

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE  
June 21, 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 June 14<sup>th</sup> Proceedings.

The proceedings were approved as drafted.

2. Report from the Chair.

- a. Campus Virus and Vaccine Status. The positivity rate on campus is 1.3%. There is 1 confirmed case and 2 awaiting test results. renee hoogland asked for more information on variants and vaccination effectiveness after 6 months. Clabo noted from recent Public Health meeting that all 3 vaccines are effective against the delta variant, though perhaps 1-2% less than for the alpha variant. The delta variant will very likely be dominant in the U.S. within 4-6 weeks. When a large percentage of the population is not vaccinated, more variants develop and they may be more aggressive and less responsive to vaccines. Durability of immunity has not been resolved.
- b. Enrollment. Overall enrollment is down 6.47%, with undergraduate enrollment down 4% and graduate enrollment somewhat better than prior reports. These downward trends will affect the budget. Campus tours have started and will increase in frequency. Prospective students will have the opportunity to register under a tent and after orientation. Enrollment at other Michigan publics is down as low as 21% for fall, with both Michigan State and University of Michigan still offering test optional admissions and digging deeper into their pools. Naida Simon requested that students be registered with an academic advisor. Clabo said academic advisors will be available at those sessions.
- c. State Higher Education Finance report (SHEF). A Bridge Michigan article included data from the annual SHEF report. Michigan funds its public 4-year institutions at only 59% of the national average, while community colleges in Michigan are funded at 110% of the national average. Michigan ranked at the very bottom of the states for state-funded financial aid per student.
- d. Farewell. Clabo announced that today will be her last Policy meeting. She thanked the committee and let them know that it has been a pleasure and an honor to work with them all. Members noted their appreciation for her service during an exceedingly difficult year.

3. Report from the Senate President.

- a. Continuing C&IT Issues. There are still issues with communication after consolidation. It continues to be an area that needs attention.
- b. Government and Community Affairs. Stacy Clayton has come on board under Patrick Lindsey.

- c. Provost and CFO. Mark Kornbluh will be on board July 1<sup>st</sup>. There is not a date set for a new CFO to start and we have not received any follow-up information about the CFO search after submitting the Policy memo to the Search Committee and President Wilson.
- d. Strategic Planning Committee. This committee meets every 2 weeks. The discussion has been on primary focus areas. Several of the persons of color on the group were also (including both administrators and faculty) interested in refining the existing values statement. Beale shared the resulting draft with Marilyn Kelly, since the Board of Governors will need to approve any values statement edits. Co-chairs for each focus area will likely be appointed in the next few weeks. The Senate committee chairs will need to continue working with their committee's working groups on the set of recommendations on higher education policy that each committee will send to Policy in September, for review and approval by the entire Senate at the November plenary session.

4. Communications and Required Actions.

- a. PC Summer Meeting Schedule. We will not meet on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Both Noreen Rossi and Jane Fitzgibbon will be available on July 12<sup>th</sup>, which was noted differently on the summer schedule provided. Unless there is pressing business, Policy will not plan to meet on July 19<sup>th</sup> or August 2<sup>nd</sup>. There was some confusion about the Medical School election results so Beale and Powe will follow up to verify results.
- b. University Response to Student Senate's Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Statement. President Wilson blocked the Student Senate's access to the all-student listserv to distribute their statement, even though it was customary for them to use it to distribute Student Senate information to students in the past. This is problematic since it is a content-based elimination of access. The question is whether Policy considers it appropriate to ask the Academic Senate to make an official statement on this matter.

Clabo spoke to discourage a statement. She suggested that the Student Senate should have a means of communication that does not imply that the Student Senate is speaking on behalf of the university. She met with the Student Senate Executive Board, who agreed not to push any further on this issue. Clabo added that the Student Senate was able to disseminate the Senate statement through their own social media.

Beale explained that preventing the Student Senate from using the all-student listserv in the same way they have been permitted to do in the past, based solely on the content of the message judged by the President as presenting a political problem, was a First Amendment free speech issue. Charles Parrish worried that this now suggests a potential problem for any university listserv users if their content is disliked by the administration. Brad Roth explained that these situations are treated as judgement calls rather than opportunities to make statements about the issues while acknowledging students' rights to have different views. The Policy members discussed Professor Sedler's statement about the constitutional problem with the university's action. Roth suggested that he and Villarosa (since he is in DOSO) meet with Lou Lessem next to get the university's perspective. The committee will then decide whether to develop a Senate statement.

- c. Restart Rules. An Enrollment Management email went out to employees with a blanket statement that the campus is reopening. It allowed all individuals to work remotely one

day a week but said that no individual would be allowed to work remotely full-time. The announcement did not consider households that are more vulnerable for different reasons. Beale noted that if there are many who work in person full-time, there would likely be sufficient work that one who needed to work remotely could do so full-time. Clabo merely suggested that employees and supervisors should be in communication about work schedules. Work that needs to be done on campus will need to return to campus. The last 16 months were used to accommodate individuals for safety purposes, but as there is a decline in cases, individuals will be asked to come back to campus. Clabo suggested that FMLA is an option for vulnerable populations.

Public Health will be sending out individual messages about restart. Villarosa noted the Restart representatives' concern that there was still inconsistent restart communication. Clabo will bring up the issue again in the executive restart committee. The emerging issues are changing daily and cannot be answered definitively as of today. Beale suggested that the provost's office encourage supervisors to provide clear communication. The Enrollment Management email left no room for any discussions between an employee and supervisor about individual situations.

- d. Senate Representatives to the Administrative DEI Council. Beale recommended that renee hoogland and Ricardo Villarosa serve as Senate representatives to the Council. Both agreed to serve.
- e. SmartCheck Termination. This system would alert students that withdrew from courses after census date to reach out to an academic advisor and/or financial aid to be aware of consequences of withdrawal. With its termination, new and some continuing students may fail to get necessary information. Clabo will look into this and provide additional information.
- f. BOG Budget Items for Friday Meeting. The fee and tuition rate recommended increase for 2021-22 is 4.2%, with provision for reduction if the state sets a lower cap. A Beecher House item is to provide a system that can bring fresh air in and provide air conditioning. Clabo said that Public Health and Schools/Colleges would send out messages regarding campus safety issues. Plexiglass use is under review. The Warrior Safe Training 2.0 will be updated and the screener will still be used.

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