

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE
August 5, 2024

Present: L. Beale; S. Chrisomalis; L. Clabo; D. Donahue; r. hoogland; P. Khosla; J. Lewis; N. Rossi; B. Roth; S. Schrag

Guests: Ahmad Ezzeddine, Sr. Vice Provost; Bethany Gielczyk, SVP Business Affairs; Elizabeth Klobuchar, Accenture; Alexandra Perkins, Accenture; Jessica Roy, Accenture

I. ACCENTURE HR: NEXT STEPS

The Policy Committee met with representatives from the Accenture consulting firm that has been hired to look at HR procedures throughout the university and recommend steps to incorporate better business practices. Klobucher, Perkins and Roy provided a recap from the first 12-week phase of their work and summarized how they will incorporate what they learned into the second phase of work taking place over the next 20 weeks.

During the initial 12-week assessment period the Accenture team collaborated with WSU stakeholders to understand the current state of HR procedures. They considered how to enhance efficiencies and HR processes that impact the campus holistically, focusing in on what we do and how that helps cultivate a culture of the HR process across campus. They worked with a number of key leaders (University Leadership Council, Council of Deans, HR and academic leadership, Policy Committee, functional HR leads and teams, BAOs, Student Senate, Graduate Student Union, Coalition of Unions) to create a strong foundation for collaborative work within and across HR.

They identified stakeholders to determine engagement opportunities throughout the assessment, many of whom they will speak with again over the next 20 weeks. Those conversations were to understand the campus community's core issues and experiences with HR. These interview responses showed certain emerging themes that need to be taken into account in recommendations. WSU competes within the higher education space as well as locally for talent. What does this look like from an HR perspective? What does it mean specifically in higher education? How do we help bring in best practices? Where do we have extra steps that we can eliminate? How can we be more efficient moving forward, making sure that we are doing what we can to be exemplary in the different things we are focusing on throughout the course of the next several weeks and changing those ways of working going forward? Ultimately, that will lead to the future state roadmap.

Accenture met with over 150 different individuals who have some capacity in which they partner with HR, leading to 53 pages of notes. The goal was to find key themes to understand where alignment is needed going forward and to make sure they have the right partnerships established. Ultimately that led to 15 potential initiatives.

The disconnect across the different parties was prevalent. Everybody is trying to do the right thing, but there is a lack of clear process leading to confusion and negative sentiments from multiple parties. The challenges were in four key areas: (i) insular culture and fractured trust; (ii) lack of end-to-end customer service view; (iii) unclear ownership and issues with processing; and (iv) legacy technology. There are some good things in place, but there are potential improvements. Most importantly, this has to be developed differently: for changes to stick, the approach must fundamentally shift. These four themes are across the HR function.

Linda Beale asked about to what extent comments on specific people's performance in HR were incorporated if none of the key themes reflect individual performances. Roy replied that specific call outs were shared but for the most part feedback was aggregated. This assessment is not individual performance reviews. Those conversations will be part of this next phase looking at goals, responsibilities and core skills expected in various roles.

Regarding Insular culture and fractured trust: There is a culture of fractured trust across the campus both from HR personnel's perspective and from other campus units' perspective of HR. This fractured trust created a barrier to collaboration. A statement that summed this up was "It feels like whenever we ask a question or try to get something done, the initial starting point is no, instead of how might we get to an answer." There is an assumption of non-collaboration that requires rebuilding trust. The data indicated trust is broken because of the lack of transparency in who should be doing what and how things work together.

Policy members understood the importance of a culture of trust, but noted that the long history of lack of HR responsiveness means that changing that culture will require a radical change in processes, personnel training and clarity about the policies and how they work.

Regarding Lack of end-to-end customer service view: HR teams are focused on the individual steps and pieces that they own. There were multiple instances of people saying, "I have done my part; I do not know what happens over there." When those different steps are not tied together, any lack of movement is likely to be perceived as the fault of one team or another, when in reality it may just be a broken process. For example, there is a 15-step process where steps one through five are done in one place, someone else does steps six through 10 and something else happens in steps 11 through 15. The person who does steps six through 10 does not know what happens in steps one to five but did steps six through 10 correctly but based on the wrong information. That 15-step process is made worse because the steps were not created with the end user in mind, so the perceived customer for each step might look different. It is important in designing a process to consider what it is meant to achieve and what outcome is best for that customer. The current HR processes were designed based on the systems already in place. Over time they have changed as roles changed and people in different places took on new roles, so that the entire process is like a bowl of spaghetti.

HR has already done some process redesign, looking at the work group to hire process. Last week, the Accenture team met with the HR leadership team to talk about ways of working differently. Roy explained the difference is that feedback and recommendations gathered over the past few months allow a design with the future state in mind, figuring out what needs to be different to achieve that best outcome, thus changing to a customer service mentality.

Regarding Unclear ownership and issues with processing: Often times assessments start out with high goals—how can we become a top talent recruiter? Those aspirations are important, but they require getting the basic things right. Here, that means getting rid of finger-pointing and blame and developing a solution-oriented mindset. Policies are in place for a reason, so the HR team voiced their frustration when leadership sometimes ignores policies. There does need to be collaboration on following stated policies, but groups need to work together to find a way to get to the best outcome while following policy. Roy suggested some existing policies may need additional consideration.

Provost Clabo noted that most who complain about HR are struck by the difference between the documented process and what happens for any transaction. There may be 14 steps in a process, but the steps applied are 1, 2, 13, and then 3. Documented processes are rarely followed, resulting in the regular hiring of new faculty or staff seeming like a first ever hire as a university.

A common example of failed processing is when the initial data submitted by a department is processed by the HR team to the end step when someone realizes that the code is incorrect or some other technical detail is wrong and sends it back to the first step to be redone. There needs to be some kind of check and balance, a better form or better information, to prevent that kind of delay and screw-up of process—perhaps an earlier check by the person who has the right information. Right now, there are some processes where the only check and balance is the final data entry process. There are opportunities to build that in, but the knowledge, training and the information must be right from the beginning.

Steve Chrisomalis noted that any front-line person in a department or a college doing this work will have anecdotes of doing X and then being told they have to do Y. The next time they did Y, but were told they have to do X. As a result, people feel they are being gaslighted. Roy responded that these hiring processes are the priority at this point. Noreen Rossi pointed out both hires and retirements are a problem.

Regarding Legacy technology: There are many scenarios where the same process is supported by two or three different solutions depending on the area. A big change to the system is not on the near-term horizon, but there is opportunity to look at some of the basic processes. For example, there are conversations about case management to support better tracking. A common theme was about use of email: something may be sent by email, and when there is no response, another email will be sent asking for an update. That can add to confusion.

Gielczyk noted they have been working on that email piece with C&IT. We were not using some of the existing functionality with Banner. Some of the impediments in that system have been addressed, and HR has been working with a small group of the BAOs on campus with a small number of forms. As a result of this change, that process will happen in Banner EPAF similar to a Docu-sign that generates to the next person, and the original instigator will be able to track it. This improvement now allows us to track how quickly things are moving and where our process pain points are. Jennifer Lewis suggested adding a dashboard that everyone can access to see where a candidate is in the hiring process. A link to the policy could be embedded. Everything else can turn on that.

The goals and next steps of phase two will continue the momentum towards improved practices. There are a lot of “big picture” things the university can do. Accenture is working through this with President Espy, Provost Clabo, Sr. VP Gielczyk and others to be clear on the focused outcomes. They will continue the engagement across campus, which includes building a more intentional governance model. There will be working groups set up for these process-change programs with cross-function representation to ensure a customer-centered mindset.

The goal is to do things differently and push to the leading practice. There will be scenarios where perhaps the technology or staff is not there, but we still want to nudge and ask questions to identify some of those opportunities that are leading practice. It would show in the market.

Facilitating these changes requires a sense of ownership about the ways of working and understanding how things can be done differently. The teams will be equipped with a different way of looking at these instead of going back to the way it has always been done.

The focus areas for the next 20 weeks are in four buckets. First, project planning and initiation entails mobilizing the project team to refine the project schedule; define roles, responsibilities and ways of working; and confirm that the project management structure and approach align with the project management governance framework. They are identifying the groups of people that need to be involved for this second phase of work. It will be a collaborative effort starting with teams

that already exist, but in some cases it will be necessary to create specific new groups. For example, for the recruit to hire we would expect to have folks that represent both the academic and the non-academic side such as BAOs or teams that support them as well as the HR leadership team or their teams that do the processing.

Clabo noted the people who are the customers in this are the academic chairs who have to be core to that working group because they are the people who hire the faculty. Beale agreed. Having some of the BAOs might make sense, but they are not really the ones who would understand some of the key timing issues and other things that come up.

The second bucket is to define the enterprise-wide HR roles and enabling support. We are looking at leading practice roles for HR teams, similar to how WSU is structured today. This is not doing an entire reorganization, rather understanding how this operates in other universities and to successfully create the roles and responsibilities in those key process areas to ensure folks have the knowledge needed to get that work done, and the understanding of how those roles fit together.

The third bucket is about the recruit to hire process. This process is prioritized because (i) some of the work was already in progress with the HR team, (ii) the EPAF process is closely aligned, and (iii) this was by far the biggest challenge point heard across the feedback.

The final bucket is about HR service delivery. How do we make sure some of the tools and process support materials are available? A quick win is inventorying the HR website because the forms are out of date. It is a capacity challenge. As a capacity focus, we will determine who is going to the website, what is it that they are going for and what questions are they calling about when they cannot find answers on the website. We can help facilitate getting the right things to the customers as they need them.

Beale asked how it is expected to accomplish these things with working groups without some plan for what the critical basic foundations of a good HR office in a university that deals with these problems should look like. Roy explained they started with the leading practice roles and responsibilities to do that. They are not necessarily recommending restructure, though if there are opportunities or conversations that make sense perhaps they will. If we have not fixed the underlying process challenges and gaps in knowledge, the restructure will have the same problems just in different places. We think about it in terms of processes first and the roles that come along with it, and then where those roles sit and how they are structured becomes the natural outcome of how we design the processes.

II. FORAGERONE UPDATE

Ezzeddine was invited to Policy to discuss the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) and the implementation of ForagerOne. UROP was assigned to him only a month ago, so he is still learning about issues and opportunities. He is working with Matt Orr (Program Coord-UG Research) on the roll out of ForagerOne more widely across campus. Kelly Dormer (Testing, Eval & Stud Life Res), who originally worked on the transition of UROPConnect to ForagerOne, has been consulting with Ezzeddine to make sure they do not let anything drop in the process. There are some opportunities that we could do with UROP in general, and particularly ForagerOne, so he wants to make sure that this implementation and the rollout is effective with faculty and students so that everybody understands the benefit.

Rossi had contacted Ezzeddine about the rollout to faculty in the medical school. The rollout to students in the medical school is easier because you can tell them about it in the classroom, but the rollout to the faculty has been less than ideal. She has offered multiple times to the dean for

students to go to each of the departmental faculty meetings and explain how it works. So far, she has only been invited by one department and they loved it. None of the others have done it.

Chrisomalis worked on ForagerOne with Orr and noted there are no problems with it because every change they asked for was made. He was not sure if an email about ForagerOne went out in the spring because by the time it was ready to be announced to faculty in April, faculty were on their way out. Orr was considering sending out an announcement in May, but it was not the most effective way to get faculty to pay attention. August is the best time to send out a strong message about ForagerOne. It must be noted that it is not just for UROP. If faculty are not actively involved in UROP, then they do not really know what that is. Some of the messaging going around is that it is replacing UROP, which it is not. He suggested Orr put something together in the next week or so that rolls out to all faculty instructing them on what to do and what you do not have to do, because as long as your college website is updated, you just put in individual projects that you may have into ForagerOne. The wonderful thing about this system is it is something that faculty should be doing anyway. The people who have used ForagerOne are mostly people who have an early adopter mindset and might be more technically minded. There may be challenges amongst the technological laggards whose websites have not been updated in a number of years. That is not a technical problem but a social problem.

To promote faculty reading and uptake of such a message, Policy members suggested keeping the message brief with a clear title that gives enough information that they know what it is about. Clabo suggested Orr help prepare the message, Brandon Gross (AVP for Strategic Operations & Academic Communications) can help write it, and it should be sent from the provost and Academic Senate president so faculty see this is for faculty. The message can include short testimonials from Rossi and Chrisomalis. Policy members suggested sending a separate notice to each of the chairs, because faculty do read their chairs' messages, and the deans can let them know to be on the lookout for it.

Chrisomalis noted the advantage of doing that is if something comes from the upper administration, there is sometimes skepticism. For example, some of the parts of College to Career are not yet visible. Making it clear for people who are from academic programs who may initially see College to Career as an effort to turn Wayne State into a vocational school is an opportunity for chairs to demonstrate this as an opportunity to shape our contribution to College to Career through UROP, which President Espy has made clear is a part of what College to Career represents. Clabo agreed and asked Ezzeddine to include it on the agenda for New Faculty Orientation. She also suggested Chrisomalis and Rossi do a 10-to-15-minute testimonial about how they use it to lend credibility.

Ezzeddine noted his discussion with Rossi about the complement of students being full and having to turn students away. We want to find ways to connect them to someone else who may have something similar or where they can continue to get those experiences.

Beale asked about continuing funding for UROP. Ezzeddine confirmed there is funding, and he is seeking an understanding of ways to ensure that all the funding is made available. They are expanding the reach to all students, not just honors students who know their way around. We also want to use more effectively work-study funding to support these initiatives, because we have money that is not being spent and work study that should be spent. We will find funding to support faculty activity. There will be a major information campaign at multiple levels to tell faculty about all these resources. Clabo recommended the draft of what that campaign looks like also be brought to Policy for advice. The more faculty voice we bring to these kinds of messages, the better they serve.

Chrisomalis pointed out that receipt of UROP funding does impose a different set of responsibilities on the student to manage hours. These are things that non-US students may struggle with, so we want to make sure that communication is clear. Ezzeddine is working on how this is packaged and when, and will facilitate that process for them. They are working behind the scenes to clear up many of the issues.

III. POLICY PROCEEDINGS

The proceedings of the July 22 and July 29, 2024 Policy Committee meetings were approved as drafted.

IV. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Enrollment: It appears FTIAC enrollment may be up nearly 1%. Clabo has now asked that effort be put into transfer students because those numbers are down. The free community college program may be encouraging people to stay longer before they transfer.

Chrisomalis noted the biggest increases in master's enrollment. The downtick is in the non-resident category, but the resident category is incredibly good. Only master's engineering is down because of the decline in international enrollment. Clabo noted we have work to do to bring some level of focus to our expertise and how we bundle some of those very disparate, under-involved master's programs into something that is attractive, contemporary and helps someone get a job or get to the next level of the job they are in, especially for engineering master's.

Nursing is down due to national trend. Pandemic media reports about staffing shortages, burnout and attrition in the profession did nothing to help. Also, students of a certain age are looking for opportunities to work remotely. It is going to be an uphill climb to get that turned around.

Fall Opening: We are short volunteers for move-in. It is an important experience for students that they see people at the university as welcoming. We are working with student organizations and leadership is expected to help with that. There is a sign up and you can pick a time and an event to help with such as check-in, directing students to their apartment or carting TVs upstairs. More than anything, it is about being welcoming and also as emotional support for a tearful parent. Beale shared with Policy the link to Fall Opening events and encouraged Policy members to do at least an hour of move-in volunteering.

V. REPORT FROM THE SENATE PRESIDENT

AVP for Tech Commercialization: Taunya Phillips has been named AVP for technology commercialization.

Interdisciplinary Taskforce: Beale and Clabo discussed the interdisciplinary taskforce issue and are hoping to bring that back to Policy in the next couple of weeks.

Wayne Experience: The Wayne Experience course has been suspended for one more academic year. Beale and Clabo discussed moving quickly in the fall to develop a plan for next year that includes piloting multiple opportunities. Clabo intends to follow up with renee hoogland and others for suggestions so that we might have a suite of Wayne Experience offerings for students to choose from. If a student has more needs around how to navigate the campus or how to write versus a student who comes well prepared and wants an intellectual experience in their first Wayne Experience course, we should be able to give students a variety of options.

Lewis pointed out a roadblock in her college when people teach courses like Wayne Experience is that it costs the college. For example, if she teaches a Wayne Experience class and it is not for the students in her unit, then her college hires part time faculty to fill her role but the college is not compensated for that. As a result, her college has said they cannot do that anymore, so Wayne Experience will be discouraged in the College of Education because that does not serve education students.

Clabo explained we are not an RCM (responsibility-centered management) institution and she does not expect that in an incremental budget model. Hearing about that issue is helpful, so she needs to message the deans about resourcing those requirements. The college does not pay for anything; instead, the university pays for it. That “cost to the college” reflects a fundamental lack of understanding of budgeting. In budgeting, the allocation is not based only on enrollment of majors but also on credit hours taught and other factors.

Chrisomalis noted there are contexts where BAOs do use major numbers. When he asked what is needed to get a full academic advisor in his department, he was told they need X number of majors, not Y number of credit hours taught. That support comes down to a BAO pointing to the major number in a lot of colleges.

Clabo explained the folks who serve on the Budget Planning Council are probably the most well versed in the university’s distribution of resources and have the best understanding of why we make some of the decisions because they help shape those decisions. But everybody does not get an opportunity to serve, and these old ways of thinking persist. Clabo and Gielczyk will likely need to do another road show on how budgets become law. Beale also noted that the Budget Committee did not do its full ‘show’ for Budget Advisory Committee members in the schools/colleges/departments in 2023-24, so that needs to be reinstated this year.

New Faculty Orientation: Beale is waiting to hear back on a representative for the Facilities, Support Services and Technology Committee to present at the New Faculty Orientation. Everyone else has confirmed and the plan remains the same.

Parking while on sabbatical: Beale alerted Policy to something Brad Roth had brought up relevant for faculty who have a parking tag and go on sabbatical. Currently, faculty are told that they must fill out a form to cancel the parking permit and give up the tag. There is no way to simply ‘pause’ the parking tag’s viability. Beale alerted Gielczyk who agreed to work with parking to find a better solution, since faculty should be able to suspend parking while on sabbatical but keep their tag for when they return.

CIAC-I representative: Policy reviewed the full membership of the CIAC-I committee, recommended a Senate member to serve and decided to move to staggered terms. Beale will reach out to determine willingness to serve.

SAVP Marketing and Communications: Policy interviewed the four SAVP marketing and communications candidates last week and Beale sent the consensus memo of recommendation on behalf of Policy to Chief of Staff & University Relations Officer Melissa Smiley. Beale noted to members that Smiley had expressed her appreciation for the Policy memo and noted that it was helpful in the process.

VI. CONTINUATION OF SENATE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON AI

Policy members agreed to invite C&IT and some of the people from the AI subcommittee to an upcoming meeting of the Policy Committee to discuss the WarriorGPT process and the pilot plan.

Policy also agreed to add up to three additional members to the subcommittee. Beale will check with Chair Richard Pineau (CLAS) before contacting them.

VII. MEMBERSHIP OF THE NON-ACADEMIC STUDENT MISBEHAVIOR HEARING COMMITTEE PANEL

Policy reviewed the membership of the Non-Academic Student Misbehavior Hearing Committee Panel. Beale will reach out to confirm whether the current members are willing to serve another term.

Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of August 19, 2024.