

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

September 14, 2009

Present: N. Barrett; C. Parrish; L. Romano; H. Tse; A. Vlasopolos; W. Volz;  
J. Whittum-Hudson; A. Wisniewski; S. Wolfson; J. Woodyard;

Absent with notice: M. Sengstock

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of September 14, 2009.

1. Report from the Chair:

- a. Wayne State will participate in a survey conducted by the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) of the Harvard Graduate School of Education to learn about the level of satisfaction of WSU faculty members who are in the early stages of their careers. COACHE will send the survey directly to the faculty. Policy Committee members suggested that the Provost send a message to the faculty prior to the mailing of the survey to notify them that the survey is being conducted and to ask that they participate in it.
- b. Preliminary enrollment figures indicate that head count is slightly higher this fall than in fall 2008. The final enrollment figures will be known on September 17. There was an effort to get students registered earlier than usual for the term.
- c. Student housing is full. On a pilot basis, the lower level of the Student Center Building is open until 2:00 a.m. to encourage students to use the facility.
- d. Policy Committee raised concerns about the computing facilities, both the inability to access Pipeline and Blackboard during the first week of classes and the need for personnel to staff the Help Desk to assist students who take on-line courses and are on-line at any time of the day.
- e. A member asked the Provost if it was true that community colleges were asking the state of Michigan to allow them to grant four-year degrees. The Provost confirmed that it was true.
- f. Asked about the status of the search for the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Provost said that the search has not been initiated.
- g. Provost Barrett was asked about low productivity courses. She said that every two years the University looks at the programs that do not graduate a certain number of students. Some are eliminated. Others, because there are no costs with their continuing, remain on the books.

2. Report from the Senate President: Mr. Wolfson brought to the Policy Committee's attention the Statutes that govern the Academic Senate. Members expressed concern about the lack of consultation that the President has had with the Academic Senate as the official representative of the faculty and academic staff. Mr. Wolfson will write a memorandum to the President about the role of the Academic Senate.

\*3. Proceedings of the Policy Committee: The Proceedings of the Policy Committee meeting of August 31, 2009, were approved as submitted.

4. Election of the Parliamentarian: The Policy Committee selected Mary Sengstock to serve as the Parliamentarian for the 2009-2010 academic year. This action will be submitted to the full Senate for confirmation at the October Senate meeting.

5. Election of the Vice Chair: The Policy Committee selected Louis Romano to serve as the Vice Chair of the Academic Senate for the 2009-2010 academic year. This action will be submitted to the full Senate for confirmation at the October Senate meeting.
6. Liaisons to Standing Committees: The assignment of Policy Committee members to serve as liaisons to the Senate's standing committees was completed.
7. Pandemic Concerns: Mr. Wolfson questioned whether the Policy Committee and Academic Senate should offer advice to faculty on how to handle class attendance in the event of a flu pandemic. Most members of the Committee believed that they could not provide any more advice than that offered by health officials to avoid contracting the virus or to students who may contract it. It was also noted that by making this a major issue, students might try to use it as an excuse to avoid exams.
8. Issues for Future Senate Meetings: Policy Committee reviewed issues that might be on the agendas of Senate meetings this fall. Mr. Wolfson will contact Associate Vice President Kohrman to learn if the administration still plans to conduct a forum about strategic directions at the October Senate meeting. [The forum was postponed to the November 4 Academic Senate meeting.]
9. Issues for Policy Committee Meetings: Policy Committee discussed issues that might be on the agendas of future meetings. Graduate School Dean Mark Wardell will meet with the Policy Committee on September 21.

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Approved as revised at the Policy Committee meeting of September 21, 2009