

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

January 13, 2014

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

Guests: John Vander Weg, Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Academic Personnel; Kelley Skillin, Director of Professional and Academic Development, Office of the Provost

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of January 13, 2014.

1. Policy Guidelines on Courses and Credit Hours: Ms. Skillin informed the Committee that over the past 18 months, her office audited the class schedule to determine the number of credit hours assigned per clock hour. This was done in preparation for developing a policy on the allocation of credit hours to courses, which is needed to satisfy the requirements of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association and federal regulations. They reviewed the class schedules from fall 2009 through fall 2013 for a total of 59,000 courses. Although some of the courses were not in compliance at the beginning of this time period, they were changed substantially over the years so that they are now in compliance. Ms. Skillin turned her attention to future courses so that in August 2013 her office looked at the courses for winter 2014. A draft policy was developed from the information gathered. It was discussed at this meeting of the Policy Committee.

The majority of lecture classes meet for one hour per credit hour and the majority of laboratory classes meet for 2 to 3 hours per credit hour. WSU's definition of a credit hour is 50 to 60 minutes. The policy was developed to encompass the majority of classes in the class schedule. It was reviewed by the Deans, the Chairs, and the scheduling coordinators; changes were made based on their feedback.

The fall 2014 and winter 2015 class schedules will be given to the accreditors along with a copy of the policy and a copy of the University's definition of a credit hour. The accreditors will determine if WSU is compliant with the credit hour policy and with the federal guidelines. The accreditation visit will be in the 2016-2017 academic year. The accreditors want consistency in allocation of credit hours to courses across the institution.

Asked about consistency in the scheduling of courses, Provost Winters said that the University has a matrix that departments are supposed to follow so classes start and end at the same time, but it is not enforced. Mr. Romano suggested that the matrix be revised so all courses start on the hour. This could be carried out as part of a master plan that would maximize classroom usage and parking facilities.

A Policy Committee member thought special attention should be given to hybrid and online courses in determining the number of contact hours. Ms. Skillin said that the

University has to report to the government the number of traditional, hybrid, and online courses we offer. The federal government is not interested in contact hours for online or hybrid courses. They are interested in traditional courses, and the assumption is that the meeting time for online and hybrid courses, if they have a face-to-face equivalent, are equivalent to the traditional courses. Mr. Romano noted that, if the government is concerned that students get the instruction for which they pay, this is an area that would concern them.

Provost Winters said that the 2N Committee on Online Education would answer some of these questions but all of the members have not been appointed yet. Revising course policies is a long-term project; issues have to be tackled one at a time.

Some members noted that the categories into which courses are placed in the draft policy do not cover all types of instruction. Provost Winters pointed out that there has to be a limit to the number of categories; we can not have categories for every type of course.

In the years ahead faculty and Department Chairs will be able to use more creative models for delivery of courses. Some colleges already have revised their calendar to meet six or seven weeks rather than 15 weeks. The contact for the condensed courses must equal the contact hours in the 15-week courses.

There was a great deal of discussion about the length of laboratory classes. The draft policy states that they must be two to three hours in length. Some members understood the federal requirements to allow faculty to increase the hours spent in laboratory instruction without having to increase the number of credits attached to the lab. Ms. Skillin spoke to the need to have consistency across the University. She said that the accreditors would want the University to justify the assignment of credit hours to the different amount of time. Mr. Romano noted that the policy for lecture courses was that one credit should require at least one hour of class time and saw no reason why the words “at least” could not be added to the laboratory time description. Mr. Romano asked for a copy of the policy that requires absolute consistency in this area. The Provost’s Office will check into the matter.

[Ms. Skillin left the meeting.]

- *2. Educational Development Grant Committee: The Provost and the Policy Committee jointly selected the members of the Educational Development Grant Committee for the 2013-2014 academic year.

[Mr. Vander Weg left the meeting.]

- 3. Report from the Chair:
 - a. The Clinical and Translational Science (CTS) Committee held its first meeting on Friday. The members of that Committee suggested that additional members in certain fields be added to the membership. The CTS Committee was organized to work with the consulting firm Faegre Baker Daniels to learn what other

universities have in place for CTS and to make recommendations about how WSU should position itself for research grant awards in the field. In addition, President Wilson has asked that the same Committee work with the Battell Group, a consulting firm that will look more widely at research and advise the University how it should position itself to increase grant support in general. The Provost and the Policy Committee discussed the fields that should be covered and selected additional faculty. Provost Winters said that the two consulting firms are cooperating in the work.

- b. Provost Winters, Associate Provost for Student Success Monica Brockmeyer, Chief Information Officer Joseph Sawasky, and Assistant Vice President for Budget, Planning and Analysis Mark Byrd, are going to Georgia State University on January 24 for a presentation about GSU's use of big data in their student retention efforts. Dr. Winters also wants members of Georgia State's administration to visit Wayne State to hold workshops.

4. Report from the Senate President:

- a. The announcement has been sent requesting faculty to make brief presentations as part of the program celebrating President Wilson's inauguration. The theme of the presentations is "new frontiers in research." If the talk is related to urbanism it will be given special consideration. The inauguration is Friday, April 4. There will be a concert the evening of April 3 and a reception following the inauguration on April 4.
- b. The search committee for the Vice President for Research will soon be selecting the applicants to invite for airport interviews.

- *5. Proceedings of the Policy Committee: The Proceedings of the Policy Committee meeting of December 16, 2013, were approved as submitted.

Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of January 27, 2014