

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

August 28, 2023

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

Guests: Steffi Hartwell, Dean, CLAS; Matt Larson, Assoc. Prof. and Dir. Implementation, Center for Behavioral Health & Justice; Terrell Topps, Educational Transitional Coordinator

I. WSU PRISON PROGRAMS

The Policy Committee invited Hartwell, Larson and Topps to discuss the university's current in-prison programs, what the future might hold and what the Academic Senate should be thinking about in terms of support for or recommendations of such programs. A two-page document was shared with Policy members describing the Educational Transitional Coordinator (ETC) program.

Persons released from incarceration with a GED have reduced recidivism, whereas the rate of recidivism without a job or GED is about 75% after three years. Education beyond a GED diminishes recidivism more, saving taxpayer resources. The ETC program is one of the few in the nation that does "in-reach" to prisoners to recruit those already taking in-facility higher education courses, assessing what they want to do upon release and determining their pathway to higher education. When prisoners transition out, ETC Coordinator Topps supports with a pipeline to community colleges and to Wayne State. He leads a learning community for those on campus and generally works with people who have been imprisoned or had to go through the criminal justice system, whether they were exonerated or completed their sentences.

Linda Beale asked whether the program is still in a pilot phase and when it began operating. Hartwell explained the program began in 2020 with extensions into 2024 because COVID prevented access to facilities through early 2023. It is referred to as a pilot because of the plan to apply for competitive federal grant funding. It has been supported by \$200K in Michigan Justice funding for two years, which may also be extended.

Wayne State University may not be the proper choice for some students academically or financially. Topps noted the higher the degree of education, the lower the rate of recidivism, and he is a standing testament to that, having served time in Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC). After his release, he continued his education and is now in a position that demonstrates that formerly incarcerated people can be successful—a data point for what education can do economically. Currently, there are six students registered at Wayne State, and six more are in the process of being accepted and/or becoming students in the winter term. It is important to stabilize this population in the community and at home first (e.g., employment, transportation, housing), locating resources for them through community partners in southeast Michigan. This stabilization helps ensure they do not return to prison; education is secondary.

Hartwell noted that the case management team is working with approximately 40 released individuals, with weekly check-ins. Some of the challenges they face include the uncertainty of the release date, the type of financial aid available and parole stipulations.

Beale asked how people connect to the ETC program and what type of programs are currently offered in the institutions. Initially, these were MDOC referrals, but now people also contact the ETC directly. MDOC allows the program to talk with people enrolled in in-prison collegiate programming. After being released, marketing and community encouragement direct them to the education program at Wayne State. The institutional programming is predominantly associate degree programs with community colleges, but there are some four-year universities offering degrees.

Hartwell discussed the ETC program's evaluation arm: the structural and functional obstacles for implementing this type of program and for the participating individuals is under review. Structural obstacles include transportation, jobs, housing and stigma. Functional obstacles include family relationships and release dates. Topps and his team focus on the functional obstacles that can be changed. The research around this program's success is done through the program evaluation and will determine whether it can be replicated throughout Michigan and, ultimately, across the country. There is a similar program at California State University-Fullerton: it includes a residence hall for individuals coming out of prison. There have been discussions here about housing, but transportation and jobs remain obstacles. They are cognizant of the mass incarceration culture in the United States and its severe implications for the adult population that lives in the city of Detroit.

Danielle Aubert asked whether Wayne State currently offers courses or degree programs in the facilities. Larson noted that the university did offer courses inside the Detroit Reentry Center from 2017 until the pandemic began; regrettably, that facility has since shut down. Certificate programs (part of a national collaboration that involves more than 100 universities) were also offered to bring college students into the facility to take college courses alongside prisoners. Thus, the university has some experience in the space as we approach this degree-granting possibility.

Noreen Rossi asked whether one of the hurdles faced by those leaving incarceration is access to health care, since it is taken care of while they are in prison. Hartwell said health outcomes are in close alignment with mental health/well-being outcomes and substance abuse outcomes. They partner with Health Management Systems of America (HMSA) which provides that connectivity. A needs assessment survey is done before and after they come out of prison that includes questions about HIV status, suicidality and mood, and psychological scales inform them of anxiety and anger. It is known that high levels of anger lead to less productivity in the community, and they are probably not yet ready to sit in a classroom.

The university has provided learning communities to help support mental health by creating a safe space for these students. For example, a professor that provides feedback on an insufficient paper is not like a corrections officer giving orders, so students have to reframe their thinking to identify with being a student on campus and not suffer imposter syndrome. MDOC provides vital documents to partners such as HMSA, who provide DHS types of services (e.g., mental health, Medicaid and Bridge cards).

Beale requested more information regarding planning for an in-facility degree proposal and what is being done through the Social Work center. Larson noted that prison education programs in the country came to a halt in 1994, with experimental sites not being re-established until 2015 to provide access to incarcerated students at 50 institutions throughout the country. Last year, the number of institutions was expanded to 200. Last month, the door officially opened so there are many universities trying to establish partnerships with the departments of corrections to implement degree-granting programs. In Michigan, there are three four-year universities that

have already established such programs (Eastern Michigan, Western Michigan and Calvin College), with three-year legislative start-up funding of \$250,000. It is too late for Wayne State to receive that funding. Hartwell, Larson, Topps and Michelle Jacobs (CLAS) have collaborated on the first stage of a proposal submitted to the MDOC, which is the first of three hurdles (application to the MDOC, application to the Higher Learning Commission and an application to the State Department of Education). The goal is to establish a partnership with Macomb Correctional Facility, which is the closest and most reasonable for faculty driving to and from the facility. There is considerable competition from nearby universities, particularly because of the associated Pell grant money; but the group thinks we are in a good position to formalize that relationship with Macomb Correctional Facility because the director of reentry is a partner in the ETC who appreciates Wayne State's reputation for working with this population.

Beale asked about the involvement of CLAS faculty and why the proposal included a four-year degree in social dynamics and human behavior when that is a currently listed degree program. Hartwell noted that she and CLAS Associate Dean Lori Pile have discussed creating a new certificate and full degree program. The proposal was broad because they expect to write a full proposal for the MDOC. They assume a sociology degree would be appropriate because many of these students want to become counselors; yet it is important to advise these individuals they may not be able to get a job as a counselor or teacher because of their prison history. Many come out of prison with an arts degree or a business degree, and they are interested in social justice and history courses. CLAS has many offerings as well as social justice-motivated faculty that may be interested in teaching a course.

Beale asked about the approval process and involvement of faculty from other areas than sociology. Hartwell said the work was done over the summer and will go through faculty governance this fall. To develop a rigorous and sustainable program, it must be highly collaborative. The next stage, after MDOC approval, will seek more faculty input with discussion about a new certificate program or degree. The principal author is a sociologist, but it is not exclusive to sociology. The CLAS Faculty Council and chairs will be involved, hopefully with a large group of participating faculty.

Aubert visited Yale's in-prison education initiative and sat in on a popular graphic design class. Instructors had to figure out how to teach without many tools. Hartwell confirmed that the available technology is limited in facilities.

The Policy Committee envisions this program being viable to the extent it can be expanded and be cross-disciplinary. Larson agreed, but noted that the successful programs nationwide started with a singular discipline, were highly collaborative and expanded over time. Harwell noted the plan to offer one course in fall 2024.

Pramod Khosla suggested there would be a robust conversation in faculty council and agreed with the importance of having a diverse faculty. The university should offer a seamless transition to an appropriate degree that is both sustainable and economically viable. Collaboration among different departments is a need. Topps pointed out that associate degrees currently offered to prisoners do not translate well economically. renee hoogland asked whether programs only focus on male students. Topps explained that Huron Valley is the only female prison in state, and it is extremely challenging to gain access because of various legal actions between the state and the federal government.

Brad Roth asked whether the group has reached out to the business school. Hartwell confirmed that business has been involved with the ETC program. To facilitate faculty buy-in, the business

school dean has encouraged faculty to let students audit courses. They have also worked with the university food and clothing co-ops. One of their interns is developing a care package upon return and helping with those basic needs so that they can become students. The DOSO has also been involved with a laptop program. Most of our students have complicated lives, but this group needs extra structural and functional support. Jennifer Lewis noted that Education had for many years taught a robust, in-prison course that was suspended during COVID. Hartwell asked for information about that course.

Larson noted two primary considerations for moving forward. The first is whether we have enough interested faculty who are willing to make a commitment to drive to and from a facility and add hours to their normal workload. The second is whether there is sufficient financial support for incarcerated students. Pell grants only cover \$7300 in tuition, and incarcerated students are not eligible for federal loans. Philanthropic support or discounted tuition for incarcerated students will be necessary. Some universities have eliminated that gap altogether, while others have reduced it to make it more manageable by raising funds to cover it.

Beale requested Policy be kept informed of the program's progress. She believes this should come before the Academic Senate for approval.

II. APPROVAL OF POLICY PROCEEDINGS

The proceedings of the August 21, 2023 Policy Committee meeting were approved as submitted.

III. REPORT FROM THE SENATE PRESIDENT

Meeting with President Espy: Beale met with President Espy for a frank discussion about what is going right, what is going wrong and issues that demand attention. Topics included HR, marketing, lobbying, facilities, and the School of Medicine. Beale provided a brief history about the "Wayne way" problems and some faculty morale problems from a sense of overload. They also discussed the positive impact of the president's openness, respect for shared governance and dynamism.

Fall Opening: The faculty brunch was an overall success. All the tables were full, and faculty were pleased to have an opportunity to interact. Beale suggested there be more opportunities like this in the future. Policy members agreed there are few things that bring faculty together. hoogland noted the vegetarian food was gone before she arrived. It should be considered that everybody can eat vegetarian, but not everyone can eat meat. Provost Kornbluh suggested holding a faculty brunch in January as well. Beale suggested a central location that works for all faculty. hoogland noted faculty have long discussed having a faculty club.

Many faculty also attended the hugely successful Festifall and took the opportunity to talk with students, their parents and siblings. The performance at the end of the convocation was fantastic and Beale recommended such performances be held at the beginning of the event. Kornbluh agreed. He will put together a committee to debrief.

Beale noted the student move-in appeared to work better with the specific scheduled times for freshmen versus upper class. Kornbluh said the only hangup was requiring students to check-in through the Welcome Center: next year students could move directly into their dorms.

Enrollment: Beale shared the latest enrollment information with Policy, noting it is up except for master's enrollment.

Emails from the Packback consultant: The Packback strategy consultant that has been sending emails to faculty that imply that she has a contractual arrangement with Wayne State to advise faculty has sent a second and third email that were not much better. Beale reported that General Counsel had communicated to her that she cannot represent herself in a way that suggests she is an employee. New faculty might be confused by receiving those kinds of emails. If this persists, it may be helpful if the provost's office sends out an email alerting faculty that there is no official connection to WSU.

Ph.D. Committee: As a member of the committee, Beale has been sitting in on the data group. It is difficult to get the data needed to make informed recommendations. She heard that the two people working to gather data had talked to the Graduate School because there is a group working on sources and uses of GTA funds, but they would not share their data.

Because of the difficulty in figuring out the exact money, Kornbluh said they determined to do modeling. For example, they modeled reducing the number of credits required for a Ph.D. and were able to determine that this will not cost the university much money, so the committee will recommend reducing the number of credits.

In terms of allocating the general funds to support GAs/GRAs/GTAs generally, Beale said the Graduate School chart provided to the committee has a column that says 100% funded and a bunch of people are listed as 100% General Fund, but they may have been on a T32 grant for two years and then on General Funds for one year. There is no way of seeing that, so it is hard to know whether these people were on General Funds the whole time or were partly on grants. The group that is looking at the data did not find it specific enough to understand how the allocation is currently working.

IV. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

State Hall: Kornbluh provided an update on State Hall. It is currently scheduled to open early October, although recent heavy rains may push back that date. One of the reasons flooding was so bad on campus two years ago is because gravel got into the storm drains from the overpass being built near campus, causing the water pressure to shoot up. Thankfully, the storm last week did not cause the same problem, but several basements did get six inches of water. Apparently, this area of the city is designed to drain by gravity and can only handle half an inch per hour: that does not work with these new, more powerful storms. Because the plumbing in State Hall was not completed, water came up through toilets throughout the building.

Beale noted that some faculty have said to her that the information about State Hall was not clearly communicated to those who had expected to be teaching in the building. Some may now want to stay at the substitute room, so there needs to be good communication to everybody. Kornbluh agreed to investigate.

V. BRAIN INSTITUTE CHARTER

The Policy Committee discussed the changes to the charter request submitted by David Rosenberg and determined they could not yet support the request because of a co-leader outside of his department, because of the need to have diverse perspectives on seeking funded faculty positions. Rosenberg merely pointed to a center at

Michigan that was headed by the chair of the department and claimed that it should be no problem. Another concern was around grant support: this additional information again lists existing grants from faculty who may in some sense ‘participate’ in the institute: the creation of an institute should mean that grant opportunities are expected beyond those already available to individual PIs.

Kornbluh will discuss this with Rosenberg and request he respond directly to these issues. He should likely have two internal boards: an administrative board (as he currently has) and an advisory board consisting of faculty from diverse schools and departments that would have a strong say on institute governance before submitting it to Policy again.

VI. GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Kornbluh reported that Darin Ellis (AVP, Academic Affairs) reviewed the university’s governing rules about graduate education. The Board statutes provided for the Graduate Council with significant authority over the Ph.D. education; however, they do not give the Graduate School authority over master’s, graduate certificates or Ed.Ds. Those are in the charge of the faculty of the respective colleges. This is important because master’s that are financially useful for an institution, as well as for students, are different today than they were 10 years ago. There is a different market in which we compete with other institutions. To attract those students, we have to be more nimble: if someone clicks on our website, we need to capture their email address and follow up with them right away to try to admit them conditionally.

The provost wants to use some of the tools used in undergraduate admissions (because that is bulk admissions for the colleges) to give the colleges more authority over their master’s admissions and remove the Graduate School from that process. The Graduate School does not have to certify a transcript before we admit the student. Some programs take anyone with an undergraduate degree and certain classes or a 3.0 GPA and certain classes, while others want writing samples. Those decisions belong to the faculty in the departments in the colleges.

If we transition to that across the entire university, Beale asked what happens if students are admitted to two different programs (e.g., a joint MBA and LLM program). How do we successfully track the admissions and the reporting? Currently, the Graduate School does some of that work. It seems there is a service function at least in tracking/coordinating those kinds of admissions. Can we shift the transition to make it work?

Naida Simon provided two examples of delays caused by Graduate School handling of applications. She noted that the Graduate School accepted an application for admission to a master’s program for spring/summer 2023 on June 15. GradCAS provided a July 5 deadline for spring/summer applications, but the department’s deadline was January 2nd, 2023. When the student did not get everything in on time to be admitted by the department, the Graduate School would not refund the application fee. Another undergraduate applied to spring/summer 2023 but realized they would need to take a missing undergraduate course in spring/summer so requested to defer the application to the fall. The Graduate School did nothing for a month. After the student inquired about the status, on August 21 the Graduate School began reviewing the application for starting this fall.

Lewis recommended each school have simple dashboards to see who applied. Beale noted that the Graduate School’s dashboards have tended to have inaccuracies.

hoogland asked what problems the provost foresees in trying to implement this transition. Kornbluh responded that the president agrees with the need to be nimble with master's

applications. Approximately 40% of this university's Ph.Ds. are in chemistry and psychology, and they basically choose all their Ph.D. students, so that cut the Graduate School's work on Ph.D. admissions by 40%. Many of our master's programs do not have selective admissions--just rather simple requirements. Nearly all our Ph.D. programs have significant selective admissions. The departments should control them, but there may be a role to work with the Graduate School.

Aubert raised concern about support for departmental directors of graduate studies (DGS). Kornbluh will support programs who want to continue to use the Graduate School's services. In some CFPCA programs, a Master of Fine Arts is a terminal degree with selective criteria for admission. Perhaps the Graduate School can continue to service some CFPCA and EACPHS programs that have master's professional degrees. He noted the Graduate School does not do all the admissions; the professional schools (law, business and pharmacy) are completely on their own. Various members noted past and ongoing problems. Beale stated that when the Graduate School was handling law admissions, the law school lost good students because of delays. Lewis said Oakland University's master's program in education is equivalent to ours, but Oakland's students are admitted on the spot.

Beale asked how the service role for which the Graduate School is needed can be defined. Kornbluh suggested the one thing the Graduate School can do to be supportive is to offer professional seminars for graduate students, build cohort groups where they can meet each other across colleges, collect lists of people who will mentor and run programs for connecting careers to graduate students.

Beale suggested the provost attend the first Graduate Council meeting to discuss what this transition intends to accomplish and make clear that it is not taking away from role of the Graduate Council. Kornbluh agreed. The goal is to make sure we build the systems to support things, not just change it and then not be able to support it otherwise. We are currently doing the admissions through Slate. Can the graduate directors see every name and where they are in the process? It is necessary to have in place the type of dashboard with the ability to enter and admit rather than waiting to let the Graduate School admit them.

Khosla commented that he was a graduate director for 10 years in a department that has little interaction with the Graduate School. The initial application to the advisor for Ph.Ds. and master's was passed on to the Graduate School, which merely reviewed to confirm whether requirements were satisfied. Recruitment support from the Graduate School is minimal: most do not think the Graduate School is more than a bureaucratic watchdog. The Graduate School needs to work better with offices overseeing international students: there is often duplication because one party does not know the other's requirement.

Kornbluh recommended a joint meeting of Graduate Council and the Policy Committee to discuss how the transition takes place. Policy members agreed.

VII. STANDING COMMITTEE CHARGES

The Policy Committee discussed potential charges for each of the Academic Senate standing committees. A finalized list of charges will be shared with each of the committees' chairs in the coming weeks.

Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of September 11, 2023.