

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

April 15, 2019

Present: L. Beale; P. Beavers; V. Dallas; r. hoogland; D. Kessel; C. Parrish; B. Roth; N. Simon; W. Volz; K. Whitfield, A. Wisniewski

Guests: Darin Ellis, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness

The item marked with an asterisk constitutes the Action of April 15, 2019.

1. Academic Analytics: Associate Provost Ellis first discussed the university's use of academic analytics with the Policy Committee on December 10, 2018. At today's meeting he provided a handout illustrating the factors that units might use to measure productivity. The department or school is able to determine the factors that best showcase the work of their faculty. Mr. Ellis explained that all of the raw data are gathered from publicly available sources, such as the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the British Library for the ISSN numbers. Data can be compared across all institutions. There are two suites of products. One is benchmarking that primarily compares institution to institution at the institutional level, the Ph.D. program level or the department level. The other is the discovery suite. All faculty with a research appointment will be able to access their own information in the Discovery suite. Departments have to identify the faculty who have research appointments. For the first year, the university identified people by classification. The roster of researchers could change from year to year if the unit changes its definition of researcher. Every public piece of information on every scholar's record is available on a tool called faculty insight. Faculty insight allows people in the humanities and performing arts and even in the STEM fields to claim impact or credit for work that is not normally counted in databases. They are able to edit the work to their faculty insight profile. We could make that publicly available through what is called an external discovery suite. Scholars are able to identify collaborators.

The academic unit determines how much weight to assign to a particular type of work, such as books, journal articles, awards, etc. Ms. Beale pointed out that although the data are quantifiable objective data, they are subject to all the subjective issues of how it is used.

Mr. Ellis used universities in the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities (formerly known as the Urban 13 Universities) to show how the data are recorded. Units can select the institutions to which they want to be compared. He displayed information of a department based on career progression, award profile, grant funding sources, book profile, and unit modeling. By manipulating the unit model information, a dean is able to see how hiring a new faculty member with particular credentials would affect the unit. Chairs could compare their department with similar departments in other universities to see if they are getting their fair share of grants and awards. If a

department thinks the faculty should get more awards they could determine which ones to pursue.

People have to be trained before they are given access to the database. Ms. Hoogland pointed out that faculty need to be made aware of the information that is collected and how it is used. Mr. Ellis had not considered that. Ms. Beale asked if the information would be used in the salary process and, if so, would there be guidelines on how it is to be used. Use in the salary process is a strong reason for communicating with the faculty and ensuring that any 'report' on a particular faculty member is available to that faculty member. If chairs have access to the data and faculty don't and chairs group and sort the information, there is potential positive uses, but also considerable potential for misuse.

Ms. Beale distributed a draft recommendation for forming an Ad Hoc Task Force on Transparency. The draft was precipitated by the concerns related to the way Google and Amazon use their databases. She thinks the Academic Senate ought to consider in more depth the transparency concerns in light of the increasing availability of data and the subjectiveness of data selection. She hopes that Mr. Ellis, a member of the staff in Institutional Research, Senior Associate Provost for Student Success Monica Brockmeyer, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management Dawn Medley, and Student Financial Aid would meet with the task force to discuss and demonstrate various key databases so the task force can write a report and recommendation. Ms. Beale understands not wanting to have universal access to the data and needing expertise but there has to be a way that the academic governance organization has the information and an understanding how it is used, such as having selected faculty trained with access. The Faculty Affairs Committee discussed the use of Academic Analytics. Members asked the rationale for its use and how much it cost. What is the probable outcome?

The PC members agreed that transparency is important and that faculty should be able to correct records about themselves. Faculty need to be able to add more modest citations than are in the databases of the institutions from which the university gets the information. Mr. Volz agreed that it was important to consider data transparency. Ms. Hoogland said that someone who changes their research agenda would likely need a couple of years to establish a new niche. That person could be adversely affected in the process.

Mr. Parrish believes administrators will use the data for whatever they want. Ms. Beale responded that the potential for use is a good reason for the task force and ultimately for having some non-administrative faculty who are able to work with the database.

Ms. Dallas supported the task force idea but noted a concern about information that is put into students' records that may be harmful long after they are here and concerns about access to confidential data. Ms. Beale agreed that there are confidentiality issues that need to be considered. Mr. Ellis pointed out that there is a data governance group that is discussing similar concerns, including what policies should be established on deletion of information on students. Another issue the

Policy Committee had asked Institutional Research about is the dropout rates for different groups (African American, Gay, etc.) by cohort. Mr. Ellis said that they are working on it. The data governance group is discussing compliance issues and other restrictions of access to data. Robert Reynolds, Professor of Computer Science, and Jane Fitzgibbon, Lecturer of Communication, are members of the Information Systems Management Committee that is also discussing these issues. Ms. Beale asked for a list of the members of the data governance group.

Mr. Parrish said that once a public institution creates a data set it can be requested through FOIA. Ms. Beale noted that FOIA requests would likely not be useful if faculty do not know whether a chair or dean has run an analysis of that person or what factors or filters were used for such an analysis.

Ms. Beale said that the use of data could be good or could be problematic, so this task force can be an important step. Policy members agreed that the task force should be established. The selection of the transparency task force members will be on the agenda for the next Policy Committee meeting. Ms. Beale asked Provost Whitfield if the administrators mentioned would be available to consult with the task force, and he agreed they would.

[Mr. Ellis left the meeting.]

2. Report from the Chair:

- a. The Spirit of Community Awards Ceremony was held April 11.
- b. Provost Whitfield has been attending many alumni receptions. The university, he said, should soon begin its next capital campaign. The process should be informed by the faculty and the schools and colleges because a university is built on its academic mission. The Provost believes we need more distinguished faculty chairs and more faculty titles generally. Donations often are given when donors know what faculty are doing. The Provost suggested a push for titles that require even smaller amounts of funding, and indicated that alumni he has met would be interested in providing such support and appreciate the recognition. Alumni want to be connected to their professors.

Ms. Beale noted that the Policy Committee has advocated for more named faculty positions for years and provided a proposal for modest changes in funding levels that would create some lower-cost titles than the current named faculty titles, but the Development Office has not taken action. Ms. Beale has had discussion with alumni at some of the tailgates and found a definite interest in such possibilities. Suggestions were made to increase faculty involvement in fundraising. Mr. Volz suggested it might be helpful to have a senior faculty member involved with the Development Office in seeking support. Provost Whitfield thought it would be helpful to establish a faculty advisory group and have several faculty accompany development officers when they solicit financial support. Policy Committee will revisit the proposal it made a few years ago for funding faculty titles.

- c. The second annual Social Entrepreneurship Conference was held on April 5. The keynote speaker, Morgan Simon, spoke about responsible funding of endowments. The Provost is interested in the university pursuing such efforts.
 - d. Provost Whitfield met with one of the executives from Rock Ventures that supports entrepreneurship. He thought the university should have such support.
 - e. The Anderson Institute in the College of Engineering has an entrepreneurial competition for which they get venture capital support.
 - f. The review of the Graduate School should be completed soon.
 - g. The Provost's office called for big data grant proposal for seed money to support interdisciplinary collaborations. Wayne State's big data hires are complete. Nine faculty have been hired. The general goal is for these new interdisciplinary faculty will have a primary department where their tenure is located, though there may be a few with multiple tenure homes because of the need to maintain an active tie.
3. Report from the Senate President:
- a. Ms. Beale and Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences Stephanie Hartwell exchanged correspondence about the Dean's meeting with the Policy Committee on February 4.
 - b. Ms. Beale attended an academic leadership conference organized by Annmarie Cano, the Associate Provost for Faculty Development and Faculty Success. Women spoke about the kinds of conferences they've attended. It was an opportunity to tell people some of the funding opportunities that are funded by the AAUP-AFT professional development fund. Ms. Beale talked about women taking leadership positions such as committee chairs and task forces in the Academic Senate as a way to learn more about the university at large.
 - c. Ms. Beale distributed the enrollment projections for the spring/summer term and the fall term for the week beginning April 8, 2019.
 - d. Asked about the status of the intranet and course accessibility issue, Provost Whitfield will contact Nickolas DeNardis, Director of Digital Communications, Marketing and Communications, and Randie Kruman, Director, Student Disability Services, to arrange a visit to Policy at one of our upcoming meetings.
 - e. Ms. Beale reminded Mr. Parrish and the Provost about scheduling a date when the chairs of the online committee can report to the Policy Committee.
- *4. Proceedings of the Policy Committee Meeting of March 18: The Committee approved the Proceedings of its meeting of March 18, 2019, as submitted.
- *5. Proceedings of April 1: Policy Committee approved the Proceedings of its meeting of April 1, 2019, as amended.
6. Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP): Senior Associate Provost for Student Success Monica Brockmeyer met with the Faculty Affairs Committee regarding the UROP. Changes in the program were made without faculty consultation. As has been noted in the past, the scholars at Wayne State faculty are accessible to undergraduate students. Many students who do not belong to under-represented minorities are of diverse backgrounds. Ms. Beale had asked Ms. Brockmeyer how many students who received UROP support in the last

5 years would have met the new eligibility requirements versus the number that would be excluded by the new criteria. Ms. Brockmeyer indicated that she had not looked at that information, but she said she would provide that to the Faculty Affairs Committee and Senate. Mr. Roth noted that there is substantial student concern about this change. He asked Julie Miller, Secretary to the Board of Governors, how he, as the faculty representative to the Academic Affairs Committee, might put the issue on the agenda for the May 1 meeting. [The Board's bylaws do not allow voting faculty members of a committee to suggest agenda items; it appears that Mr. Roth must find a Board member willing to put this item on the agenda for the committee.] Ms. Simon added that students are interested in speaking to the Board about the changes, and the Curriculum and Instruction Committee has invited Bianca Suarez from the McNair program to its meeting. Provost Whitfield agreed that the question of the number of students who formerly received a UROP award but are now excluded as a result of this change is an important one. Another question to address, the Provost said, is what was the original intent of the UROP. Clearly, a major problem is limited resources because we need to provide research opportunities for students whenever possible. We should be raising funds for this purpose. It had been suggested that the deans raise money to replace the support provided by UROP to high-achieving students, but clearly that will take several years.

7. May 8 Senate Meeting: Policy Committee reviewed the draft agenda for the meeting.
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Approved as amended at the Policy Committee meeting of April 22, 2019