

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC SENATE  
PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE  
February 18, 2019

Present: L. Beale; P. Beavers; V. Dallas; r. hoogland; D. Kessel; C. Parrish; B. Roth;  
N. Simon; W. Volz; K. Whitfield

The item marked with an asterisk constitutes the Action of February 18, 2019.

1. Report from the Chair:

- a. Ten candidates for the position of dean of the College of Education were interviewed last week. The search committee narrowed the slate to three finalists. The finalists will visit campus over the next few weeks.
- b. Staff on *The South End* inquired whether an instructor who teaches an in-person class can unilaterally announce that the class will be held online when the university closes due to an emergency such as a heavy snowfall. There is no explicit policy, though administrators have tended to see no problem with a professor doing so. Some members of Policy noted that professors ordinarily exercise considerable control over the means by which they deliver course instruction. Others did note some concern in this situation—whether the students in the class had sufficient notice about the possibility of switching to online, whether all of the students had adequate access to computers and ability to follow the class online. (The lack of quality control protocols for online courses at the university is another problem, but not any more relevant to the emergency change than to other online classes.) The Provost indicated that his office is developing a policy governing academic activity emergency closure makeups. He will share the draft policy with the Policy Committee for comment.

2. Report from the Senate President:

- a. Governor Whitmer outlined her plan for higher education that includes guaranteed funding for two years for students attending community colleges. Ms. Beale expressed her concern that the emphasis on community college funding would likely result in less funding for four-year colleges. That is problematic, since community colleges have millage rates added onto residents' property taxes that provide funding, in addition to tuition and any state appropriation, whereas public universities in the state are not supported directly by millages.
- b. Several members of the Policy Committee will attend the meeting about the Microsoft Partnership on February 20.
- c. Provost Whitfield and Ms. Beale serve on the capital funding committee. The committee has suggested that the state capital outlay request in October should propose renovation of State Hall. This has been a long-term priority of the Academic Senate, along with Scott Hall, and Policy Committee members had noted that it seemed strategically a good idea to make a request, even if we have not completed the Master Plan. Since we will clearly be continuing to use State Hall (especially considering the fourth-floor remodeling) and clearly recognize that the remainder of the building needs renovation, this seems an appropriate time to target it for a funding request. The university will likely ask for State assistance with a project that would update the entire building, including a new bank of elevators to solve the current problem of wheelchair-inaccessible elevators.

- d. As of February 18 enrollment for the spring/summer is down compared with last year at this time. Ms. Beale will invite Darin Ellis, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, and Ahmad Ezzeddine, Associate Vice President for Educational Outreach and International Programs and Senior Associate to the President for Special Initiatives, to a meeting to discuss spring/summer enrollment and the status of enrollment in the extension campuses.
- e. The Budget Planning Council held hearings last week for the Libraries, the General Counsel Office, and Athletics. Hearings will continue through early March.
- f. Ms. Beale has suggested to the master planning committee that they hold at least one and possibly two focus groups to ensure that the Senate members on committees have an opportunity to present ideas. She also suggested that they hold focus groups for Graduate Council members and graduate studies directors and perhaps another focus group for undergraduate studies directors to get a spectrum of faculty commentary. It might also be important to meet with the Faculty Council of the School of Medicine.
- g. David Kessel, renee hoogland, and Brad Roth will serve as Academic Senate representatives to the Distinguished Service Faculty Award Committee.

- \*3. Proceedings of the Policy Committee: The Committee approved the Proceedings of its meeting of February 11, 2019, as submitted.
- 4. Web Accessibility Policy and Procedures: The U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) requested that the university make specific changes to our web accessibility implementation procedures. The policy and procedures establish minimum requirements to ensure accessibility of electronic information on the university's websites. It was noted that "the expense associated with bringing into compliance non-compliant Web pages and resources created and/or posted by staff or contractors, may be chargeable to the University unit that is responsible for assuring the accessibility of the information on the Web." It is expected that the cost would not be exorbitant.
- 5. Capital Projects Planning: Ashley Flintoff, Director of Planning and Space Management, Facilities, Planning and Management (FP&M), suggested that a group of faculty be available to consult on classroom renovations. Members were very supportive of FP&M consulting with faculty who teach in State Hall, since some find the renovations done on the fourth floor useful but others find them limited to particular kinds of classes. Policy Committee will ask the Provost for a list of faculty who have taught in State Hall in the last 2-3 years and that list can be provided to FP&M for this purpose.
- 6. Senate Apportionment: Ms. Simon, Chair of the Elections Committee, reported how the apportionment for the 2019-2020 academic year was obtained. The College of Engineering and the Mike Ilitch School of Business each gained one Senate seat. No units lost representatives. The total number of members next year will be 84.
- 7. Agenda for Senate Meeting: The Committee reviewed the draft agenda for the March 6 meeting.

8. Student Affairs Committee and Facilities, Support Services and Technology Committee: The committees held a joint meeting at which Jeff Bolton, Assistant Vice President, Budgets, presented the initial model for RCM budgeting. This is the same presentation made to the full Senate on November 7, 2018. It continues to be subject to revision, as the RCM Steering Committee discusses a number of details regarding allocation of resources.
9. Vice President for Health Affairs and Dean of the School of Medicine: The President announced his administrative appointees to the search committee, which will still include a representative of the Henry Ford Health System, although that person will no longer be a co-chair. (Ms. Beale will serve on the search committee, as President of the Academic Senate.) In addition to the Medical School, the College of Nursing and the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences will report to the Vice President of Health Affairs regarding clinical matters. Each of the deans (including Medicine) will report to the Provost regarding academic matters. Policy Committee expressed concern about the decision to merge the Health Affairs VP with the dean, a decision that was made without any consultation with academic governance, and about the impact of these decisions on the changing relationships the university has with the various physician practice groups, the Detroit Medical Center, and the Henry Ford Health System.
10. Student Success Steering Committee: Ms. Simon and Ms. Dallas attended the February 18 committee meeting. Housing lost students in the winter term because they could not afford the cost. The Steering Committee will look at what might be changed so students could afford to live on campus for the entire academic year. In the past, the university provided a subsidy to support university housing, which lessened the cost to students, but housing is now supposed to pay for its expenses. There is an online tuition calculator that allows students to calculate their tuition and fee payments, so Policy members suggested that it would be helpful if the university expanded that calculator so that students could include their housing costs (if on campus) and meal costs (if using one of the campus meal plans). We know that living on campus improves student retention.

The Steering Committee also is considering changing the probation policy from a strictly formal one to allow for a professional judgment in appropriate situations. An example was a student who had flunked out years earlier with a very low GPA. When she returned, her first semester GPA was 2.8, but because her GPA from the earlier semester was low, her cumulative GPA was below 2.0. According to the rule she would be excluded for the low GPA, but clearly she should not be, considering the circumstances and the fact that she has returned and is doing well in the return. The advisors and colleges also will begin looking at the GPA for each term and the cumulative GPA. A student might do well the first term, then have several semesters with less than a 2.0. If advisors looked at the student's record each term, they could intervene earlier to help the student.