

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE  
August 22, 2022

Present: D. Aubert; L. Beale; J. Fitzgibbon; M. Kornbluh; J. Lewis; N. Rossi; B. Roth; S. Schrag; N. Simon; R. Villarosa

Guests: Boris Baltés (AVP); Stephen Lanier (VP for Research)

I. CIAC II Committee

Lanier joined the Policy Committee meeting to determine the CIAC II committee members for the next 3-year cycle. He shared a document with a proposed timeline for the charter review process for four centers/institutes under OVPR: Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (current charter through January 2023); Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute (current charter through October 2023); Center for Molecular Medicine and Genetics (current charter through October 2023); Institute for Gerontology (current charter through December 2024). Melissa Runge-Morris (Director, Institute of Environmental Health Sciences/Center for Urban Responses to Environmental Stressors (IEHS/CURES)) will be pulling together the required materials for the CIAC II committee to review. The VPR and the Senate Policy Committee work together to appoint the committee, consulting with each other on recommendations of membership with each suggesting six names for a total of 12 people for the committee.

Linda Beale explained that the committee was originally set up with staggered terms to provide continuity as some members cycled off through retirement, withdrawal or otherwise. There were no appointments made in the last two years because of the pandemic and the lack of any charter renewals or new charter proposals from OVPR. She questioned whether these appointees should be asked to join for a 3-year term or staggered terms: staggering the terms provides continuity of membership and an opportunity to ensure diverse perspectives.

Beale also asked whether the CIAC II reviews should consider a revision that the Provost has suggested for the CIAC I committees—*i.e.*, building in an external review step that involves outside reviewers (WSU faculty and faculty from other universities in the field) rather than merely the self-study and the more generalist CIAC I review. The external review would take place between the self-study and the CIAC review. She asked Lanier to consider whether that would be useful also for the CIAC II reviews. Lanier's initial response was that appointees to the CIAC II generally have subject matter expertise. Beale noted that some of the self-studies are rather perfunctory and having an external review might tighten them up, though the CIAC II self-studies have tended to be better than those for the CIAC I centers. Lanier thought the process has worked well to date but added that he would share the most recent self-study with Policy for consideration of this issue.

Beale asked Lanier whether the self-study for IEHS will be a single self-study that includes the Center for Urban Responses to Environmental Stressors (CURES) or a separate self-study for

IEHS and for CURES since the two entities have a very different focus. (It is arguable, at least, that CURES should be chartered as a separate center.) Lanier said CIAC II had recommended putting the two entities together as IEHS/CURES: the director submitted a P30 grant to NIEHS that formed an umbrella for their program going forward. That P30 grant is now up for renewal. The programs are integrated with each other under one theme, with expectations of external funding. IEHS/CURES recently also received a P42 superfund CLEAR grant for \$13M from NIEHS. Beale asked Lanier to share the full IEHS/CURES CIAC II file including that recommendation for Policy to review, since Policy has not seen that information.

Lanier and Policy members determined a list of potential appointees for the CIAC II committee. Beale will reach out to the Senate's nominees on the list to verify their willingness to serve on the committee.

Regarding Lanier's list of centers, institutes and thematic initiatives, Beale questioned the structure of the thematic initiatives and how they differ from a center or institute. Specifically, Beale asked about the recent announcement of the One Health initiative that appears very similar to a center but is not listed under OVPR. Lanier said seed money was provided by OVPR to the various initiatives, with the idea of leading to broader programmatic development in that area and perhaps eventually become mature enough to be considered centers. For the last six or seven years he has been trying to nurture a broad umbrella supporting research in environmental and health sciences because that cuts across so many aspects of the mission of the university, and he now believes there is an opportunity to coalesce the IEHS, CLEAR, and One Health grants. Some of the thematic initiatives also have an educational component, such as the neurosciences initiative, where there is an undergraduate major, a graduate program and research in neurosciences: that has become a "brand" of Wayne State research, and he believes there is an opportunity for the same thing with environmental health sciences. There was a major environmental science proposal in CLAS before the pandemic started, and he believes there is an opportunity to do something special in this area. Having that kind of cross-campus collaboration is key to being competitive for large programmatic grants. The One Health initiative was tee'd up strategically to help with competitiveness, and it was very well received by NIEHS. There may be some significant overlap, but there is also potential for integration going forward.

Beale responded that these initiatives seem important and worthy of seed-funding and support, but much of what he has said is exactly what the center provisions in the BOG statutes are intended to provide a process for accomplishing. There are processes for temporary charters during seed funding and even for the first charter period, with reviews for charter renewals to be sure that the university funding is supporting an established center that is achieving reasonable external grant funding for the period that it has been in operation. That makes it hard to understand what distinction, if any, exists in these so-called initiatives established under OVPR with directors, funding, cross-campus faculty involvement, and active research and educational programming that has extended over multiple years but have not gone through the CIAC II center process for approval—especially for ones like Healthy Urban Waters and Translational Neuroscience. Lanier suggested the initiatives were not yet mature or rich enough to be centers, though he admitted that perhaps the neurosciences initiative should take the next step to become a center.

Lewis commented that sometimes things are supposed to become a center but sometimes they are seeded for other things that would not be a center. You can't always predetermine outcomes. Beale questioned where the line is drawn when they are functioning as entities and being funded in part by institutional funds. The purpose of having a charter process is to be clear about their goals and their purpose and to have the kind of review by experts that confirms that such university funding makes sense. Noreen Rossi agreed that expectations, goals and timelines for these initiatives should be made clear at the outset. Policy members agreed.

Lewis expressed her appreciation for CURES, which has provided popular offerings for her students. Lanier thanked Lewis for sharing, noting that the offerings reflected the leadership of those groups.

Policy thanked Lanier for his time in discussing the CIAC II processes.

## II. Article XXX Committees

Baltes and the Policy members reviewed the various Article XXX committee slates to determine appointees to the committees. A letter will go out to each appointee from AVP Baltes and President Beale notifying those who were chosen.

Policy thanked Baltes for his time in making these determinations.

## III. Report from the Chair

Presidential Search: Kornbluh noted that the Board of Governors did not have a specific plan yet for the presidential search, but they are discussing among themselves how to organize it. There is a commitment to a diverse search committee, a national search and assistance of a national search firm. The desired timeframe is to launch the search in the fall with selection of finalist candidates in late spring so that a new president can take office August 1, 2023.

Vice President for Research (VPR) Search: The provost hired a search firm for the VPR search and began drafting the position description prior to President Wilson's announcement that he will step down at the end of his current contract term. As chair of the search committee, the provost considered three options with the search firm: (1) hire an interim VPR (not the recommendation of the search firm or the president); (2) cancel the search and wait until we have a new president (too much a loss of time and likely loss of momentum); or (3) run the search with timing slightly behind the presidential search (current working hypothesis). The search firm has been put on hold for a month or two to see how the Board sets up the presidential search. The prospectus will note that the university expects to welcome a new president in late summer. In the best case, semifinalists could be determined by March or April, and the new president could participate in the finalist stage of the search.

Start of the Fall Semester: Move-in starts on Thursday (8/25). There is no change at this time to any university health policies: the COVID vaccine mandate is still in place (waivers are available), as is the flu vaccine mandate. Masks are required in classrooms, with personal choice elsewhere. The senior administration has not discussed the latest CDC recommendations (move

to personal choice everywhere), and it would not be the president's choice given that Wayne County is now back in high transmission.

Campus Improvements: Three elevators previously out of commission are now working (including Old Main). Dave Massaron (CFO / Sr. VP Finance & Business Operations) took the mayor out to lunch to arrange the required city inspection. Campus grounds are much improved over the last several weeks. Unfortunately, sidewalk repairs will not be done before the students return because it is hard to get contractors. Windows are being washed all over campus. The university has pushed MDOT to clean up the mess around the new bridge: all the gravel is gone; grass will be planted for the time being instead of laying asphalt to help save money (every day the university pays a fee for university asphalt that is impervious to rainfall and adds to drainage). Palmer Avenue is now open in west to east. The new bridge will open before Thanksgiving and bring access to campus from the north. Both cafeterias are opening in the fall. The chief rabbi in Detroit could not find a full-time employee to certify Gold n' Greens as kosher so it will remain vegetarian but not kosher. The university will accommodate students that request kosher food (last year there was one such student). The second Starbucks location on Anthony Wayne Drive may not remain open because there are not enough employees. Kornbluh is meeting with Aramark soon in hopes of removing restrictions on outside catering: the food is abominable, and the prices are ridiculously high (a bid of about \$100,000 for 3500 hotdogs for FestiFall, for example). Since Aramark is struggling to hire employees and has high turnover, Kornbluh hopes they allow us to walk away from the outside catering restriction part of the contract. This year we had six weeks with no campus food outlets. The Provost's plan for the future is having food on campus available year-round. The breaking point at the Towers Cafeteria is 100 meals a day and at Gold n' Greens is even lower: we should be able to guarantee those numbers even in the summer.

Codifying Protocols: Kornbluh said the Provost's Office is working on codifying protocols for handling situations in which a student is in trouble or a risk to others (mostly mental health and behavioral issues). Once the document is written, it will be shared with Policy. We are waiting for the new General Counsel to take office, with a goal of requesting more authority than our previous lawyers allowed. For example, the housing contract could allow us to mandate psychiatric evaluation when certain circumstances were present. There are other legal pieces as well. There are two new case workers coming on board. We have expanded CAPS and have social workers for students that will not have the same confidentiality requirements. We will set some clear policies regarding their work with students and how any behavioral intervention team works, making sure everything gets recorded. The idea of a behavioral information team allows all the information about a student to come together in a single file. The expectation is that this will be implemented in the next few months.

#### IV. Report from the Senate President

Enrollment: Beale has distributed the most recent enrollment report earlier and noted that the information has been broken down further and is more useful (doctorates and masters are separated from the others). The numbers are still trending lower than anticipated.

Kornbluh commented that there needs to be an intensive consideration about academic and financial holds at the undergraduate level. The bursar's argument is a paternalistic one—preventing students from falling into too much debt, thus raising the debt limit to only \$2500. We do have some evidence from last year that allowing a \$4,000 limit led students to accumulate more debt they were not able to pay. Nonetheless, Kornbluh finds it worrisome that we won't let someone register who owes more than \$2600: we have hired an outside consultant to suggest better ways to handle this. One option is to raise the debt limit; another would be to manage our financial aid in a way to help those students with a higher amount of emergency aid available. There were 1500 students with debts between \$2500 and \$4000 that could have registered with a better system. Kornbluh does not believe we are sophisticated enough in the way we do financial holds—it's not out of malice, rather trying to avoid students getting themselves into a hole. Beale asked if we could raise more donor funds to support this kind of emergency aid. Kornbluh noted that the strategic plan did make this a priority. If we have more students, we could use our own money to fill this need. He did authorize reducing the debt of 400 students with a \$100,000 allocation, but we need outside advice to figure out how to deal with this. The good news is the class is coming in within budget parameters that were planned. Kornbluh added that there should not be budget cuts this year, but a decline in students eats up all the increased money from increased tuition and doesn't get us closer to being solvent.

September Plenary: The Bernath Auditorium now has a HyFlex system, though the Senate office has not yet had time to go over to review the setup. Beale suggested holding our first meeting in person with no remote option. Not having in-person meetings is detrimental to us developing good working relationships within the faculty and academic staff membership. Villarosa suggested waiting until October for an in-person meeting. Kornbluh said most of the deans are requiring faculty meetings in person, and most of the staff are being asked to be on campus now through the first two weeks of the semester. Simon says it will be more difficult to do an election in a hybrid format and thinks this should be in person. Beale added that it helps candidates in the election give their speeches in front of the audience—it makes the election itself more realistic. Further, it is important to establish an expectation that members are to attend Senate meetings and participate, which fell short when some turned cameras off and did not actually participate in Zoom meetings that they were counted as attending. Lewis suggested the election could be conducted using a QR code to vote with phones, providing supplemental paper ballots for those unable to use the code. Beale was uncertain whether this could be arranged in time for the first meeting and worried that people without phones or who did not know how to use them in this way would require the same counting process for supplemental ballots anyway. The Policy Committee agreed to hold the September Academic Senate session in person.

Equity Increase Notice: Beale pointed out the announcement regarding equity increases, noting that it addressed an expressed need among those who had applied but not received notice of the result.

Comerica Hatch Event: Beale reported on the late July Comerica Hatch event run by Stabler in Tech Town. There was widespread enthusiasm and an overflowing auditorium for the event. It was a good PR success for the university and Comerica as a sponsor.

Test-Optional/Test-Informed Spreadsheet: Beale announced she is working with Darin Ellis, J. Morrissey and Carly Cirilli to develop a spreadsheet with test-optional and test-informed information as well as ethnicity, gender and DFW information. It will also include retention data from recent terms. The first iteration may be incomplete, but the idea is to establish a data format that can be enhanced as needed and then maintained as additional cohorts arrive on campus.

Probation Policies: Beale met with Darin Ellis and Kelly Dormer to discuss probation policies at the university level and how that works in the schools. They will work with academic advisors and associate deans to gather information about the difficulties with probation policies, such as financial hold hurdles. We would expect that before any policies are finalized, the information about problems will come to the Senate for standing committee consideration, and then to Policy and the plenary before being finalized.

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*Approved as revised at the Policy Committee meeting of August 29, 2022*