

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC SENATE  
PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

June 14, 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. 2021 SETs Process. Laura Woodward, Director of Testing and Assessment, and Boris Baltes, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and AVP of Academic Personnel joined Policy to discuss the 2021 SETs process. Woodward noted that quick decisions were made in the last year, including moving the SETs during the winter 2020 semester. The 2N SETs committee did “assist” with major issues. Prompting SETs responses using the gradebook feature in Canvas was the most controversial. A notification feature gives students the option of completing the SET process immediately or opting out of SETs for the course. Once a student opts out, it cannot be reversed. The administration added the gradebook feature because they were unhappy with poor participation rates: 40% for winter 2020 and 35% for spring/summer 2020.

After using a survey instrument with students, faculty, and some administrators for SETs feedback, the SETs committee was presented some options for the Winter 2021 process and approved gradebook reminders, a 1 ½ week extension for evaluation, a later evaluation window, the ability of faculty to change the evaluation period, and (for spring/summer 2021) inability for students who dropped the course to participate. This online system resulted in 51.4% participation.

Policy members noted that there was poor communication of these changes: the Policy Committee was not consulted at all, and many faculty members were not aware of the possibility of changing the evaluation period. Policy members found the process of connecting completing the SETs to student access to grades during the evaluation period completely inappropriate, especially when we know that SETs is generally a poor tool for assessing teaching to start with. Students were annoyed with the process and used the tool to vent. Roth noted that he considers lobbying students to complete the evaluation online unacceptable. Others noted that the process tends to attract negatives more than positives. Connecting the system with grades implies that faculty members support this. Substantial research has shown that the SETs process is biased against women, older faculty, faculty of color, etc. Further, it is absurd to count opting out of the evaluation in response to the gradebook notification as participation, which likely made the rates appear higher than they actually were.

Woodward agreed that opting out should not count as participation. Baltes said there had been positive feedback from some faculty members because the online system can be processed quicker for use for promotion, tenure and salary committee purposes. The SET coordinators within each department can create flexibility for the evaluation period if needed. Clabo noted that a template was created for SET coordinators who are within each department and better able to reach out to faculty members. Administrators claimed that complaints will be addressed for fall 2021. Woodward added that instructions and changing the question order is being considered to reduce the opportunity for bias.

Members noted that most faculty have no idea who their SETs coordinator is, and that SETs coordinators generally did not communicate these structural changes to faculty or did not communicate them appropriately. Beale and Roth emphasized that the university should not treat the necessary use of online SETs during the pandemic as approval for moving to that system permanently nor consider the processes used (such as the gradebook notification to push students to participate) appropriate. This is an educational policy issue, and there are significant reasons that the faculty considers online SETs inappropriate as an adequate measure of teaching.

2. Approval of June 7 Proceedings.

Members approved the proceedings as drafted.

3. Report from the Chair.

a. Campus Virus and Vaccine Status.

For the second week in a row, there are no positive cases on campus and a zero-positivity rate. The positivity rate in Detroit has fallen to 2.2%. Oakland University has mandated a vaccine for students living on campus and athletes. The University of Michigan has required the vaccination for students living on campus. The possibility of a vaccination mandate here remains subject to public health and state legislature considerations. There is currently a bill before the legislature that will prohibit vaccine mandates, even in residential housing.

The university plans to launch a new incentive program for faculty, staff, and students. Prizes will be given to individuals that upload their vaccination documents. The Center for Urban Studies survey will be re-launched to see where we are as a campus. If there is a lower percentage of undergraduate students vaccinated, the call will be made on a mandate. Clabo indicated she expects a decision by July 19<sup>th</sup>. If we are not able to identify individuals that are vaccinated publicly, the mask mandate will not be lifted.

Clabo indicated that HR's return to work guide will be distributed this week. If a job needs to be done in person, the expectation is that the individual will be back on campus. Some remote activity will continue. No date has been set for all individuals to return. Members mentioned the way that Dawn Medley had communicated to her staff, which suggested that none would be allowed to work entirely remotely, which is not in accord with the Academic Restart understanding.

- b. Enrollment. Enrollment numbers for fall are down significantly, with overall down 6.8% and even FTIAC down substantially. Transfer student enrollment is steady while graduate numbers are down almost across the board. Senior staff discussed strategies to help encourage students to register for courses after orientation. Online orientation allows distractions that seem to prevent many students from registering as quickly. On campus registration opportunities will be discussed as an option to increase numbers.

4. Office of Economic Development Transit Proposal. Emily Thompson, Director of Economic and Community Development, and Ned Staebler, Vice President for Economic Development, explained the transit pass plan that is still under negotiation but close to finalization. This has been in the works for at least five years and will provide more options to individuals trying to get around. Pilot programs were successful and helped to make the new, more comprehensive program possible. When finalized, students, staff, and faculty will have unlimited free access to DDOT, Smart, QLINE, and MoGo bike services with their OneCards. A new MOGO station will be added outside of MISB, and additional funding for marketing will

be incorporated into the plan. The pass will be valid in other counties where these services are available.

The potential cost to the university will be \$600,000 at most, with the real possibility of \$100,000 to \$150,000 less. Funding that had been used for the shuttles between main campus and the Ilitch School of Business (costing \$328,000) and the School of Medicine (costing \$226,000) will essentially be allocated to this program, and the shuttles will be discontinued unless some portion of the COVID recovery funds are used to run shuttles. Public transportation will benefit the campus community financially, as it pertains to parking and mobility.

Rossi noted concerns for students who travel between iBio and the medical school where parking is often difficult or they may have no car at all. She asked how the program would work for them. Staebler responded that the QLine stops at both iBio and the medical school and there is a Mogo station just two blocks from iBio (on the other side of TechTown). Similarly, the bus provides a fifteen-minute commute from Community Arts to the medical school. Rossi added that the Henry Ford Hospital is another site that students must visit. She suggested the importance of broad communication of the program and changes to students, with involvement of the medical school dean and the dean of graduate medical education. Since medical school students start in July, it would be important to get the word out during orientation. Beale agreed that targeted communication is essential—to RAs in residence halls, at orientation, in connection with the OneCard process, and with the Student Senate and the graduate student union leaders. Thompson noted that they might use a marketing committee including individuals from central marketing, the Student Senate, and the schools and colleges. Beale added that information can be sent via the Senate listserv if there are changes and updates that need to go to faculty. Clabo noted that Lisa Nuskowski, the new president of the QLine (who started MoGo in TechTown), had announced the line's testing runs for re-opening in July.

Roth thanked Staebler for his assistance with the Juneteenth celebrations

5. Additional Agenda Items. The President's Report and action items will be deferred to the next Policy meeting on June 21.

---

*Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of August 30, 2021*