

Faculty Affairs Committee//Annual Report AY 2021-2022

The Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) of the Academic Senate is charged with considering issues impacting academic staff and faculty, especially in regard to the effective exercise of their duties in teaching and service, their interprofessional relationships with other faculty and staff and administrators, and their needs and concerns regarding university cultures and norms that hinder or support their work. The FAC followed the Policy Committee suggestions closely to plan and undertake activities.

- **The Future of Higher Education**

The FAC discussed issues and concerns about the future of higher education. A series of questions on credentials, badges and certificates, degrees/careers, faculty and staff, online education, study abroad and international outreach, etc. were studied. FAC members spent extensive time and energy in it and provided productive/meaningful comments and suggestion. A formal FAC Higher Education Report was sent to the policy committee in January 2022.

- **Emeritus Status Report**

The FAC discussed the reconsideration of the Emeritus Status report for a broadening, rather than limiting, access to emeritus status, including elimination of any administrative role other than provost sign-off and availability of emeritus status to long-term or tenured/ESS academic staff and faculty. The main issues (e.g., the cost of expensive library databases; *remote access* to only select licensed resources; some emeritus faculty, particularly STEM faculty, use these databases for their own gain) were laid out and possible solutions for these issues (e.g., case by case, special request form for access, contract to fit WSU values) were suggested. At the end, a motion for reconsideration was approved.

- **Academic Misconduct Provisions of Student Code-Faculty Role**

The FAC invited Dr. Brad Roth to present the latest update on the Academic Misconduct Provisions of Student Code regarding the faculty role in the University-wide processes

- Appeals of faculty-imposed grade penalties (Sec. 10.1(a))

Faculty member decides that the student is graded down or failed but no charges are brought against the student in cases of academic misconduct. Student is provided notice. Gives the student the right to appeal with the department chair. Added language that the faculty member is involved in the appeal process.

- Informal administrative dispositions of faculty-initiated academic misconduct complaints (Sec. 10.1(b))

Faculty member decides to bring charges against a student for academic misconduct. There is either a formal hearing or the dean's office making decision on an informal basis. Faculty members want to be consulted and part of this process. Some administrators will "sweep things under the rug" without consulting faculty. Findings are to be sent to the faculty member. OGC is

hesitant to do this because it takes away the anonymity of the student and could be a FERPA violation. Resolution: Office of General Council (OGC) says that each college will report any instances of this each year including the basis of the grade modification. This is not finalized. Reason for grade change submitted to Dean and Deans report to Provost's office.

- **COVID-related Caregiver Modified Duties**

Following Dr. Lauren Duquette-Rury's story sharing, the FAC discussed the impacts of COVID on caregivers and would like to initiate a proposal on COVID-related caregiver modified duties. The COVID pandemic has wrought havoc not only in the lives of those who contracted the virus, but on families, especially those with small children, who lost childcare altogether or experienced significant interruptions to childcare while meeting the demands of their full-time jobs in academia. Some R1 institutions have erected new programs to address the differential impacts that COVID has had on faculty with dependent children and other care responsibilities. WSU may need to mobilize support to offer a similar program and help faculty adversely affected make some headway on their research programs after two years of stagnation.

- **WSU-GEARS Program**

The FAC invited Drs. Krista Brumley and Lars Johnson to present their findings on WSU-GEARS program. The purpose of their baseline survey was to gather climate and perception data on employee experiences, and provide peer support to new and current faculty members to navigate the complexities of work/family/life strains at WSU. It is found that more women are reporting high levels of work-related interference with their non-work lives and blurring between work and non-work. Women also report lower perceptions of support from the department and its leaders for non-work and family-related obligations. Family supportive superior behaviors varied for men and women by rank. Women at the Assistant and Associate ranks had a lower high endorsement as compared to men. In addition to more women reporting high levels of witnessing abuse, more women also report high levels of experienced interpersonal incivility. There are three Initiatives proposed to provide supports: *Bystander Intervention Training and Train the Trainer, Networking, and Wayne Trains, and Chair Workshop Series.*

- **International Students and Global Engagement Opportunities**

The FAC invited Dr. Ahmad Ezzeddine, VP of Academic Student Affairs and Global Engagement to talk about international students and global engagement opportunities. It was found that numbers of new international students in Fall 2021 were on par with 2019; regained all losses gained during pandemic, but not to pre-Trump numbers yet. WSU has been very successful in reaching students from countries around the world. Usually, Wayne State has students from 67-75 countries, but this past year had students from 82 countries. Growing numbers of Nigerian students; always looking to diversify. This upcoming year, the focus is on recruiting international undergrads. Currently most of WSU's international efforts happen at the graduate level. The new strategic plan does more to prioritize global experiences. An initiative

called Global Learning for All is being instituted – which aims to give every student an opportunity to gain a global experience, either virtually or in person, either abroad or through diverse communities in Detroit. Another initiative for supporting students who are apply for fellowships – Fulbright, Truman, Goldwater scholarships. Have a similar track for faculty and would love to have more faculty pursue it. Most students and faculty who pursue these opportunities through their office are successful at advancing.

- **Statute Changes of Academic Programs**

The FAC invited Associate Vice President Darrin Ellis and Kelly Dormer to discuss four university-wide proposed changes.

- Changing WF/WN/WP designations to just W. This is an equity issue; minority students were more likely to have WF, and many graduate programs penalize this designation on a transcript. WSU is only 3 universities in the state that uses a W pass/fail designation. Faculty in attendance supported these changes and recommended they be retroactively applied for the past two years.
- Removing the limit on number of transfer credit hours the university will accept. Currently, students are allowed to transfer in 64 credit hours, including 12 hours toward the students' intended program. Faculty expressed concerns, particularly about those in liberal arts traditions, creating a slippery slope where students would eventually be able to earn a WSU degree while completing little coursework here. Ellis emphasized that programs can still set the requirements and that courses that qualify for the degree will still have one-to-one equivalents.
- In line with the transfer credit issue above, students should be able to transfer up to half of the credit hours for a certificate. Again, faculty expressed concern about watering down certificates. Ellis noted that this change was requested by the foreign languages department to allow more transfer credit to count toward foreign language certificates. Faculty additionally raised the question about extending certificates to non-matriculating students. Ellis mentioned there is a big barrier with financial aid. Financial aid will not pay for a certificate; it will pay only for degrees.
- Changing many of the eligibility requirements for a post-humous WSU from 90% of credits completed to 75%. Faculty debated how this applied to students pursuing MA theses. Also discussed the need to prevent the policy from being applied retroactively. Proposed a limit of within the last 2 years.