

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

November 24, 2014

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

Absent with notice: V. Dallas; A. Sankar

Guests: Catherine Barrette, Director of Assessment; Joseph Rankin, Associate Provost  
for Undergraduate Affairs

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of November 24, 2014.

1. Program Assessment: Ms. Barrette and Mr. Rankin attended the meeting to discuss WSU's program assessment. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC), which will conduct the University's re-accreditation in the 2016-2017 academic year, requires universities to document what students are learning, what they are not learning, and how faculty are modifying the curriculum to improve learning outcomes. The HLC (formerly known as the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools) considered student assessment in past accreditations, but it is focusing more on assessment than it did in the past.

Ms. Barrette reported on the progress of the departments/divisions and schools/colleges in documenting the ways in which they assess programs. Fifty-nine percent of the programs have begun documenting program assessment. They are identifying the programs' goals and the specific learning outcomes based on the overall goals. Individual courses and the overall program are to be assessed.

The assessment process consists of identifying program goals, specifying intended outcomes, measuring whether students are meeting those outcomes, and improving the program based on the results. The learning outcomes are the statements faculty want students to know at the end of their program of study. They gather data about how well students are meeting the learning outcomes. Faculty need to know which parts of a course students understand and which parts they do not understand and use the information to improve the course. The faculty are to then revise the courses or programs as needed to meet the standards.

A support structure has been developed to assist faculty in developing their assessment programs. There will be committees at the department/division level, the school/college level, and the University level. The department and college committees are to maintain communication with the University's assessment office so it can provide assistance. Ms. Barrette asked departments to identify a program assessment coordinator who would be the main person who communicates with her office. She has offered workshops on the requirements of the assessment program. The Office for Teaching and Learning is offering workshops on developing course

learning outcomes. The timeline has been set to accommodate nine-month faculty's teaching schedules.

Several members of the Policy Committee had not heard that the University office had contacted their departments to begin the assessment process. They were concerned that the faculty may not have been notified about the assessment program and were not involved in the process.

Some members pointed out that their colleges assess learning outcomes but do not use that terminology. Ms. Barrette and Mr. Rankin agreed that assessment may be taking place, but it must be documented. Provost Winters said that how the University presents the information about assessment to the HLC needs to be unified.

It was suggested that the first task in the process was to ask departments and colleges to summarize how they currently assess courses and programs.

There was discussion about how the assessment process would be carried out. One member believed the process as laid out would require a great deal of time on the part of faculty. Mr. Rankin disagreed with the member's estimate of the time required. But he acknowledged that a new assessment committee might not be needed and existing academic or curriculum committees might serve this particular purpose.

Asked whether the purpose of assessment was to determine if students had passed a course or whether they have passed a program, Ms. Barrette said that the idea is to look at cumulative learning. That often can be drawn from what is currently being done, such as exit examinations.

The Provost said that the HLC has specific ways in which it wants to learn about Wayne State. Program assessment is more important now than it was in the past. It is more central in the accreditation process.

Members of the Policy Committee believe that proper assessment is important. Since curriculum is a faculty issue, the Provost is asking the faculty for useful suggestions on how to present the need for departments to develop or document their procedures. Policy Committee members were concerned that not enough faculty have heard about the need to document assessment of courses and programs. It was suggested that the department Chairs be contacted to carry out the necessary tasks of appointing a coordinator and setting deadlines for the departments to provide their information.

[Ms. Barrette and Mr. Rankin left the meeting.]

2. Report from the Chair:

- a. Provost Winters announced that Jack Sobel, who was serving as the Interim Chair of Internal Medicine, has been appointed Interim Dean of the School of Medicine.

- b. The search committee for the Dean of Pharmacy and Health Sciences has been formed. Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences Wayne Raskind will chair the search committee.
  - c. Marquita Chamblee assumes the position of Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer on February 2, 2015.
  - d. Provost Winters has been meeting with officials from K-12 schools and has met with Douglas Ross, who is active in promoting charter schools. They are interested in pipeline programs with Wayne State.
  - e. The dissolution of the Department of Clinical and Translational Sciences (DCaTS) is on the agenda of the Board of Governors meeting of December 5, 2014. In the Provost's presentation to the Board, she will explain that, because the DCaTS does not have faculty, consultation was provided by a special committee formed at the recommendation of the Policy Committee to study the entire question of clinical and translational sciences. Some of the funding for the DCaTS is in the Office of the Vice President for Research and the salaries of the faculty reverted to the departments in which their tenure lines reside. At the request of a member of the Policy Committee, Provost Winters will look further into the disbursement of the funding that had been allocated to the Department. Phillip Levy, a faculty member in Emergency Medicine, has been coordinating research in CTS for the past year. The CTS committee also recommended that the proper structure would be a center or an institute.
3. Report from the Senate President: Provost Winters and Mr. Romano presented the strategic plan to the Graduate Council. The Council discussed aligning its plan with that of the University.
- \*4. Proceedings of the Policy Committee: The Proceedings of the Policy Committee meeting of November 17, 2014, were approved as revised.
5. Re-accreditation Steering Committee: Policy Committee nominated additional faculty for the Re-accreditation Steering Committee. Provost Winters had said that two faculty would serve on the Committee. Mr. Romano asked that more than two be appointed, if possible. The Higher Learning Commission limits the number of persons who have access to the software package they gave to the University, and other areas have to be represented on the Committee.
6. Daycare Survey: The Facilities, Support Services and Technology (FSST) Committee prepared a survey to learn the daycare needs of students, faculty, and staff. Mr. Artiss, who chairs the FSST Committee, explained the Committee's reasons for conducting the survey.
7. Agenda for the Academic Senate Meeting: The agenda for the Academic Senate meeting of December 3, 2014, was approved as submitted.
8. Reports from Liaisons:
  - a. Research Committee: Mr. Kessel reported that the Dean of the Graduate School Ambika Mathur met with the Research Committee. She made a report about the Broadening Experiences in Scientific Education (BEST) grant. The

graduate assistantships will be awarded on a competitive basis. Dean Mathur also talked about the Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity (BUILD) program that was designed to support underrepresented minorities in biomedical research. Daniel Walz, Associate Dean of Research in the Medical School, told the Committee that the M.D.-Ph.D. program recruits four students per year. The Medical School will try to get five million dollars to repair infrastructure in Scott Hall.

- b. Facilities, Support Services and Technology Committee: Dean Yee attended the November meeting of the Committee. She talked about the renovations to the fourth floor of State Hall and the second floor of Manoogian Hall. The State Hall facilities are under-utilized. Mr. Artiss suggested that the new classrooms be filled first when we have the new scheduling matrix. The Committee also discussed the Helping Individuals Go Higher (HIGH) program and daycare.
- 

Approved as revised at the Policy Committee meeting of December 8, 2014