

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC SENATE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

March 8, 2021

Present: L. Beale; P. Beavers; L. Lauzon Clabo; J. Fitzgibbon; r. hoogland; C. Parrish; N. Rossi; B. Roth; N. Simon; R. Villarosa; Rohan E.V. Kumar

1. Report from the Chair:

- a. Campus Virus and Vaccine Status. Provost Clabo announced that the vaccine supply for the week has arrived and there are a full slate of appointments Tuesday through Thursday. Anyone over 50 with a chronic condition is now eligible. There is a plan for vaccinating students and so Clabo is hopeful we will be able to do that soon, but do not yet have support from the Michigan Health Department to do so. Clabo expected that there would be Moderna and Pfizer and possibly even J&J vaccines available. Beale asked whether the booster, if any, would need to be manufactured by the same company that made the original vaccination that a person received. Clabo indicated that would likely be so, because their versions are slightly different. Parrish asked how being vaccinated or not might affect teaching in the fall. Clabo responded that the Public Health Committee is working on metrics for meetings at this point, since various groups are asking for information on holding actual meetings. There will be a recommendation from the Public Health Committee regarding the metrics on vaccinations or natural immunity before in-person meetings are allowed but that is not yet decided. Parrish noted that some will refuse vaccination. Clabo indicated that if herd immunity (around 80%) is reached, then those who are not vaccinated should not pose a risk to those that are, though they may pose a slight risk to each other. It's like the flu, where vaccines are about 60% effective and about 40% of the population gets the vaccine each year, so those without the vaccine do pose some degree of risk. The important think to recognize is the need to get as many vaccinated as possible to help restrict the development of new mutations that may be more resistant to vaccines. Rossi added that even those who have had COVID should get the vaccine because they will have a better antibody response. Clabo noted that it isn't clear how long natural immunity will last. Another uncertainty is whether a vaccinated person can spread the virus. It appears less likely that they can transmit because they would have much less disease in their oral and nasal pharynx. Parrish asked whether there will be a record of which employees are vaccinated, and Clabo noted that there is a State record for every immunization (Michigan Quality Improvement Registry) showing type and lot number used on the identified person. Public Health is considering whether to ask campus personnel to upload a copy of their vaccine documentation to the Campus Health Center if they received the vaccine elsewhere. That would allow us to know what percent of our population is vaccinated. We will likely make it voluntary. Simon suggested it would be a good idea just to send out a link, assuming the decision is made to request voluntary documentation. Most would be willing to do it but shouldn't have to search for the link on the website. Clabo added that another type of data that would be useful is information about people who have had COVID-19. We have contact tracing for cases that occur on campus, but not for those who have been away from campus and have not filed the daily screener.

Clabo noted that unlike many campuses mentioned in the New York Times article last week, Wayne State has not been a COVID spreader but was noted in the article as an exemplary campus.

- b. Enrollments. Clabo reported that fall enrollments are a concern, and the university has received fewer applications at this point than at the same time last year. Dawn Medley's team is assessing the data, and it appears that the largest drop-off is students from Detroit Public Schools. The number of applications is down about 20% and the number of deposits is down about 11%. Rossi asked if seniors were taking a gap year because of the pandemic. Clabo noted that once students do so, there is only about a 30% chance that they will return to school. Beavers asked whether community college transfers will make up some of the slack. Clabo responded that their enrollments are down double digits as well. Parrish suggested that unemployment may also be impacting enrollments. Clabo agreed, noting that there are a number of complex variables playing off each other. It makes the issue about the future of higher education that the Senate is starting to discuss even more important. Clabo noted that enrollment efforts will continue to work to recruit a strong FTIAC class, but since that pipeline is diminishing, we will also need to step up the effort to recruit transfers and to recruit our own students into graduate enrollment. If we don't move the talented students to graduate education and even doctoral research, they will not have as good a chance to be a meaningful part of the workforce. Enrollment concern must look beyond just our FTIAC enrollments.

On that topic Simon noted that there have been complaints from graduate students who have found that classes they need are not being offered in the summer. Parrish added that has been a problem for a long time, because it costs more to teach graduate courses and no one has addressed that issue from the budget side. Clabo suggested that we need to think about this group of graduate students as having different needs. Many of our graduate faculty are on nine-month contracts so they can do scholarship in the summer. Some schools have addressed the problem with alternate teaching schedules—let the graduate faculty teach in the summer and take the winter term off from teaching, for example. Beale indicated that it is a competitive problem as well. The Law School was talking with Windsor about some joint LLM programs, but they teach classes full time through the summer and graduate students are expected to have courses they need in summer, whereas here we cannot do that.

2. Report from the Senate President:

- a. Faculty Relatives' Deaths in Nursing. Beale announced that Sandra Oliver-McNeil's father had died last week and indicated she would send a condolence note on behalf of the Policy Committee once she locates a home address for her. She had informed Beale right before the Wednesday plenary session. Clabo added that Margaret Campbell, a highly funded researcher in the College of Nursing, lost her husband a week ago quite suddenly as well. Beale stated that those kinds of losses are especially difficult to deal with in the midst of a 'regular' semester when folks are isolated. Clabo said that these were two truly significant losses within the College of Nursing.
- b. Microsoft Hack. Beale noted that the press had covered the Microsoft hack, but it wasn't clear whether there had been an impact on Outlook or other systems at the university. Microsoft had just done an update on her system and several features, such as the ability to save emails as a PDF document, disappeared. Law's IT person is going to restore those missing functions after this meeting. It was not clear whether that was related to the hack or just a weird result of the Microsoft update. Clabo was not aware but indicated she would check with Rob Thompson to see what the status is. Beale noted that an update would be

helpful since queries have come to the Senate wondering whether there is anything that they should be doing. Fitzgibbon said that one of the C&IT people is preparing a statement to send out but that they do not see any impact on the university.

- c. Tribal Statement. Beale reminded Policy that last year they had worked with the Student Senate and Stuart Baum on a tribal statement to be used at university events acknowledging that the university is built on land historically belonging to Native American tribes. Recently, she was informed that the administration had discussed the matter again with the Student Senate and rejected the tribal statement in favor of some other indication of respect, but it is not clear what that is. Clabo responded that the revised proposal is currently at the Student Senate and should come back to Policy once they have finalized the new proposal. She indicated that the question is whether the statement must be verbally presented at all public meetings or whether there are other ways to make it available, such as publishing it in the commencement booklet or creating a permanent marker on campus. Beale indicated that she had received an email from a tax faculty member in Oregon that had a tribal statement incorporated automatically at the end of the email. It seemed very reasonable and respectful.
 - d. Brockmeyer Data. Beale noted that Policy has still received none of the various pieces of data that Monica Brockmeyer has promised to provide us, on cohorts through the various programs, on test-optional admissions processes, and other items. Clabo said that Monica had given her permission to share that she has had COVID-19 but is now ready to come back and present the data upon an invitation. Beale asked why she cannot just send the data to Policy, because most of it should be presented in charts anyway. Clabo said that would be fine if that is what is desired.
3. Academic Senate Plenary Agenda for April 7. The presidential election will take up the first 30 minutes or so of the agenda. Beale suggested that the other major issue to cover is the FY'22 budget planning, with Rebecca and others from her shop. Since that material was not covered in the Academic Senate Budget Committee meeting that morning, Beale suggested that the school/college and divisional Budget Advisory Committee members will not have information in time to push for any consultation with their unit heads, which is a problem. There will be a meeting on March 22 for the Budget Committee, but normally we would have held a meeting for the BAC members in mid-March so that they are well-informed about the budget process and expectations. That makes it important to cover the budget issues at the plenary session. Beavers asked the provost's office for the list of BAC members so that the joint meeting of the ASBC and BACs can be set up. Beale noted that hopefully this year the College of Education members will have been elected rather than appointed as they were last year, which is in violation of the contract.
 4. Schedule for PC Meetings in March and April. Beale shared a draft schedule of PC meetings, noting a plan not to meet during the Spring Break week. If there is no business, it might also be reasonable to take off Monday April 19, since that is the last week of classes when everyone tends to be pressed for time so we will tentatively plan to cancel that meeting if possible.
 5. Board of Governors Documents. Beale indicated that there was not much to be said about the Board documents this time. The Academic Affairs committee will approve the course fees, which increased significantly, almost doubling in many instances. Beale asked the Provost whether these large \$500 fees were expected to make it hard for any students to make payment. Clabo noted that they had reviewed the fees and took out proposed increases for covering personal protective equipment, which is covered by the CARES funding. The remaining fee increases were for inflationary costs of expendables. Many in the health professions relate to software required for standardized testing and accreditation. Clabo and Ellis reviewed the list to keep it as

low as possible. Beale noted that Pharmacy had a substantial increase in costs and asked whether it was expected that those extra fees could be covered by cost of attendance and thus result in substantial financial aid funding increases. Clabo said that the highest fees for course materials go to students who move into the highest paid professions and the fees will be included in cost of attendance, but she thinks it's a small percentage of the budget overall.

Beale noted that the budget documents discussed were primarily the audit and investment reports, the capital projects, and the purchasing exceptions. Beavers noted that our questions provided some additional information on the use of funding to hire consultants. Villarosa noted that he was not able to attend the meeting because of some family obligations.

The final document of interest was the Strategic Plan Overview Document. Once again, Beale was disappointed that the document on how the next strategic plan will be developed made not a single mention of shared governance and the Academic Senate's role. Clabo noted that it isn't a plan but a discussion of the process and progress to date. Beale added that President Wilson had made no response whatsoever to the Senate's DEI Council resolution, even to acknowledge that he had received it. This is concerning, as it shows the disdain in which he treats shared governance.

Finally, there are various reports, such as Ned Staebler's on economic development. Many of the projects he undertakes have nothing to do with the faculty at Wayne: he neither uses faculty expertise nor relies on faculty to participate in projects. It would be helpful if he would begin to incorporate more faculty in his work.

6. Centralization of C&IT. Beale shared with the group the message that Law faculty received, which demonstrates the cluelessness of the C&IT staff about how faculty work. They fired our backup person (in the first part of the layoffs to remove staff who cannot bump others, no matter what their function) and then claimed that centralization was an advantage because it provides a backup! Similarly, CFPCA has noted significant concerns. The school uses specialized Apple equipment, and the technician they had was familiar with the needs and the faculty. Now that person is not necessarily available and the people who respond aren't knowledgeable about their needs. Again, the result rewards those who had done poor planning: the result better meets need of some places on campus that were not handling their own needs well while sacrificing the quality of schools that had planned well to address their own needs. The ticketing process is a nuisance that takes considerably more time and yields less satisfactory results, as well as more useless emails in the service recipient's inbox. Like Travel Concur, what seems to be an efficient result for administrators is a more complicated and less satisfactory result for faculty. The change of the backup from dedicated personnel to someone who knows nothing about the faculty or the particular needs of the unit is problematic.

Clabo indicated that she had followed up on concerns that she had received and found Rob to be responsive to people's needs. Parrish added that there are some very deep concerns that were expressed in the joint letter that was distributed in the packet of materials. It will have a big impact on teaching. Beale asked whether Clabo had spoken with Rob about the technical support for Apple systems in CFPCA. Clabo indicated that there was a backup plan, but that she would bring this issue up with Rob during her meeting with him this week to clarify how it is working. Beale added that the letter from C&IT talks about a 'service agreement' as though individual faculty would know what the terms of that agreement are. That is quite absurd. For example, when the problem with Outlook occurred, Beale received a series of third-party emails from the outsourced group that handles the 'response' to a ticket. Those are mostly cluttering inboxes, because they tell you nothing that matters. The people who are the techs at the

recipient end of the ticketing system don't know as much as the people that actually work on the problems and they don't always send the ticket to the right place. And each item goes through this third-party outsourced notice system as well. The more intermediaries you put in a process, the more time it takes to fix a problem and the more time is wasted on telling people what stage the process is in. Beale noted that she personally disliked the new arrangements, but obviously that doesn't matter to those who have decided that this reorganization will save money. She indicated that for Law Misbah had worked out a lot of customization, and he was required to turn over everything to the central C&IT office and then to teach them everything that he knew so that they could take it over. Something that met our needs is now in the hands of someone who has no knowledge about the unit. Fitzgibbon said that one advantage is that now there is backup. Beale replied that Law had backup before, but the backup person was one of the people that C&IT fired. Parrish reiterated that the issues were all in the long, joint letter. If Clabo discusses that with Rob Thompson, perhaps we can get an update at the next meeting. We all have anecdotes about these problems.

7. Career Insight Bot. Beale had distributed information on the Career Insight third-party online testing system for students to receive information about possible career paths based on their responses. Apparently the bot is on the admissions website and on many different departmental websites. Andrea Sankar wrote a telling letter about the absurdity of the bot's answers (sending students to cosmetics). Various standing committees (SAC, FAC, CIC) will discuss this, but it represents once again the problem of administrative failure to consult with the Senate before acting on an idea that turns out to be horribly inadequate.

Parrish noted that this was discussed at the CLAS faculty council last week. Some young administrative assistant was apparently empowered by the dean of CLAS to institute this. Beale noted that it is not just being used in CLAS since Admissions also has it on the website, which is especially problematic. This software is essentially designed for for-profit institutes training people to be car mechanics or cosmetologists. Fitzgibbon noted that she did the test five times and not one of the times did it direct her towards a degree in the right department but rather said that she should be an administrative assistant. Beale suggested it was designed for lower-level jobs where people have a single skill, which makes it completely out of place at a university.

Clabo said that she became aware of this from the discussion and materials shared for this meeting. Her understanding is that it originated in CLAS. She has asked Dawn Medley for a full debriefing on how this got implemented and who tested it. She has also asked that it be amended immediately to remove things like the cosmetology certificate and similar options. She will dig into it and let the Senate know what she finds. Beale noted that this is a constant problem here. Someone starts planning something and does it without any consultation, whereas if they had mentioned it to us, we would have tested it and identified the absurdity. Simon noted that such programs are usually not free so wondered what the cost was here. Clabo indicated she would find out what the cost was and how it was funded. When she finds out it will make it possible to avoid doing the same in the future.

8. Ad Hoc Academic Senate DEI Committee and Higher Education Planning. Beale asked for information on nominees for membership in the DEI committee and working groups on the Higher Education initiatives. Simon noted that she does not think there is much that SAC can do on either this spring. Higher education is on the agenda for both the March and April meetings. Beale said that it would be preferable to start up the DEI committee, at least organizationally, before fall. Beavers indicated he would send out a letter on Budget asking for volunteers and nominees. The meeting on the 22nd will focus on the post-pandemic planning issue. Beale suggested the questions about how RCM should work is one topic Budget should consider.

Clabo noted that the plan is still to move forward on RCM but not until there is a new VP for Finance. That person may have it in a slightly lower priority so there may be further delay. Hoogland added that FAC will meet on Wednesday with a discussion of the GEARS project and then of the strategic planning around higher education's future. She will also try to get a subcommittee in place to work on Emeritus Status. FSST will similarly try to focus on these issues at the next meetings. Beale suggested that the chairs stress that this is part of strategic planning. If the Senate doesn't do it, it will be done elsewhere. It is important to get our ideas into the process so that we have a voice on prioritization in the next strategic plan. That is the critical reason why we are doing this. Rossi announced that Research will meet on the 18th with the Graduate Dean and then will discuss the issues on post-pandemic higher education. She will push to break into working groups to develop a vision. Beale agreed that the chairs will need to force workgroups to develop; if they wait for those to develop on their own, it will not happen. Rossi noted that there are people who do undergraduate laboratory research, those with wetlabs, some with databases and social research. There will need to be plans for those several different strategic areas. Roth noted that CIC is set to discuss the higher education issues on the 31st and suggested Beale remind the CIC Chair about the DEI nominees.

9. Liaison Reports.

- a. Student Code of Conduct Subcommittee. Roth noted that the committee met with the school/college associate deans who work on academic misconduct. It was encouraging because there was no pushback to the idea of codifying constraints on what they do. Some of them did not seem to have a framework for how they handled complaints. Heather Dillaway contacted Roth after the meeting to discuss ideas. Hoogland added that many of the deans with smaller programs just let the one with the most experience handle things. Dillaway had to deal with a big issue last year in Chemistry. But it was good that they all seemed agreeable to the process we discussed. Hoogland noted that Dillaway said at the meeting that it would not occur to her to proceed with anything along these lines without consulting with the faculty member, but it needs to be in writing somewhere rather than relying on good faith on the part of whatever administrator fills the position at the time. Roth noted that the one college that has had significant problems with this matter is Engineering, and that college has not responded to the Subcommittee's contacts. Beale added that Engineering was the college in which two professors found a cabal of students clearly cheating together and the dean's office overrode their decision and let the students off.

Parrish added that the union has a problem when an associate dean overrides a faculty member, throwing the faculty member under the bus in order to please some students. That is the problem and it is political, when the dean interferes to support that approach. Beale suggested that if Engineering doesn't participate in these discussions but there is a new policy, they will just have to deal with it. Beale said it is problematic when there is proven plagiarism that is simply excused.

- b. UROP Subcommittee. Roth noted that the UROP subcommittee met with Matthew Orr from Brockmeyer's office regarding the processing of new applications. In the past, there were ratings that were done by various people and all the decisions stemmed from the ratings. Now, the rating process will be supervised by the subcommittee. It is a more labor intensive but more coherent process. The Subcommittee will also meet with Matt on a regular basis, including over spring/summer.