

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC SENATE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

March 3, 2014

Present: J. Artiss; L. Beale; V. Dallas; D. Kessel; C. Parrish; L. Romano; W. Volz;
M. Winters

Absent with notice: R. MacArthur

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of March 3, 2014.

Guests: Thomas Cavalier, Assistant General Counsel; Kelley Skillin, Director of Professional and Academic Development, Office of the Provost

1. Policy Guidelines on Courses and Credit Hours: Mr. Cavalier and Ms. Skillin attended the meeting to continue the discussion about the Policy Guidelines on Courses and Credit Hours. Ms. Skillin and John Vander Weg, Interim Associate Provost for Academic Personnel, had attended the Policy Committee's January 13 meeting. At that time, the Committee suggested that changes be made to the draft Policy. The changes were not made and the Policy, dated January 2, 2014, was issued to the schools and colleges. Mr. Romano had informed the Academic Senate about the Policy at the Senate's February 7 meeting. Provost Winters has asked that Ms. Skillin and Mr. Cavalier make a presentation to the Senate at the April 2 meeting.

Ms. Skillin outlined the presentation she will make to the Senate. She will give a brief history of the need for the Policy and the role of the accreditors in enforcing the program integrity rules. She will outline WSU's Policy and respond to the concerns that Senate members raised at the February Senate meeting.

Several issues that were discussed at earlier Policy Committee meetings were raised again. They included the definition of a credit hour and whether uniformity in course credit hours was needed across all disciplines. Ms. Skillin said that there was no requirement for any discipline to do one particular thing, but insisted that accreditation bodies require consistency. The members of the Policy Committee disputed that contention. The administration tried to build in as much flexibility as possible after talking with faculty in most of the disciplines. If a department's courses are the same as the courses at other institutions across the country, departments may apply for an exception. Mr. Romano believes the University should have a policy that does not require exceptions in major units of the University. However, Ms. Skillin said, the University cannot have a policy for every unit. The administration is responsible for monitoring compliance, and that would be impossible. Mr. Romano pointed out that if the Chemistry Department increases the number of credits for laboratory courses, the number of credits will increase for the students in other disciplines who take Chemistry courses.

Ms. Skillin said that the accreditation agencies do not distinguish between lecture and discussion courses. They combined discussion courses with lectures and seminars in counting credits. Mr. Romano said that the DOE Guidelines state that if an institution counts contact hours per credit it needs to state that there are two hours of homework.

Ms. Skillin maintained that the units decided how to categorize their courses but some members of the Policy Committee noted that they were told that the administration had promulgated the policy and units had to conform to it.

At earlier meetings, Mr. Romano had pointed out that the DOE Guidelines required more information about hybrid and online courses than was in the University's Policy. Ms. Skillin said that the information would be added. A special committee is being formed and it would develop the policy for those courses. Mr. Romano understood that all that was needed was for the University to state that online courses that meet asynchronously have the same amount of work required as the courses that meet in classrooms.

Provost Winters said that the administration would revisit the Policy and would make some changes. Mr. Cavalier and Ms. Skillin will present the University Policy to the full Senate at its April 2 meeting. Policy Committee asked to see the revised Policy Guidelines prior to the Senate meeting.

Some members of the Policy Committee expressed their disappointment that none of the suggestions that the members had made in January were incorporated into the University Policy.

[Mr. Cavalier and Ms. Skillin left the meeting.]

2. Report from the Chair:

- a. CURES: Mr. Romano had asked questions about the fact that the Center for Urban Responses to Environmental Stressors (CURES) was not chartered. It is housed within the Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (IEHS). The IEHS has applied for a grant, called a center grant, from the National Institutes of Health. The University Statute on Centers and Institutes does allow this type of center to be formed. Mr Romano stated that If the grant were to be awarded, then this center can stand. If not, then it cannot exist. When the grant expires the center is to close.
- b. Fall Enrollment: Provost Winters reported on the enrollment figures for the fall term 2014 as compared with fall 2013. Applications are up 7%, admissions are up 11%, the number of students who were admitted and said they would accept is up 101%. The students that were admitted do not have to pay any money at this time.
- c. Recognition: Associate Provost Monica Brockmeyer began a project with the December 2013 graduates when she asked them if they wanted to thank one individual who was of particular help in their getting their degrees. One hundred twenty-six graduates responded. Each of the faculty or academic staff members
- d.

- e. who were named will get a postcard with the student's quote, signed by President Wilson, Provost Winters, and Associate Provost Brockmeyer.
 - f. Capital Campaign: The Capital Campaign is scheduled to be launched in October. The faculty and staff campaign will be launched in May. Outside donors like to know that the faculty and staff of the University are donors also. The administration would like to have all faculty and staff support the campaign. The amount is not important.
 - g. Provost Winters saw a presentation by the Educational Advisory Board, a software company that does risk assessment for students. It predicts success based on past data of pass and failure rates of courses. The information could be used as an advising tool.
3. Report from the Senate President:
- a. The subcommittee that reviewed the applications to make brief presentations at the symposium held in conjunction with President Wilson's inauguration selected the participants from disciplines across the University,
 - b. Mr. Romano met with President Wilson. They discussed the relationship between the faculty and the Board of Governors and the clinical and translational science initiative from the National Institutes of Health. A consultant will advise the University on the initiative.
 - c. A member asked Mr. Romano to raise the possibility of the Policy Committee meeting with the President on a regular basis.
- *4. Proceedings of the Policy Committee: The Proceedings of the Policy Committee meeting of February 24, 2014, were approved as submitted.
5. Faculty Mentoring: Ms. Beale, the Policy Committee liaison to the Faculty Affairs Committee, mentioned that one of the issues raised at a recent meeting was the need for reviewing the mentoring process and ensuring that feedback was given to the faculty or academic staff member. The issue of mentoring will be on the next agenda of the Policy Committee. Provost Winters said that every hiring packet has a mentoring plan.
6. Reports from Liaisons:
- a. Mr. Kessel reported that the Research Committee thinks faculty might need help, such as reviewing the application, with grant submissions. The Committee will write a recommendation. The question will be whether a review should be mandatory or optional.
 - b. Ms. Beale reported that the Graduate Council, at its meeting of February 19, discussed questions that people had about background checks for international students. The Provost will have a report on the background checks. Ms. Beale also mentioned that the Graduate Council discussed faculty's getting credit for advising on directed studies and theses.