notify the student and ask the instructor to verify when the student was last in class or performed some type of academic activity. If there is no response from the student or the instructor, the government says you have to assume they attended 50% of the class and return the remainder of the financial aid. Another 561 students were in that category in the fall. At some universities, when a student goes online to withdraw from all courses, a message pops up telling them to go to their advisor for permission, to get written permission from the instructor, and to meet with a financial aid counselor. If the student does not return and they have loans, after six months, the government will seek repayment of the loans.

When registration was opened for the winter term, the University had holds on 5,000 students. A total of 1,963 or 7.3% of the students enrolled in fall 2012 did not re-enroll in winter 2013. This included the undergraduate students who did not have a 2.0 GPA and graduate students who did not have a 3.0 GPA.

Some policies the University has in place make it hard to enroll enough new students to cover those who cannot enroll and those who take a break. Some institutions track students by term as well as cumulatively so they can intervene with students and get them out of trouble before it's too.

Ms. Webb had a list of the guidelines the Admissions Office is following for admitting first time in any college students and transfer students for the fall 2013 semester. Beginning with the fall term, students who transfer credits must show evidence of 24 completed credits with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 and a grade of C or better in those courses. If a transfer student does not meet these criteria, they will be reviewed under the FTIAC admissions criteria.

The number of students admitted for fall term 2013 is up 4% over this time last year. By mid February, 564 students had accepted the offer of admission.

Ms. Webb informed the Committee about the strategies to improve the number of students who register for classes. The number admitted is good, but the yield needs improvement. Communication with newly admitted students will increase. A new database will be created to guide and direct multiple campaigns to keep in touch with students who have been admitted. The Enrollment Office will coordinate an alumni letter writing campaign to welcome the new students who have been admitted. There will be multiple orientation sessions from May through August. The awarding of financial aid for newly admitted students will be expedited.

The college scorecard is posted on the White House website. The scorecard gives the cost to attend, the graduation rate, the loan default rate, and the typical amount borrowed for undergraduate study. Within 24 hours after the information was posted the University received phone calls from parents asking why they should send their child to Wayne State when it has a graduation rate of 26.4%.

A member asked if anyone has looked at such criteria as ACT scores to see if there are patterns with which to identify at risk students. Knowing if the reason for poor performance is due to poor academic preparation, financial problems, or family

issues would offer guidance in terms of future admissions. Ms. Webb's office has not done that kind of study because they have only recently gathered the information. However, her office has sent tools to colleges to access information about a student's GPA and the holds on his/her record. Faculty and students can access that information as well.

Although faculty approve students' request to drop courses, they do not know that the student has withdrawn from all his/her classes. The members of the Policy Committee had not known the consequences for students who receive Pell Grants and who drop all of their classes. They believe action needs to be taken to inform students and faculty. Ms. Webb suggested a procedure to handle requests to drop classes and sought the Policy Committee's approval. Policy Committee asked her to develop a process for review by the Academic Senate. The policy would go into effect in fall 2013. In addition, when faculty submit their grades they will be asked to include the last date when they saw the student in the class. Just from the fall 2013 term, Ms. Webb estimates that the University will have to repay the federal government \$1.2 million for the students who dropped all of their classes. Ms. Webb acknowledged that the information about the consequences of dropping classes must be stressed at orientation and that the information ought to be sent to the student's parents. It also was suggested that the administration send a message to faculty that when a student drops a class, there are implications not only for the student but also for the University.

Ms. Webb explained the goals that have been set to improve the graduation rate. Information about the credits individual students need to graduate has been sent to the colleges. They will evaluate the records and contact the students who are close to graduating to assist them in completing their degrees.

Some issues that might affect a student's graduating in six or fewer years are: How much are those who take seven or more years to graduate working? How large are their families? How old were they when they matriculated? How much are they impacted because they cannot get the classes they need?

[Ms. Webb left the meeting.]

4. NIH Proposal: Interim Dean of the Graduate School Ambika Mathur will attend next week's Policy Committee meeting to inform the members about a grant opportunity from the National Institutes of Health that would provide infrastructure for graduate students to follow career paths other than academics. The grant would provide money for students to intern at businesses.
- \*5. Proceedings of the Policy Committee: The Proceedings of the Policy Committee meeting of February 11, 2013, were approved as submitted.
6. Graduate Council Meeting: Policy Committee received the agenda and supporting documents for the meeting of February 20, 2013.

7. Agenda for the Academic Senate Meeting: Policy Committee reviewed the drafted agenda for the March 6 Academic Senate meeting.
8. Report from the Elections Committee: Mr. Woodyard, the Chair of the Elections Committee, gave a preliminary report on the number of faculty and academic staff in the various schools/colleges and the number of representatives from the units to the Senate for the 2013-2014 academic year. The eligibility of some academic staff members has to be determined before the information is finalized. Those who are administrators and have given up their retreat rights are not eligible to serve on the Senate or to vote for representatives.
9. Report from the Chair of the Research Committee: Mr. Kessel assumed the position of Chair of the Research Committee after David Oupicky, the previous Chair left the University. Mr. Kessel reported that Vice President for Research Hilary Ratner informed the Committee about the research establishment. The University is bring in as much funding as in the past but other institutions have increased their funding and so Wayne State is falling behind in the rankings. Expenditures are not increasing possibly due to the reluctance of investigators to spend money because they are uncertain if their grants will be renewed. The Division of Research will establish centers of excellence rather than the points of excellence program now in place. The areas are: cardiology, imaging, and nanotechnology.
10. FY 2014 Budget: In response to a question, Deputy President Vroom explained the information and instructions given to the Deans about next year's budget. President Gilmour recommended that the tax on the funds remaining in college budgets from the FY 2012 fiscal year be taxed only 1.5%. She stressed that this is only a recommendation; it is not firm. The money would be used to make up for the reduction in the state appropriation, the projected shortfall in tuition, and the carryover debt from FY 2011. Also, Deans were asked to prepare a scenario explaining how they would cover a 5% cut in their budgets. Again, no decision has been made about a budget cut.

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Approved as corrected at the Policy Committee meeting of February 25, 2013