

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

May 4, 2020

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

The item marked with an asterisk constitutes the Action of May 4, 2020.

- \*1. Approval of Proceedings: The Proceedings of the Policy Committee meeting of April 20, 2020, were approved as submitted.
- 2. Report from the Chair:
  - a. At its May 1 meeting, the Board of Governors established three new academic programs and discontinued four others. Provost Whitfield said the university has about 350 academic programs. The University of Michigan and Michigan State University have about 250. The administration will conduct a review of all curricular changes: new programs, discontinuances, and programs that could be melded. He will bring the information to the Policy Committee for feedback before it is given to the Board.
  - b. The Provost asked if Policy Committee would like an update on the climate survey from Associate Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer. They have new insights into the survey results. Policy Committee thought an update would be informative.
  - c. Undergraduate enrollment for the fall term is very high for this time of year. There is a mix of FTIACS and transfer students. The administration has introduced a new program, the "Kick Start College" program to help students transition to college. Incoming students may take a free general education online course in the summer. If they complete 15 credit hours in the fall term the summer course will be free. The courses are oral communication, basic composition, and intermediate composition. They meet general education requirements. They were chosen because they are predictors for student success and they contribute to student success. Ms. Beale would have appreciated the Provost consulting with Policy Committee before the announcement was made since there was some lack of clarity about the 15-credit requirement (it has later been clarified that the summer course will count towards fulfilling that requirement).
  - d. The Board of Governors is likely to hold a special meeting to set tuition for the 2020-2021 academic year. Most universities are making decisions about tuition early. It is likely that there will be pressure not to increase tuition for next year. Even if we have an increase in enrollment we will have financial challenges. The Provost suggested that the Senate Budget Committee hold a meeting to discuss tuition. Ms. Beale has asked for information from the administration for the committee to use in making decisions. She asked that Rebecca Cooke,

Vice President for Finance and Business Operations, and Bryan Dadey, Senior Associate Vice President Finance, send the scenarios they are developing to the committee. Neither the members of the Budget Planning Council nor the Senate's Budget Committee have yet seen the background information this year—the only information provided in connection with the SOM tuition increase decision was an aggregate figure of \$23 million in expected fixed cost increases. Ms. Beale also asked for the accounting records for the last few years for the Medicaid Public Entity Physician Payment Adjustment Program (PEPPAP) and the current year accounts information that President Wilson had said he would provide at the Board meeting.

3. Report from the Senate President:

- a. During the discussion of the contingency reserve report at the May 1 meeting of the Board of Governors Budget and Finance Committee, it was learned that the President had decided not to make an appointment in the search for the Vice President for Finance and Business Operations: it will be restarted later. There is no decision yet regarding the search for the Dean of the Graduate School. The Policy Committee interviewed the finalists for both positions. They considered there were well-qualified candidates in each pool.
- b. Ms. Beale noted that the athletic department is selling season tickets for football games. The announcement included a statement that if the football season were shortened or cancelled the ticket holders would be asked to consider the unused tickets as a donation to the football program. Refunds would be available, also. Mr. Volz mentioned that, when the theatre department's season was cut short this year, they similarly asked that patrons donate the money to the theatre rather than request a refund.
- c. It was mentioned at the Board of Governors budget committee meeting that the School of Medicine is hiring some pediatricians to replace those who moved from Wayne State to Central Michigan University. The university is also seeking additional sites where our pediatric residents can be placed for training. Asked if pediatricians who remained with Wayne State would be able to practice at Children's Hospital, the Provost understood that the physicians who already had admitting privileges would continue to practice there. He thought 25 pediatricians remained with Wayne State's new pediatric practice plan Wayne Pediatrics. Mr. Parrish thinks the majority of those who remain are not practicing at Children's but have office practices since the specialists have left. [An announcement from VP Health Affairs and SOM Dean Schweitzer indicated that Children's had withdrawn admitting privileges from at least some of the Wayne Pediatrics physicians.]
- d. The Capital Planning and Priorities Committee has met monthly and is working to develop a methodology for prioritizing capital projects. It is doubtful that the state will provide any new funding this year. We are not likely to get any State funding for the renovation of State Hall but it would be paid for out of the new bond issuance. Provost Whitfield added that most construction has been halted and the work on the STEM building will be about two months behind. It may not be ready for occupancy at the beginning of the fall semester. [Re-opening of construction activity after the meeting suggests the work may be completed by the end of August.]

- e. Sara Kacin, Director of the Office for Teaching and Learning, drafted a document describing the various kinds of courses: remote, synchronous, and asynchronous, and language to standardize the use of the terms. Ms. Beale asked PC members to comment on any items that are not clear. It is important to have defined terms. The document has been discussed at the Academic Restart Committee.
- 4. Board of Governors Meeting:
  - a. The Board of Governors revised the statute governing the General Education Program to change from having the committee decide when students should be added to requiring “one (1) student representative selected by the Student Senate.” Due to an oversight, the Provost did not bring the proposal to the Academic Senate but noted the error at the Board meeting and stated that all general education statute matters would be brought to the Senate in the future.
  - b. The administration proposed an increase in tuition for medical students to raise about \$1.87 million. Prior to the meeting, Ms. Beale spoke with some medical school faculty and learned there was strong faculty opposition to the increase. At the Board meeting, President Wilson said there was no difference between in-person and virtual learning because most faculty in the school have online lectures. However, faculty in the Medical School pointed out that there are clearly areas for which remote training alone is inadequate: one noted that you don’t want someone performing a specific surgery who has only been a part of virtual surgeries. A medical student polled the medical school students. Ninety-five percent of the students were concerned about increasing tuition because of finances, family stressors, and difficulty of managing at this time. Another concern was not having any sense of the actual numbers supporting the medical school budget. Ms. Beale noted that the tuition change did include a feature recommended by the Senate for many years—i.e., that the non-resident tuition increase should not be a percentage of the current tuition but should be the same dollar amount as the resident tuition increase because of the much higher tuition and high debt of non-resident students. The LCME has been critical of the high debt that our non-resident medical students have upon graduation. The increase passed the committee and the Board by one vote.
- c. Mr. Beavers mentioned that Vice President for Health Affairs and Dean of the School of Medicine Mark Schweitzer gave a specific rationale for the increase in tuition to support increased payments to HFHS for residency instruction and suggested that the overall debt level of our students does not create an accreditation problem. Mr. Beavers suggested that students, faculty, and the press be given a concise statement with the rationale for the increase and the level of debt our resident and non-resident students have upon graduation compared with the national level.
- c. The request of funding for the proposed renovation of the WSU Art Gallery was not approved in the Budget and Finance Committee, on the grounds that this kind of expenditure should not be entered into in the uncertain pandemic situation in which administrators are suggesting the possibility of layoffs of university employees. Ms. Beale pointed out that the money for the renovation

- was about the same as the amount that will be raised by increasing the tuition in the medical school.
- d. Ms. Beale noted a common complaint that the university and school/department websites are very impersonal. It is very difficult to find information. On many there is no information about whom to contact—i.e., names and contact information for directors/staffers for programs discussed are not included. The university “academic calendar” is not useful for anything but university-wide events: students, faculty and staffers need a downloadable form of the academic calendar with specific information for their units. The websites should be less corporate and more academic: the corporatization likely alienates some students and parents.
  - 5. Academic Works Scholarship Software: Academic Works is the program we use to determine which students receive scholarships, but it does not work well for some departments. The application process is cumbersome and discourages students, and qualified students often are rejected. Previously, Policy Committee had asked that departments be surveyed to find out if the software fits their needs so that Financial Aid can pinpoint problems and create workarounds. The Provost commented that they are working on a survey but do not know when it will be sent out. It is almost impossible to sort the information that the program needs and creates additional work for the financial aid staff. A member noted that students who do not fill out a FAFSA form are automatically rejected for any scholarship, even though financial aid may not be necessary for the award. Another member noted that departmental staff had to work with the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid to get the program to fit their needs: it was a long process, but the program now works well. Provost Whitfield said that the system is an advance over past practices in which a single person may have made decisions regarding departmental scholarship recipients. There are problems if the donation is not used for the purpose the donor requested. The Provost will ask AVP Dawn Medley to analyze the problems and work more closely with departments to ensure that the software does not reject eligible applicants and to make the award process easier.
  - 6. SAT and ACT Scores: The Board of Governors approved temporarily suspending the standardized test score requirement only for new fall 2020 freshmen applicants who have not taken the SAT or ACT due to the cancellation of later testings because of the pandemic. (This is estimated to be a relatively small group of 100-150 applicants.) Ms. Beale noted that the Academic Senate had not been consulted or even informed that the measure was going to the Board of Governors, though this is clearly a question of educational policy within the Senate’s jurisdiction. Members voiced concerns (i) about the process and the fairness of giving special consideration to some but not all students and (ii) about moving to elimination of any testing requirement for future admissions without a full consideration among all the interested constituencies of related staffing and potential additional foundational course requirements. Some schools that have eliminated the national tests have a multi-year process for developing their own testing system.

Provost Whitfield said that we have a procedure for admitting students to APEX. The prospective students are interviewed and their grades and letters of support are evaluated. Usually, between the time when the delivery of the SAT and ACT tests ends and the fall term begins 50 or 60 students apply. Provost Whitfield will get

data for the time when we did not require students to take the ACT or SAT and the alternative ways we use for APEX students to assess the likelihood of success. Policy charged the Curriculum and Instruction and Faculty Affairs Committees to review the data and consider questions about the process for evaluating students and how and if we might change that evaluation process. We could compare our data with national data. The committees should look at the placement tests that students took in the past to see if they were good determinants of success. The committees will also need to consider the use of these tests to determine placement of students in English and math courses. The Provost indicated that there would still be a testing process for determining placements, but the committees should review that as well, given the multitude of problems with the former testing for placement in math. Ms. Simon noted a high failure rate when students are placed in courses for which they are not prepared academically.

7. Inclusive Access Program: On April 20, the Policy Committee reviewed a proposal to institute an Inclusive Access program that would provide digital textbooks to students. Timothy Michael, Associate Vice President for Student Auxiliary Services and Chief Housing Officer had informed Ms. Beale that the program, suggested by the bookstore manager Jodi Young, would be implemented and indicated that he considered no consultation necessary. The Policy Committee strongly disagreed in a memo to AVP Michael stating its concerns and acceptance of at most a small pilot with certain requirements as outlined in the memo. AVP Michael has not responded. The Provost indicated he would ensure that only a small pilot would be undertaken and would communicate with Policy after discussing with AVP Michael.
8. BartlebyLearn: Ms. Beale asked the Provost for an update on the Policy Committee's request that the bookstore send a message to students who purchased BartlebyLearn to notify them that the Academic Senate had urged discontinuance of the program as not functioning as represented and that improper use could be seen as cheating or plagiarism. Do any students still have subscriptions to BartlebyLearn? Was the notice sent? If it was not sent, will it be sent? AVP Michael had apparently been concerned about liability if the university would suggest that the program could be improperly used to cheat or commit plagiarism, but faculty are concerned that the program invites students to cheat or plagiarize. Thus, there may be liability if we do not provide notice: if students were to be charged with academic misconduct they may claim as a defense that the university gave no notice that the service was problematic after that was recognized.
9. Student Fees: The fees students pay for consumable course supplies and to enhance student activities on campus have been waived for the spring/summer term because classes are remote. Fees for software used in classes remain in place. Ms. Beale asked if it was possible to solicit information from faculty who teach classes that use supplies (e.g., sculpture, sciences) to find out when and how purchases are made. Some have said that many teaching art buy supplies in advance for their classes to ensure supplies are available and seek reimbursement. The Provost said that if faculty purchase supplies for classes it is their decision. They need to know if students will be in class and buy accordingly. There was some question whether the materials that the faculty use in classes, such as art

classes, are purchased from fees or through department budgets. PC will seek more information about the use of the fees.

10. Native American Tribal Acknowledgement: The Student Senate passed “A Resolution Supporting the Creation of a Campus-wide Provisional Land Acknowledgement and to Respect the Legacy of Native Peoples.” The Policy Committee proposed a minor change to delete the Native American name of the city of Detroit (which might discourage emcees from reading the statement because of difficulty of pronunciation), and suggested that a pronunciation guide for the indigenous names be provided. Ms. Beale will share these suggestions with the Student Senate so that they can consult with the tribal groups about these issues.
11. Restart Committees: President Wilson has formed nine Restart Subcommittees to address issues before the university can re-open and hold classes on campus. They are: Academics/Teaching and Learning; Public Health; Housing, Dining, and Campus Retail; Finance; Facilities; Computing and Information Technology; Human Resources; Athletics; and Research. President Wilson had informed the administrative chairs of the committees to pick their own faculty members for the committees and not to ask the Senate to provide Senate representatives. Ms. Beale asked that Policy be provided the membership lists and charges to the subcommittees and the notes about the discussions that have taken place for sharing with the Academic Senate at the May meeting. The Provost hesitated, stating that the Academics/Teaching and Learning Committee that he chairs takes iterative notes about the discussions, but he does not know the process the other committees use. The Provost does want there to be sharing of notes among the committees. Ms. Beale reiterated that it is critical that the Senate be involved in the process, as this is clearly a time when shared governance is essential to ensure that the issues receive the benefit of a broader range of perspectives. The issues that have to be addressed are interrelated and affect all aspects of academics. Earlier and more transparent communication of how the university is approaching these issues is essential—especially the budgetary repercussions and the research, teaching, facilities, and technology issues connected to reopening a campus to which the general public has widespread access. Including Senate representation and sharing the information under consideration is a critical part of shared governance.
12. Availability of Instruction When Under Mental Stress: After a conversation with a distraught student, Mr. Roth tried to pull together information where students could seek help when they are under mental stress. Even though he was already aware of many of the resources available, he had to search in many places for the information. He asked Dean of Students David Strauss to have the information compiled into a one-page easily-accessible web page, but Dean Strauss seemed to think that could not happen for some weeks, at least. Provost Whitfield will follow up with Dean Strauss about improving access to mental health services.
13. Software for Tenure and Selective Salary Process: The medical school (SOM) has a new software program, Mountain Pass, that will be used to replace the earlier-purchased software to which faculty strongly objected. In the SOM, the software will be used for CVs and in the selective salary process. It is said to be an improvement over the previous program. The announcement about the new

program indicated that it was being instituted throughout the university. The Provost said the program will be used university-wide as a digital database for many of the materials that are now forwarded from department to dean to Provost to President to Board in paper files for the P&T process, but it will not be instituted university-wide for CV or selective salary purposes.

14. Ad Hoc Transparency Task Force: Ms. Beale asked Provost Whitfield about the status of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Transparency. At the March 4 Senate meeting the members supported the recommendations of the ad hoc committee and the Provost agreed to implement them. The first recommendation called for access to databases utilized by the university. The Provost said that when the Senate forms the committee, access would be provided.
15. Schedule of Senate Meetings for 2020-2021: Policy Committee scheduled the meetings for September 9, October 7, November 4, December 2, January 13, February 3, March 3, April 7, and May 5.
16. Academic Pathways to Excellence (APEX): APEX Scholars provides a network of enhanced support for students to be successful in college. Each year about 100 to 120 students are invited to participate in the program. The summer bridge program that was instrumental to student success was cancelled because of the pandemic but students will be admitted for the fall semester. Provost Whitfield will provide an update to the Policy Committee regarding plans to make up the work students missed in the summer. Policy expressed some concerns that students may be unprepared for fall classes, especially if remote instruction was in place for most courses the APEX students may be taking.
17. Fall Semester: A member noted that there have been different messages from administrators whether all classes would be online in the fall semester. Should faculty prepare classes in two modalities? If so, that likely would require two or three times longer to prepare classes that may not be necessary. For nine-month faculty that takes time away from their scholarship during the summer.

The Provost said that the Academic Restart Committee discussed the issue. There is no certainty that we will be able to hold in-person classes. Classes will be held on campus if everyone can be safe. The state and local governments can restrict what the university does. Some faculty will be at risk. The restart committee is working on options: at this point, it is unlikely that all classes will be taught in person. Provost Whitfield praised the faculty for the transition they made from in-person teaching to remote teaching after spring break.

A member wanted the administration to recognize that faculty did unacknowledged unpaid labor in moving to remote instruction, but they did it because they want to give students a good educational experience. Students and faculty had considerable difficulty in the last several weeks of the winter semester. Most students were not happy to have the in-person experience eliminated.

Another member said that faculty have a professional commitment to the university. They do what is required and their sacrifices should be recognized. What may be missing is shared sacrifices across the university.

A third member thought the lack of acknowledgement of the many additional hours of labor required for faculty speaks to the fact that some executive administrators do not recognize or value the time faculty spend preparing classes or the time spent participating in shared governance to find solutions and to address issues. The administration does not appear to comprehend the level of commitment that is in place throughout the university from senior faculty, lecturers, and academic staff to keep the university functioning.

18. Report from the Liaison to the Facilities, Support Services and Technology Committee:

Ms. Dallas reported that Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management Dawn Medley addressed the CARES Act funding of \$9.4 million to the university for student aid. Graduate and undergraduate students who were registered for at least one credit in the winter term and who file a FAFSA are eligible to apply for \$100 to \$1,000. Ms. Medley thinks the Office of Financial Aid will be able to dispense the money fairly quickly. A special philanthropic fund has been set up for students who are not eligible for the money from the CARES Act. The university will also receive additional funding of about \$9 million for losses due to the pandemic, but it is not clear how those funds can be used.

Dean of Students David Strauss told the FSST Committee that students have sought help from the Food Pantry. The pantry also has distributed Chromebooks to students; and still has some available. Mr. Parrish pointed out that Chromebooks do not accept the Respondus lockdown browser. He thinks Respondus is a corrupt system that enables students to cheat. Ms. Dallas said that students are concerned about privacy and do not like the Respondus camera monitors: they don't want to be watched. Faculty also have complained that Respondus does not meet their needs. C&IT is trying to find solutions to the problems. The volume of CARE reports has increased substantially. Faculty, staff, and students may file a CARE report with the Dean of Students Office if they notice behavior that indicates a student may need help. There has been an increase in anxiety related to financial and health issues for the students and their families and also an increase in cases of academic misconduct. Ms. Beale asked whether there is data showing the level (graduate, undergraduate, first year undergraduate, etc.) of students about whom reports have been made and category of problems: that might help in understanding the most appropriate university responses.

19. Report from the Chair of the Research Committee: Mr. Kessel reported that Vice President for Research Stephen Lanier attended the recent meeting of the Research Committee. Re-starting research will be difficult, and we don't really have a plan for doing so. Mr. Kessel has talked with faculty at other universities and no one knows how to proceed. The ventilation system in Scott Hall is bad. Black mold comes through the ventilators on the ninth floor. Ms. Beale attended that meeting and noted that the plans VPR Lanier covered addressed many of the issues being considered in the Academic Restart;

nonetheless, she sensed a strong press to move forward even if adequate PPE and other safeguards might not be in place.

20. Report from the Liaison to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee: Mr. Beavers mentioned that Barnes & Noble Education has other programs for higher education than BartlebyLearn. Mr. Roth, the Chair of C&I, said that we don't have enough resources for freshmen to complete one of the general education requirements called the Wayne Experience, which is intended to serve as an introduction to college. Since we don't have enough courses, there are no sanctions for not taking the course. Academic advisors and other academic staff members, not tenure-track faculty or lecturers, teach the course, and the coursework is not consistent across all classes. It is relatively beneficial but after the first year there is no reason for students to take the course. Ms. Beale suggested that this problem should be resolved rather than requiring something that isn't working. Are there ways to involve tenure-track faculty and lecturers? Ms. Dallas thinks the course could be restructured so that the requirement could be completed by internships, work studies, and seminars. Perhaps the course should be elective rather than required.  
Discussion will resume at a later meeting.
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Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of May 18, 2020