WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE
August 2, 2021

Present: L. Beale; P. Beavers; J. Fitzgibbon; r. hoogland; M. Kornbluh; C. Parrish; N. Rossi; N. Simon; R. Villarosa; Prasad Nangre

Absent with notice: B. Roth

1. Approval of Proceedings.
    The committee approved the proceedings of July 19.

2. Report from the Chair.
    a. Respondus. Last week Provost Kornbluh was informed that if the university did not renew the software for Respondus by Friday it would lose access to the software for proctoring exams. The software is problematic, but some courses depend on it. Respondus has two parts, a LockDown Browser and AI technology. The browser is not as problematic as the AI technology which judges whether someone is cheating. In talking with Linda Beale, the Provost learned that the Academic Senate has similar concerns. Mortuary Science and Nursing have courses that need to be proctored for accreditation. The university gets 200 seats free for proctoring by renewing LockDown Browser. Kornbluh renewed the LockDown Browser. He would like to work with the Senate to move towards the type of exams that do not require proctoring software.

    b. The Provost and Policy members discussed the status of COVID-19 on campus and the restrictions that will affect students, faculty, and staff in the fall term. All employees will not be required to work on campus; some will be able to continue to work from home. Faculty and academic staff should work with their Chair or Dean to determine how to handle their work. Kornbluh said that when the FDA officially approves the vaccines anyone who comes to campus (faculty, staff, students, and guests) would have to be vaccinated for the next semester. Beale urged that an announcement about the requirement for vaccination be made soon and a statement that is being prepared be sent to faculty to include in their syllabus. Kornbluh mentioned that because the positivity rate for the virus has not increased, unlike at other universities, Wayne State has some time to decide on mandates and to inform the university community. While there are reports of less testing for COVID-19 the positivity rate has not increased in Detroit as it has in other cities. Beale thinks faculty should decide if students in their classes should wear masks. This is needed especially for faculty who are immunocompromised.

3. Report from the President:

    a. Enrollment. Beale reported that enrollment continues to drop. Kornbluh said that colleges are contacting students who attended orientation but have not registered for classes. There will be a major registration drive both on campus and online. He is hopeful that a budget deficit as a result of lower enrollment in the fall term will be made up somewhat by increased enrollment in the winter term. The enrollment of transfer students, he said, is very good.

b. <u>Senator Carl Levin</u>. The death of former Senator Carl Levin will affect the status and work of the university's Levin Center.

c. <u>Strategic Planning</u>: The strategic planning subgroups are beginning to meet. They are to focus on certain areas. One is research, but the focus of that group appears to have been changed to community engagement. The Policy Committee appointed some faculty and academic staff to the subgroups, but Kornbluh said that the subgroups could appoint additional members. Policy Committee will revise its selections for the subcommittees. Noreen Rossi asked the Provost for the list of members of the various subgroups.

4. <u>New Student Convocation</u>: The convocation is scheduled for August 31. A representative from Policy Committee will welcome the students on behalf of the faculty and academic staff.

5. <u>New Faculty Orientation</u>: The orientation for new faculty is scheduled for August 19. Members of the Policy Committee will speak about the Senate's role in educational policy through shared governance and the work of the Senate's committees.

6. STEM Innovation Learning Center: Last year Crain's Detroit Business announced that the university was establishing a STEM center in collaboration with an external digital platform to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion among tech companies. Beale asked the status of the plans. Kornbluh said that he would not create a center around learning that is independent from the colleges and departments. His office is consulting with deans, department chairs, and faculty to set up labs that will be useful to faculty. Naida Simon asked if there would be a building manager for the STEM Innovation Learning Center. The provost said there would be building manager. All aspects of the building, such as entrances, exits, and elevators, are under study to determine what needs to be done and what can be done to meet the needs of the users of the building. The STEM building and the renovated State Hall will have a lot of technology and students will be using the buildings for many hours, not just for classes. We were depending on the classrooms when State Hall is off-line in the 2022-2023 academic year. Beale asked if Policy could be given a tour of the STEM building. That, Kornbluh said, can be arranged.

7. <u>Center for Emerging and Infectious Diseases</u>: The Policy Committee had approved a one-year temporary charter for the center and sent comments to the faculty who proposed the establishment of the center. Those faculty responded to the comments. Policy Committee members discussed their concerns about the center at today's meeting. Noreen Rossi noted that if the faculty involved in the center wanted to get substantial external funding they would need investment by the university. The university should evaluate the grant to determine if it wants to invest in the project. Also, Facilities Planning and Management needed to be involved in planning the facilities for the project. Because the center is able to function under the temporary charter, Policy Committee tabled the discussion and will re-visit the question in the fall. Kornbluh will tell the investigators what information the Policy Committee wants.

8. Agenda for the September Senate Meeting: Beale reviewed the items on the agenda for the September 15 meeting of the Senate. The Senate will elect the 2021-2022 Policy Committee at that time. PC discussed the pros and cons of the Senate meeting remotely and in person. The September meeting will be held via Zoom. Beale will poll the members to learn if they want to continue meeting via Zoom or in person. If the

committees want to meet in person or want a hybrid system with some members meeting in person and some meeting virtually, there may be problems with the facilities that are available in the Faculty Administration Building.

9. <u>Post-Pandemic Future of Higher Education</u>: The Policy Committee charged the standing committees with considering issues related to teaching and learning as a result of the pandemic and changes the university might make to further student success. The topics are: students (undergraduate students, graduate students, non-matriculated students), credentials (grades, badges, certifications, degrees), online education, study abroad and international outreach, faculty, research, faculty needs, and experiencing the university context. President Wilson asked that the Senate to complete its work by October 15. The chairs reported on the progress of their committees. Some members declined to work in the summer, particularly after the stress of remote learning and the pandemic in general. The question before the committees is whether the areas should be pursued. President Wilson is asking for ideas, not for in-depth studies.

10. <u>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee</u>: Policy discussed the establishment of the Senate's DEI Committee. On the request for committee preferences, members were asked if they were interested in serving on such a committee. An ad hoc committee will be set up this year. The Senate's bylaws must be changed to make it a standing committee. After that is done, it will be expected to function as all other Senate committees.

11. <u>Responsibility Centered Management</u>: Provost Kornbluh asked if Policy Committee was in favor of moving the budgeting process to the RCM process. Ricardo Villarosa said it was just changing the political budget process. It has great promise for improving transparency and accountability, but its effectiveness is in the details. Beavers is concerned about unintended consequences. He is concerned about the impact on graduate education and the process. Beale sees the benefits of a good RCM model as primarily transparency and clarity about what is driving budgetary decisions and the potential of having a 3-year revision process of the formulas driving the budget allocations. At Wayne State much of the budget process is hidden. The Budget Planning Council makes recommendations. The President adopts some of them and the budget book is produced. However, the budget as presented is not final because it is not an all-funds budget book. Former Chief Financial Officer William Decatur wanted an all funds budget so we could see all the money and how it is allocated. A concern was the graduate school functions, how the graduate research assistants and graduate teaching assistants are supported. Could the deans of the schools and colleges use money that was allocated to support graduate students for other purposes? There is worry about the way RCM was designed. Another concern was the financial aid structure, how much money is allocated and how much is spent. We need a better understanding of discounting tuition versus real dollars. A lot of accounting for undergraduate students has been obfuscating rather than clarifying. A third issue is space. Most people felt that more particularity is needed than what is in the plan, i.e., laboratories versus classrooms and offices. Labs are more costly. Are they helping the students, researchers, and the university? Beale said that we need a full data budget whether it is a base budget with re-allocations or an RCM budget. Kornbluh noted there is a problem if you have a budget that doesn't balance and where you have to make cuts every year. How do you reallocate money? Beale said that the university has to figure out how to support the programs with the funds we have. Both models can do that. With RCM data show how money is coming in and how much more is needed. A base budget shows the amount you had been

allocated. Should that be increased or decreased? It appears that RCM would be a better model for re-allocation but it depends upon the people making the decisions and how much data describe the issues. That is hard to do when you have declining enrollment. Beale added that one problem is the hiring of highly paid administrators. reneé hoogland pointed out that humanities programs do not pay for themselves but they are necessary particularly in a university like ours where many students come in without a lot of cultural capital and not much experience thinking critically. To a large extent Wayne State offers a liberal arts education at the undergraduate level. Everyone needs those skills to get a job. Students cannot learn how to think critically in one semester. Humanities programs cannot pay for themselves, but they don't require expensive laboratories or expensive technology. Beale ended the discussion saying that Policy Committee wants a budget that is more transparent so that people can discuss what should be cut and where to provide additional support. Referring to the comments about declining enrollment, Kornbluh said that he would seek advice of the Senate on how to increase enrollment.

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