

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE
May 17, 2021

Present: L. Beale; P. Beavers; L. Lauzon Clabo; J. Fitzgibbon; r. hoogland; C. Parrish;
N. Rossi; B. Roth; N. Simon; R. Villarosa; Prasad Nangre; Amanda Powe

1. Approval of May 3rd Proceedings.

The May 3, 2021 proceedings were approved as drafted.

2. Report from the Chair:

- a. Campus Virus and Vaccine Status. The campus statistics are continuing to improve, with only three cases last week and a 1.7% positivity rate. Detroit has similarly improved, though it still has a 10% positivity rate. The vaccine supply is plentiful. Campus testing is being reduced, so that only symptomatic individuals will be tested (including vaccinated individuals that are symptomatic. Random testing will continue for both vaccinated and unvaccinated, though likely with a smaller sample size.

The town hall tomorrow will likely address primarily faculty and staff to inform about current planning. At this point, the university will continue to require masks indoors, since there is no definitive data about vaccinations and Michigan still requires both masking and social distancing. This may, however, be updated soon.

Full face-to-face class in fall will require lifting the social distancing requirement, though small classes and graduate seminars can likely find spaces that will work. The hope and current discussion of planning is that there likely will be no social distancing necessary for fall. Contingency planning for fall required that faculty members submit courses with method of delivery. Many considered the social distancing mandates when creating these plans. Roth pointed out that nonetheless any requirement for social distancing would impact ability to deliver classes as planned, by switching to SYNC or using the "hy flex" platoon system, which most find unacceptable. Clabo acknowledged that the circumstances are still uncertain but that she expects the university to be able to manage. Beale noted that many faculty have asked whether they can require masks in a large face-to-face class. Clabo responded that they cannot do so if there is not a mask mandate for the campus.

The question of a vaccine mandate has still not been decided. The Michigan House has forwarded a budget proposal that will restrict state appropriations for public universities mandating vaccinations. The senate is working to pass a bill that will restrict vaccination passports or any requirement for documentation of vaccine status. That makes a mandate here difficult.

Rossi asked what the plan is for dealing with a student in a large class that becomes sick. Clabo responded that isolation will be required only for nonvaccinated individuals. Everyone will be asked to continue completing the daily screener for ongoing contact tracing purposes. The CDC guidelines will be followed.

Presidential Town Hall. This meeting will focus largely on fall plans. Many of the faculty and staff members have registered for the event. Questions related to fall will be

answered accordingly. Many of the answers will depend on future data and recommendations. Confusion regarding indoor mask mandates will be discussed. Masks will continue to be required along with social distancing indoors. September requirements may look different. Requirement updates will be based on the local and national status of the disease and the overall vaccination status of the campus community. Face to face instruction depends on the restrictions being lifted.

3. Report from the Senate President:

- a. School and College (S/C) Reviews. Beale noted that the Senate has still not received the various S/C reviews that have been completed for some time and that were to be distributed to Policy—e.g., Business, Nursing, CFPCA, Engineering. Provost Clabo stated that she would send those reports to Policy after sending them to the respective colleges.
 - b. Inventory of Centers. Beale also noted the importance of having the information requested on the various S/C and university centers and institutes that have either not been chartered officially or have not gone through the appropriate five-year review process. Clabo indicated she is still developing an updated list and plans to provide it to the new Provost when he arrives.
 - c. CFO Candidates. The Policy committee typically meets the candidates for CFO, so Beale sent a request to President Wilson after the May 5 plenary requested that the practice be followed in the current search. His response indicated that he would consider it. Beale asked Beavers if this has been raised on the search committee. Beavers indicated it had not been discussed but agreed to bring this up during the process, which is just now at the “virtual airport” interview stage. A public presentation will potentially build support and ease concerns.
 - d. Enrollment. Enrollment statistics distributed last Monday (and others to be distributed today) indicate that graduate enrollment continues to be an issue.
 - e. Meeting with BOG Members. Terri Lynn Land has communicated that she will continue working to set up a meeting for the Board of Governors and Policy.
 - f. Senate and House State Appropriation Discussion. Beale provided information on the bills under consideration. The suggested House approach will pose problems for research and graduate students.
4. New Faculty Orientation. A draft of the Senate’s proposed presentation was shared with Policy for the meeting, to cover Senate structure, operation, and the election timeline, with each committee chair providing an overview of that committee’s area of interest and types of action recommendations undertaken. Beale suggested that Rossi plan a special unit of the Senate’s presentation for the medical school faculty. Rossi suggested that the orientation be made mandatory for medical school faculty to be sure that those faculty can be relieved of their duties to attend, with some online education module as consequence for not attending. Clabo indicated that the Provost’s Office would not mandate attendance, but both Clabo and Beale noted that there can be several steps to encourage medical school faculty to attend. A special invitation can go out. Clabo suggested that Rossi discuss with the dean’s office the question of duty relief to enable attendance.

5. Faculty Affairs Subcommittee Emeritus Issue. Beale quickly reviewed the requirements for emeritus status in the recommendation that came to Policy through FAC and the FAC subcommittee. She noted several concerns about the recommendation. She believes the idea was to have the unit faculty approve the request for emeritus status automatically unless there was some major detriment in the applicant's file (e.g., moral turpitude or other unprofessional behavior). Further, she disagreed with the limitation to tenured faculty with ten years at Wayne and the rationale that such a limitation was necessary to protect access to expensive library databases, as well as a sense that emeritus is historically a faculty privilege and other honors could be devised for academic staff and clinical and lecturer faculty. At the FAC meeting, she noted those concerns but thought some of the members were hesitant to speak out to disagree with the subcommittee.

hoogland explained some of the thinking on FAC regarding applying emeritus only to full-time tenured faculty. Even though some lecturers and academic staff do research, they are not evaluated on their research every year. The committee considered that people in different functions should be recognized in other ways, and thus agreed that staff and lecturers should not be included in this proposal. The committee did intend to take administrators out of the process to make sure that individuals could not be denied emeritus status based on personal bias or disagreements.

The Policy members agreed with the concerns Beale had laid out. Beavers noted that there are librarians with emeritus status and such a policy would appear to eliminate their status. Further, retired individuals continue to have access to the information and systems, other than some of the specialized databases. Simon explained that there are academic staff members that participate in research and should be recognized despite the yearly evaluation factor. Villarosa found the cost justification for excluding academic staff and contingent faculty from emeritus status exclusionary. Rossi noted that the tenure requirement would eliminate 85% of the medical school faculty that are clinician educators who are not eligible for tenure. Clabo noted that the term "faculty" includes lecturers, clinical track faculty, and research faculty as well as tenured and tenure-track faculty. Parrish reminded Policy that a revision was needed because a long-time faculty member was denied emeritus status because of his opposition to administrative policies.

Policy concluded that assignment of emeritus status should not be a promotion and tenure process and that precise language is necessary for the final version. Beale asked Villarosa to check the bylaws for process: based on that check, Policy agreed to send the memo back to the committee with a clear statement regarding the reasons for sending it back and the changes Policy would like to see. Under the bylaws, if the committee returns the report without change, Policy would take the report to the plenary with a statement of Policy's concerns and rationales for objecting to specific items in the report. Beale will develop a draft for resending to FAC at the beginning of the fall term. It might be advisable to hold a joint meeting of Policy with FAC to discuss these issues.

6. Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Beale noted that the 'homework' assigned to the Steering Committee members for the second meeting (on Wednesday May 19) is to select foci and goals related to those mentioned in the Wright document distributed to Policy (developed based on the Board of Governors Retreat held in March). Beale reviewed the items indicated as possible focus areas and the goals stated, noting that it seemed rather disorganized, in that many closely related areas were treated as completely separate, while some other focus areas seemed rather limited and too oriented towards business approaches. There seem to be some biases in the way various subjects are addressed, in

particular the “teaching excellence” section and various other items that clearly emphasize increasing online courses and degree programs (the executive education item). After discussion and suggestions from members at the meeting, Beale invited additional comments to her via email by Tuesday noon at the latest, which she will incorporate with the discussion from the meeting into a document to be copied to Policy for final comments and then shared with the Strategic Planning group as the Senate’s key concerns.

7. Meeting with School of Medicine Dean and Vice President for Health Affairs Mark Schweitzer. Beale noted that Dean Schweitzer had agreed to come to the Policy meeting next week and urged members to approach this as a collegial discussion with particular focus on research within the School of Medicine. The discussion should not be adversarial. It is important to get clarity on research—where he thinks the school will be in a year, in five years, and what the key problems are. We should also pose questions related to OVPR funds and whether that office is working well with the medical school in stimulating research. Questions also about the upcoming accreditation review are related.

Rossi commented that the medical school tenured/tenure-track faculty has decreased by about one-third in the last six years. On average, at least one person leaves the clinical department each month, and there are no hires in the basic sciences. Just recently a tenured faculty left Wayne for Central Michigan. This attrition raises concerns. Many remaining faculty do not have grants, and even those submitted to NIH that are well prepared often score too low to be funded. Other grant sources have been diverted to support COVID research. Once a faculty member has been without a grant for five years, it is very difficult to get grant funding. New faculty hires take time to establish their research. The timeline for the expectation to have 50% of salaries on grants is important—getting to 50% can’t happen overnight.

Parrish indicated his concern with the dean’s firing of two chairs, one in Family Medicine who had received a glowing review and another who had been the key person on diversity hires. Parrish does not believe that the dean has a plan for the next five to ten years.