

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC SENATE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE
June 20, 2016

Present: J. Artiss; L. Beale; V. Dallas; D. Kessel; L. Romano; B. Roth; N. Simon;
K. Whitfield; A. Wisniewski

Absent with notice: C. Parrish; W. Volz

The item marked with an asterisk constitutes the Action of June 20.

1. Report from the Senate President: The search committee for the Associate Vice President for Budgets and Planning conducted the initial interviews with the candidates. Mr. Romano has received assurance from Vice President for Finance and Business Operations William Decatur that the Policy Committee and the Budget Committee would meet the candidates who will visit campus for the next round of interviews.
- *2. Proceedings of the Policy Committee: Policy Committee approved the Proceedings of its meeting of June 13, 2017, as submitted.
3. Hilberry Theatre: On June 13, Policy Committee toured the Hilberry Theatre and the Theatre's production center. The College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts is seeking the Policy Committee's support for the issuing of bonds to fund the Hilberry Gateway Project. At today's meeting, PC members revisited the question. They agreed that improvements in the Theatre's facilities are needed, but they think, given the University's financial situation, the College should investigate the possibility of making some renovations to improve the facilities that would not be as expensive as the Gateway Project.
4. Mathematics Competency: Policy Committee commented on the administration's suspension of the mathematics competency (MC) requirement in the General Education Program. Mr. Romano spoke about the authority granted to the Academic Senate and the General Education Oversight Committee by the Board of Governors University Statutes. University Statute 2.26.04 states that the administration has to consult with the Academic Senate about any changes to policies that affect the entire University. University Statute 2.43.03 *General Education Program; Requirements* states that the General Education Oversight Committee is to be consulted about proposals to revise the Program. The GEOC was not consulted.

Mr. Romano noted that it was the Policy Committee that brought the problems students have in fulfilling the MC to the attention of the administration in a meeting with President Wilson and his Cabinet in March of 2015. The MC was a hindrance to graduation. The steps students had to take to complete the requirement needed to be changed. Policy Committee never suggested that Wayne State should not require students to demonstrate math competency. In meetings with Provost Margaret Winters, the Chair of the Math Department Daniel Frohardt, and Associate Provost for Student Success Monica Brockmeyer, Policy Committee suggested ways in which the requirement might be changed. One suggestion was that the

requirement might be based on the student's major, but that change would need a great deal of discussion. The Math Department was to revise the courses students take to demonstrate competency and to revise the math competency exam.

Provost Whitfield noted that Provost Winters had consulted with General Counsel Louis Lessem, who ruled that the elimination of the requirement did not violate Board Statute. Members of the Policy Committee disagreed with Mr. Lessem's interpretation. The Statutes are clear that the appropriate academic bodies are to be consulted before academic policy is made. Ms. Beale noted that, on occasion, the Board of Governors has not acted upon a recommendation from the administration until the appropriate consultation took place. The General Counsel's interpretation denigrates the role of the faculty and suggests that consultation with faculty is not necessary to change academic policy. This occurrence makes mockery of academic governance. Ms. Beale mentioned concerns about the University's reputation because of the way in which people might interpret the elimination of the math competency. Mr. Roth said that the Statute specifically confers upon the GEOC the task of determining whether high school mathematics fulfills the math competency. What upset Mr. Roth most was that the decision had been concealed. The decision was made but the announcement was delayed deliberately to ensure that consultation did not take place.

Provost Whitfield met with the Chair and the Associate Chair of the Department of Mathematics to discuss the need to find out why students have great difficulty fulfilling the MC. He was told that there are a number of faculty in the Math Department who are ambivalent about teaching remedial math. The Provost is gathering data and forming a committee to look at the issues. He asked members of the Policy Committee who are interested in serving on the committee to notify him of their interest.

Mr. Romano will send the Provost the records that the Senate Office has from the discussions that have taken place over the past year. The question will be on the agenda of the next meeting of the Policy Committee.

5. Student Code of Conduct: In response to a request from faculty, the Policy Committee submitted a request to Provost Winters that the Board of Governors University Statute 2.31.02 be revised to include a specific prohibition against reusing the work product from a prior course in a current course without the prior permission of the instructor. When Provost Winters sent Policy Committee's request to General Counsel Lou Lessem, he responded that it already was covered in the Statute. Last week, Policy Committee discussed the issue with Provost Whitfield. At the Provost's suggestion, the wording was revised. Policy Committee will submit to the Provost its recommendation to revise the Statute.
6. Board of Governors Meeting: The Board of Governors Academic Affairs Committee, Personnel Committee, and Budget and Finance Committee and the full Board are meeting June 24. Policy Committee reviewed some of the materials on the agendas: the Student Development Initiative – Student Success for Students of Color; the FY 2017 Proposed General Fund Budget; the FY 2016-17 Tuition and

Fee Rate Recommendation; the FY 2017 Proposed Auxiliary Activity Budgets; and the Report on Research Awards and Proposals for the period October 1, 2015 through May 31, 2016.

Mr. Romano pointed out that, despite the University's spending millions of dollars to narrow the gap between the graduation rates of white and African American students, the gap has increased. In 2010 the gap was 33.7%; in 2015 it was 35.3%. Mr. Roth commented that, from what his students have reported, socio-economic factors are major impediments to improving retention and graduation rates. We need to improve the resources for students so they can devote more time and attention to their education. Provost Whitfield specifically mentioned the need for childcare. He is hopeful that the changes in the scheduling of classes might contribute to improvement as well. New programs that would provide more aid to students might help. Ms. Dallas mentioned that we now have a monthly payment plan. It might help students better manage their finances. PC members mentioned the success Georgia State University has had in improving the graduation rate of African American students.

The 2015 Affirmative Action Status Report was submitted to the Board of Governors. Mr. Romano commented on the difficulty the University has in hiring and retaining African American faculty in the sciences. He suggested some steps the University might take to attract them to Wayne State.

Vice President for Research Stephen Lanier submitted the Report on Research Awards and Proposals from October 1, 2015 through May 31, 2016, to the Board of Governors. Our total funding has increased since 2013. In 2013 the awards totaled approximately \$62 million; in 2016 they totaled \$116 million. Funding from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation has decreased greatly since 2005. Mr. Romano noted that we need to increase competitive investigator driven funding. Provost Whitfield added that when agencies reduce their funding for research, faculty need to increase the number of proposals they submit.

The proposed tuition increase averages 4.2%. Tuition for lower division undergraduate students will increase 3.8%. The increase for upper division undergraduate students is 4.5%.

7. Reports from Liaisons: Ms. Dallas, who serves on the search committee for the enrollment manager, reported that the candidates have been interviewed. Mr. Romano asked that, in the future, the candidates meet with the Policy Committee.
8. Search for the Director of Financial Aid: The University is searching for the Director of Student Financial Aid. Mr. Romano said that a strong, highly-qualified director is needed. There are long-standing problems in that Office. In a recent evaluation of the Office, federal auditors found many violations.