

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC SENATE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

January 12, 2015

Present: J. Artiss; L. Beale; V. Dallas; R. N. Frank; D. Kessel; C. Parrish;
L. Romano; A. Sankar; W. Volz; M. Winters; A. Wisniewski

Guests: Monica Brockmeyer, Associate Provost for Student Success; Thomas Fischer, Associate Professor, Psychology, Liberal Arts and Sciences; John Vander Weg, Associate Provost for Academic Personnel

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of January 12, 2015.

1. General Education Development Committee: Ms. Brockmeyer and Mr. Fischer co-chair the General Education Development Committee (GEDC) that was formed in 2014 to review the current general education requirements with the possibility of revising them. They attended this meeting to inform the Policy Committee about the work of the Committee.

The GEDC began working in November and is gathering information. They will set up a website so their deliberations are available to faculty, students, and staff. They know that any recommendations need to be faculty driven. The Committee has met with the Senate's Curriculum and Instruction Committee and it will meet with the Council of Deans.

They want to find out in which courses students are doing well and which courses impede students' progress. The question for the Committee and the University is what do we want students to learn and what will prepare them for the 21st century.

A member of the Policy Committee spoke to the need to have students declare a major early in their studies. General education should support their learning in the major. Students need to see a relationship between the general education curriculum and their major.

Several members of the Policy Committee expressed concern about the fact that changes in the requirements would adversely affect departments and graduate programs. The development of the general education program was a political process on which academic programs have been built. The changes could affect the basic structural integrity of the University. Provost Winters has talked with the GEDC about the political issues.

Another member pointed out that the current requirements are complicated and confusing for students. The program needs to be reviewed and streamlined, if possible.

The GEDC is expected to complete its work in the fall of 2015, and any changes would be effective fall term 2016.

It was suggested that an academic advisor be added to the GEDC. The Provost asked that names be submitted to her and she and Ms. Brockmeyer will select the person.

Periodically, the Policy Committee will get updates about the Committee's work.

2. APEX: In September, the Policy Committee had asked Ms. Brockmeyer for information about the APEX program. She does not yet have all the information, but will send what she has been able to gather.

[Ms. Brockmeyer and Mr. Fischer left the meeting. Mr. Vander Weg joined the meeting.]

- *3. Academic Staff Tenure and Promotion Committee: Provost Winters and the Policy Committee jointly selected the members of the Committee for the 2014-2015 academic year. Mr. Vander Weg participated in the selection.

[Mr. Vander Weg left the meeting.]

4. Report from the Chair:

- a. Provost Winters gave a brief report about graduate enrollment, but the figures are not final.
- b. Kelley Skillin, the Director of Professional and Academic Development, has resigned. Her responsibilities include academic compliance, program review, accreditation, and new faculty orientation. The responsibility for new faculty orientation will be transferred to the Associate Provost for Academic Personnel.
- c. The Kresge Foundation awarded a grant to the University in support of our Undergraduate Student Success Initiative. Provost Winters will hold a data summit bringing experts to campus to talk to academic advisors and faculty about best practices in teaching based on big data.
- d. Marilyn Kelly and Dana Thompson, the new members of the Board of Governors, met with administrators to get oriented to the University. Members of the Policy Committee suggested that they might have an informal meeting with Governors Kelly and Thompson. In the past, such meetings with members of the Board have been productive.

5. Report from the Senate President: Mr. Romano serves on the committee that is looking at the adjustments made in the benefit rates. For research associates the rate increased from 27% to 33%, which adversely affects research because money that had been going to the research side of the University will be going to the administrative side. The new rates are based on current benefit rates. For some time the University has been subsidizing the costs. The problem is how to handle the increase for ongoing research grants. For the near future, the University will rebate the benefit money being taken from current grants. However, when applying for a non-competing renewal, researchers cannot change the budget more than a few percentage points. The committee is still debating that issue. Nine-month

faculty in Liberal Arts who have summer grants were to be charged the full 27%. Part of that amount included health care, but health care for 9-month faculty is paid during the academic year. A separate category may be made for those faculty.

- *6. Proceedings of the Policy Committee: The Proceedings of the Policy Committee meeting of December 15, 2014, were approved as submitted.
7. Capital Projects: On December 10, 2014, James Sears, Associate Vice President for Facilities, Planning and Management, met with the Facilities, Support Services and Technology Committee. Mr. Artiss, the Chair of FSST, and Mr. Sears “agreed to work towards developing a mechanism whereby faculty could have input into the selection and prioritization of capital projects.” The Provost had followed up on the suggestion, but she will contact Mr. Sears again.
8. Interdisciplinary Hiring: Mr. Romano distributed a report dated June 2, 2014, titled “Interdisciplinary Hiring: Recommendations for Planning at Wayne State University.” The report was prepared by the Ad Hoc Committee on Interdisciplinary Hiring. The report laid out how to remove the barriers in the University’s procedures that discouraged interdisciplinary hiring. Policy Committee members discussed issues that need to be addressed to promote interdisciplinary research.
9. February 4 Academic Senate Meeting: Policy Committee reviewed the drafted agenda and issues that might be covered at the Senate meeting. The agenda will be finalized at the January 26 meeting.

Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of January 26, 2015