

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE  
January 30, 2023

Present: D. Aubert; L. Beale; r. hoogland; P. Khosla; M. Kornbluh; J. Lewis; N. Rossi; B. Roth; S. Schrag

Absent with Notice: N. Simon

Guests: Boris Baltés, AVP, Faculty Affairs; Hasan Elahi, Dean, CFPCA

I. APPROVAL OF PC PROCEEDINGS

The proceedings of January 23, 2023 were approved with revisions.

II. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Behavioral Intervention Team: Provost Kornbluh reported a rough week with student mental health and highlighted the need for continued improvements in the support network. Currently, we rely only on academic advisors to talk with students who reach the final stage of academic probation. We are moving to add this to the work of our Behavioral Intervention Team and to assign academic case workers to reach out to students before they are excluded from classes. We need to always respect FERPA and HIPAA privacy rules, but we also have a moral obligation to intervene with students at risk. At times, this can mean contacting families of students even if they are of legal age. Kornbluh indicated that our new General Counsel brings experience in this trying area and is committed to prioritizing student safety and well-being.

Brad Roth noted a presentation given to the Student Affairs Committee a decade ago about the protocols for dealing with students in the dorms who had expressed suicidal ideation. It appeared that the policy was to characterize this as a threat of violence, albeit to oneself, as a justification for throwing the person out of the dorm. He suggested that did not seem to be the most appropriate response to someone suffering from depression. He questioned what the protocols are at this point. Kornbluh explained the protocol has been that we use involuntary removals only for clear behavioral violations. We are reexamining this policy. We want a student to be able to continue to stay in our housing and receive support from us. On the other hand, if the family wants to help the person, we do not want to be their hideout and have them harm themselves under our responsibility. We want to move towards a more nuanced response.

Noreen Rossi pointed out that having students in remote classes makes it more difficult to detect that something is awry. She made a report after meeting with a student who needed help: it was surprising to learn how many people had encountered issues with this student with emotional problems, without doing anything about it. They were dealing with the class details, but that was not the issue: the issue was that she had emotional problems.

Kornbluh indicated that the university has a process for dealing with students at risk. We follow best practices and have an interdisciplinary behavioral intervention team (BIT). The guiding idea here is to have one forum to respond and follow up on all cases related to student welfare. When a student is referred, the group will reach out to the student and open the case. The committee discusses new and active cases in the multi-disciplinary meeting and follows up on them. BIT is chaired by the Dean of Students and includes, the head of counseling services, our conduct officer, the head of residential life, and representatives from OGC, the police, and student success on the academic side. He indicated that we are in the process of adding resources to this process. We have hired an educational

case worker and have another hire in process. BIT meets weekly to talk about students at risk and, in between those meetings, our educational caseworkers follow up. We are scheduling a visit from NABITA, the national organization for such work, and will follow that visit with the establishment of more detailed written protocols to guide this work.

Roth commented that people are generally aware of the Care Report, but that knowledge seeps away over time if it is not reinforced. Kornbluh stressed the need to let the faculty know they should refer a student who is not taking care of themselves or is homeless. The Care Report would be discussed by this committee to determine if all the pieces are in place. Over the past decade, the university has invested more and more resources into student support. BIT is a key tool in that process and Kornbluh believes that these caseworkers will significantly enhance its functioning. Linda Beale suggested having a brief presentation on this addition of caseworkers and more nuanced approach at an upcoming plenary session.

Pramod Khosla questioned the protocol when something similar happens with faculty and staff. Unfortunately, the culture at Wayne has been to do an investigation into erratic behavior. In Kornbluh's experience in academics, we are obliged to do Title IX and EEO investigations. Beyond that, he does not believe HR should be doing investigations. Certainly, with faculty, the department chair and dean have the ability to get them some help, and employment contracts provide the ability to require a faculty or staff member to be seen by a physician.

Jennifer Lewis was concerned about the overall general mental health of students. Every semester she has had many students inform her they are in bad shape, having a hard time getting out of bed in the morning, etcetera. What are things we can do systemically that would support overall well-being?

Board of Governors Meeting: There were only two committees that met at the Board of Governors (BOG) meeting. Both the provost and AVP Darin Ellis had been ill, so academic affairs did not have a presentation.

Carolyn Hafner (AVP & Chief HR Officer) presented a rosy overview of improvements in HR. Khosla noted a recent meeting with her was not useful. There have been many AAUP grievances over issues such as several members being told they no longer have prescription coverage. Danielle Aubert was concerned with the misleading discussion at the BOG of improved customer service with fast response times. Lewis is trying to hire a student assistant and is concerned the process will take the entire semester, by which time the grant funds will expire. Noreen Rossi pointed out the report of positive surveys in the HR presentation: afterwards, she told Hafner there is one group they do not survey—the people who never apply because they cannot get in. She also raised the horrendous experiences faculty report when they try to retire.

The Finance and Budget Committee discussed the bond authorization proposal. At this point, we have the capacity to borrow \$150 million without making our debt payments unmanageable or downgrading ourselves—an opportunity that comes along about once every seven years by averaging out debt service and refinancing older bonds. The proposal includes both the School of Medicine building and other facilities' improvements/long term needs. Much of the discussion was about potential plans for the School of Medicine building. The state is giving us \$100 million, and the original pitch was for the university to borrow \$100 million and raise \$100 million in philanthropy, and for Karmanos to raise another \$50 million in philanthropy, which will allow us to build a new \$350 million building. When Karmanos and the medical school planned out their building needs, the price was closer to \$450 million. There are not yet any major philanthropic donations on behalf of Karmanos or WSU. When you plan a building floor by floor, it is called a program. There were questions around what program \$250 million will buy. Currently, there is only a program for \$450 million.

There was some discussion of using the expected \$250 million to build a smaller new structure and remodel the first through fourth floors of Scott Hall, shelving the floors above. Beale questioned if

that was still a viable possibility. Kornbluh confirmed the current plan is to build the building in the parking lot next to Scott Hall. The HVAC system in Scott Hall is zoned through floors 1-4 and \$250 million will allow a remodel of these floors with a new HVAC system housed in the shelf space above the fourth floor. Later, we would need to raise some additional millions for each additional floor.

Beale found this discussion worrisome. How will we meet the research needs in the medical school and have the ability to hire? One of the problems right now is hiring good researchers when we do not have sufficient lab space. If we spend funding on wet lab space, we need to hire researchers who will bring in grants. Kornbluh could readily see \$200 million needed to hire researchers to fill that space because the cost per investigator at that level is high. All medical schools that have big research enterprises receive tithes by their hospitals. The DMC used to tithe Wayne State \$150 million a year but now funding from DMC is a pittance of that. It was also clear that BOG members were concerned about making this type of commitment in the midst of a presidential search.

### III. UPDATE ON THE COLLEGE OF FINE, PERFORMING AND COMMUNICATION ARTS, DEAN HASAN ELAHI

Elahi has been dean of CFPCA for eight months and is settling in. He is not new to Detroit, having attended graduate school at Cranbrook. Prior to Wayne State, he was a director of design at George Mason University. What attracted him here was the idea of an access university and what we do for access and opportunity. He is what the Wayne State student would have been 35 years ago. Born shortly after the Revolutionary War in Bangladesh, he came to New York City with his family when he was seven as a war-displaced immigrant. He had a 2.17 GPA in community college, and it was only when he attended a university with a similar ethos to Wayne State that he gained the ability to contribute and make an impact. After completing a college degree, he attended an elite art school that is in the top ten of visual arts in the country. Coming from George Mason University, he views the two universities as very similar and worlds apart. Mason is a libertarian, free market university with a very different ideology towards finances. There is no such thing as faculty lines and it has a very different structure, yet they have almost identical missions in the role that we fulfill for Wayne State here in southeast Michigan, and what Mason does for Virginia. The student demographics are very similar, with a high number of first-generation students, Pell Grant students and nontraditional students.

Elahi is the first dean at Wayne State to come out of the visual arts. There is a misconception that artists are bad with money. The reality is that artists are incredibly resourceful with money: they just do not manage enough of it. How do we create a future stewardship of the arts when the arts are the first thing to be let go when there are financial issues? If we rebrand this and look at the needs for a literate and functional society, we need workers that are collaborative, that can think creatively and innovatively. This is the collaboration that we teach. Prior to Mason, he was at the University of Maryland and ran a portion of the honors college. They had a living-learning program in digital cultures and noticed students with orchestra experience were able to work together a lot easier, even if there were no arts involved. This is what helps in terms of understanding collaboration, the work that the entire rest of the sector uses for innovation.

A critical part of what is offered in the arts and culture in the college is the concept of peer review. The first assignment in the freshman drawing class is called critique, and teaches how to do this peer review process. There are things that the arts can teach that transform the ways of everything else around us. Because the arts are not an isolated thing, they need to be embedded in every aspect across our campus, as well as through our entire workforce. This is important because Detroit is a city that creates American culture: whether it is Motown, techno or fashion, many movements in American culture route back to Detroit. We are the cultural center of Detroit. As a college, we are relatively small with about 1700 majors, but the scale of impact is critical. Proportionately, we are affecting more of our community. Through Communication 1010, we touch every student in the university through our college. How can we open this up? How can we bring as many students in as

possible? How can we bring as many constituents as possible because the arts belong to everyone? This is not a hyper-specialization—we are embedded in every part of human behavior.

Elahi pointed out a historical problem with equity in CFPCA. He pointed to four of five tenure denials in the past that were to faculty of color, in a relatively small faculty. The one white male faculty member appealed and was granted tenure. It is problematic to invest years attracting faculty of color, only for them to leave immediately after coming up for tenure.

There are also major challenges with salary inequities in the college that he wishes to address. He pointed out an academic staff member in the job over ten years but was paid only \$60 above the minimum position range. The college has the lowest paid full-time professor in the entire university, who is also a woman of color. One of the things that make it more difficult for the college is that most of the classes meet for multiple (2 to 5) contact hours for each credit hour; accordingly, work put in by faculty is in contact hours, but revenues are determined by credit hours. Many CFPCA full-time tenured or teaching faculty teach as many as 24 contact hours per week. This is especially difficult for part-time faculty who are paid by credit hour and not by contact hour. Elahi shared a pragmatic example. In 1990, he was an art student at Bloomsburg University and the professor would set up the still life in the middle of the room and the students would draw while the professor sat in the corner smoking cigarettes and reading his newspaper during the entire six hours of the three-credit class. At the time this was the norm in the field. These days, faculty are actively teaching for six hours, and being paid for three credit hours. This is, as noted, especially problematic for part-time faculty who are paid about \$3300. Theatre courses sometimes offer only one credit for five (5) contact hours. That also makes most of the four-year programs difficult to schedule. Graduating a student takes about eight years because of the time required (180 hours crammed into a 120-credit degree). This is all on his agenda to address with the faculty.

renée hoogland asked the dean how the Department of Communication works at the college. Elahi responded that communication is a large department with about 30 faculty. The Department of Art and Art History has between 550 to 600 majors. If you add up all the design disciplines (graphic design, interior design, fashion design, industrial design and add digital arts to it), there are about 377 students. There are two tenured faculty in that entire side of the department. In graphic design, for example, there are 136 majors and three full-time faculty (two are non-tenured faculty).

There are also equity issues in music, which has about 200 majors. The enrollments in the performing arts took a hit during the pandemic. Voice is relatively small. There are nearly 100 in music technology, which has two full-time faculty (one tenured faculty of color and one assistant professor of teaching). An issue that must be addressed in music is admissions. The department does not currently recognize the electronic instrument as a valid instrument for audition, so auditions tend to disproportionately affect students of color negatively. The secondary tier of admissions also disproportionately affects students of color because of a requirement to audition in a traditional instrument or voice. The requirement for voice is one foreign language song, preferably in Italian. Elahi suggested it was problematic to evaluate students applying to study music at Wayne State on their ability to sing in Italian when they want to study a genre of music invented by Black DJs in Detroit.

It appeared to Beale that there may be problems within the school around (i) some of the traditional long-term protocols and policies that favor a classical view and (ii) the lack of promotional possibilities or probabilities for faculty who have been stagnating. She questioned if Elahi saw those as related and how that might be addressed. He believes they are intertwined. Legacy programs hold most of the resources in the college and have been slow to change even as student interest and demand has grown in other programs. He is eager to work with the faculty to rebalance resources and reset priorities.

Rossi questioned if all the faculty are on tenure lines. Elahi noted university-wide there are 2866 full-time faculty, with two-thirds full time, one-third part time. CFPCA is inverted, with one-third full

time and two-thirds part time. Rossi noted that factors are determined by the college (and department), so if there is a problem, perhaps the departmental factors could be revisited to reflect changes. In the School of Medicine, factors for the clinician educators were changed about five years ago because their function differed, and it was not fair to hold them to the old standard. If the factors are written such that new areas of activity are not recognized, then it becomes inequitable. Elahi suggested the bigger issue is cultural, relating to the denial of tenure to Black and Latino faculty. Danielle Aubert pointed out an issue with relation to design that has been corrected: a faculty member who was up for full had trouble because faculty in the department did not recognize design as a valid discipline.

Beale questioned if there was college-wide discussion about these issues. Elahi responded that some departments have made strides in the right direction, but that more change remains needed. Beale suggested starting with small, concrete steps that support student success. Rossi noted that the chair in her department in medicine in 1990 found women were paid \$20,000 to \$40,000 less than their male colleagues for the same amount of experience, and it was corrected. Elahi confirmed they are working on that. He views the multiple denials of tenure to faculty of color in the past as problematic but is committed to working towards cultural change.

Elahi noted that the credit hour/contact hour differential creates a problem when some faculty have significantly more contact teaching hours than others. Hoogland suggested this might be partly addressed by taking account of work done in supervising dissertations—work that, in her field, is considerable but does not count as part of the workload. Aubert emphasized that the credit hour/contact hour differential is common, even in community colleges, so it would require radical restructuring to change, especially in the arts. For example, a demo in ceramics can take hours. And this conversation would be different for each discipline. Some faculty would rather have the longer contact hours. We owe it to our students to spend time watching them work if we really want to teach them. Elahi responded that WSU can follow the norm for the field—much of which dates to the 1970s and 80s when there was dead time in the arts classrooms and graphic design was not considered a legitimate field—or become a national leader in equity. A few schools have done this, including George Mason, Hunter College and Cal Arts.

Beale recommended this conversation take place over a period of time, at the ground level, among all the faculty to figure out what can be done for each field. It is not an easy process. Unfortunately, across the university, we have more part-time faculty and fewer tenure lines as an economic way of managing the crisis in finances of higher education. Lewis is not sure what the answer is, but that is the reality. It is embarrassing what our part-time faculty are paid to teach one course.

#### IV. SELECTION OF 2 SENATE REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BUDGET PLANNING COUNCIL

Policy members discussed potential Senate members that might be considered as representatives on the Budget Planning Council. They will finalize the selection next week.

#### V. REVIEW OF THE LATINO STUDIES CENTER REQUEST FOR CHARTER RENEWAL

Baltes was invited to Policy to discuss the request for charter renewal for the Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies (CLLAS). The center is continuing to work and is not receiving external funding. Beale questioned whether there are many prospects for raising external funds and whether the curriculum connected with this program is developed through CLAS or separately, since it was not stated in the document and the center was moved out of CLAS (from under Dean Raskin) and put under the provost. She assumes curricular issues go through the faculty and college process, but it is not clearly stated here.

Baltes stated that his understanding is that most of the faculty are in the history department and the curriculum goes through those departmental processes. Most of the curriculum is stable, and it has not changed. Baltes said that any center curricular suggestions would go through the department and then the college. Kornbluh noted they funded the center to support the scholarship in community activities and teaching in this area, but they run their teaching program through CLAS, and it is all approved through CLAS. It has not been a problem, and our roles for curriculum are a lot clearer because we are governed by accrediting bodies.

Beale suggested the review should include a simple statement to the effect that any curricular offering or degree or certificate program must go through the appropriate faculty department and college process. Lewis agreed with the statement and commented that we put our faculty through many levels of scrutiny that other universities do not. Baltes agreed to add such a statement. Beale will send a memo on behalf of the Policy Committee.

## VI. REPORT FROM THE SENATE PRESIDENT

Education Dean Candidate Interviews: Beale shared the dates and times for the education dean search: February 3, 1:45 to 2:30; February 8, 12:15 to 1:15 (lunch will be provided); February 14, 11:00 to 11:45. In-person attendance is encouraged, but a hybrid option will be available.

Graduate Council Meeting: The Graduate Council reported that GradCAS problems continue. There were issues with documents and no provision in GradCAS to do a fee waiver. The Graduate School is concerned that PhD and international applications are down. They have not focused as much on master's applications, but that is where the biggest numbers are. At the meeting, Beale suggested Graduate Council members hold a retreat to discuss recruitment of master's students here. She was also disturbed to hear that graduate students are complaining about safety concerns. It was unclear how much of that is a mental health issue and how much of it is living in areas around the university that do not feel safe because there is not enough graduate housing on campus. Rossi understood the concern: if you are working late in laboratories in engineering and chemistry, it is much more isolated in those buildings now because there are fewer people.

Center Reviews: Beale noted the Senate's ongoing efforts to ensure that chartering of centers takes place appropriately. The One Health Initiative and Healthy Urban Waters both appear like centers but are not chartered as centers: they may be merely grant-funded temporary centers (allowed without a charter) but it is not clear. It is worrisome that there is a BOG statutory charter requirement and review process that has frequently not been honored. For example, when former Provost Whitfield moved several centers out from under schools to put them under the provost directly, that caused a loss of process. Similarly, the Translational Neurosciences Initiative was handled with a memorandum of understanding explicitly to avoid going through the charter process, which allowed it to avoid the Senate review required under the statute.

New AVP of Economic Development/TechTown: Beale suggested inviting Christianne Malone, the new AVP for Economic Development and TechTown Chief Program Director, to Policy to discuss her new role.

School of Public Health Committee: President Wilson sent a response to the members of the School of Public Health Committee on January 12th, informing them he was moving forward and meeting with legislators. This is worrisome when we are already planning to borrow \$150 million to perhaps move forward with a Scott Hall replacement or improvement. We likely cannot borrow more for seven years. A new school could cost as much as \$20 million a year to operate.

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*Approved as amended via email on February 20, 2023.*

