

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC SENATE  
PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

May 18, 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 items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of May 18, 2020.

\*1. Approval of the Proceedings: The Proceedings of the Policy Committee meeting of May 4 were approved as submitted.

2. Report from the Chair:

- a. Provost Whitfield reviewed some of the information that the chairs of the restart subcommittees provided at the May 13 town hall meeting. At today's Policy meeting, he stated that we need to be flexible-- in particular in dealing with public health and safety--as we prepare for the fall term. We need to give faculty enough notice to prepare their classes so they can make changes if necessary. Because of social distancing, classroom space is limited and will be used quite differently.
- b. The Provost updated the committee on the search for the Dean of the Graduate School: he hopes for a finalization shortly.
- c. Dean of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts Matthew Seeger and Dean of Engineering Farshad Fotouhi are in the fourth year of their second terms. The review of the colleges will be conducted in the 2020-2021 academic year. The review committees will be formed according to the Agreement between the University and the AAUP-AFT. Interim Dean of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Catherine Lysack will continue as dean for the 2020-2021 academic year. The RFP for the position has been sent out and the search for her replacement will begin in the fall. He suggested the Senate consider nominees to serve on the various committees. Provost Whitfield said that he would give the reviews of the colleges to the faculty in the college.
- d. The Provost said that a recent survey showed that safety is people's biggest concern about returning to campus. He will provide the questions and the data from the survey. The Provost and the committee talked about the need for people to practice better health behaviors.

3. Report from the Senate President:

- a. Undergraduate enrollment for the fall semester is up but graduate enrollment is down compared with last year at this time.
- b. The Wayne County Department of Health, Human, and Veterans Services issued an order requiring the university to conduct a daily screening of all critical infrastructure workers who are expected to report to work on campus for the purpose of limiting exposure of COVID-19 to the community. The online form (at <https://forms.wayne.edu/covid-19-screening/>) asks employees if they have various symptoms linked to the virus, have had close contact in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with the virus, and if they've traveled by airplane in the last 14 days. PC members note that this screening form cannot identify those who may be asymptomatic who come onto the campus: asymptomatic persons have been significant spreaders of the virus in crowd settings (churches, funerals, etc.).
- c. Graduate students proposed a resolution at the American Federation of Teachers Michigan conference about relationships between faculty and students, senior and junior faculty, and administrators and students. They strongly urged that such relationships be entirely

prohibited. Mr. Parrish said the action was put forward mainly by the leadership of Wayne State's Graduate Employees Organizing Committee. The presenters were generalizing about problems that occurred in their department. There was a brief discussion at the AFT meeting. Ms. Beale noted that faculty from the other universities were more cognizant of the nuances involved in policies that attempt to prohibit such relationships rather than mandate disclosure so evaluative and supervisory functions can be removed.

4. Faculty Representative to the Finance Restart Subcommittee: Policy Committee had selected Ms. Beale to serve as the Senate representative on the Finance Restart Subcommittee. The President responded he rejected only one Senate representative, and that was the Senate President. He considered the membership of the Finance committee fine as currently staffed, and he claimed that the person selected by the Chair (CFO Rebecca Cooke) and the person selected by the Union (who he was willing to add to the committee) were serving as Senate representatives since they were members of the Senate.

Mr. Roth stated that this is a serious problem. The President cannot determine who serves as Senate representatives, and he appears to be attempting to isolate the Senate President. It appears that President Wilson has determined that it is a matter of grace for him to consult the Senate or not and that the Senate should be grateful that he consults us any way that he chooses. He appears to believe that it is not incumbent upon him to accept the role of the Senate as the formal representative of the faculty and academic staff to participate in university governance or the role of the Senate President as spokesperson for the Senate. This is flatly unacceptable. If the President continues to ignore the Senate in this way, the conflict will escalate. It is a totally senseless conflict. Mr. Roth asked Provost Whitfield to impress upon the President that this is an unnecessary fight that may be due to his misinterpretation of the University statutes.

Mr. Parrish agreed about the severity of the situation. He noted that in the recent survey conducted by the AAUP-AFT in conjunction with the American Arbitration Association, only 29% of the faculty and academic staff had strong or some confidence in the President, while 41% had little or no confidence in the President. The Board of Governors statute is clear about the role of the Academic Senate. The President should accept it. He should not continue to confront the Academic Senate adversarially: the Senate is the official representative of the faculty.

Ms. Beale stated that it was not only the Policy Committee that objected to the lack of faculty representatives on the restart subcommittees. Senate members talked with their colleagues who also raised concerns that faculty with administrative appointments were identified as representatives of the faculty on the original list of members of the restart subcommittees.

Ms. Hoogland noted that for a person, even a Senate member, to serve as a representative of the faculty or academic staff on a committee, the person has to be selected by the Academic Senate Policy Committee. Policy Committee carefully chooses people to serve on committees who can best represent the faculty and academic staff.

Provost Whitfield misunderstood Ms. Hoogland's comments as referring only to committees whose membership is selected under Article XXX in the Agreement between the University and the AAUP-AFT, and suggested that these kinds of university-wide committees are somehow different. The Provost agreed with Mr. Roth that there are bigger issues facing the university. He suggested that the Senate and the administration agree on a way to move forward during the COVID-19 crisis. There are long-standing issues related to academic governance. There are different perspectives about what should have been done in the forming of the subcommittees.

This might be an opportunity to articulate better the process by which committees are formed. If afterward one side violates the process, it will be clear.

Ms. Beale pointed out that, in the past, the Senate President was regularly included in executive-level discussions about the budget. That was the underlying presumption under prior presidents and in President Wilson's first year here. It was the underlying presumption when the Budget Planning Council was created. Choosing to exclude the current Senate President from the Finance Restart subcommittee—and appointing instead a faculty member preferred by the administration as though that person can then be the Senate representative—is counter to the way shared governance has to work. Ms. Beale appreciates the Provost for including faculty representatives on university committees. However, the Policy Committee cannot accept the President of the university rejecting the appointment of the Senate President, chosen by the Policy Committee, to a university-wide committee.

Mr. Roth agreed that there are many other important issues, but pointed out purportedly temporary changes to normal practice tend to be used to accomplish a power shift. When a practice is changed, supposedly as a temporary measure, a precedent is set: it becomes the practice for the future. The Board of Governors Statute providing the Senate's jurisdiction clearly supports the Senate as the appropriate source of consultation, through the appointment of faculty and academic staff representatives on university committees, just as we appoint our own voting representatives to the Board of Governors committees.

Ms. Beale asked that Provost Whitfield convey the Policy Committee's discussion to President Wilson. If the President wants to build trust he needs to accept the appointment of Ms. Beale to the Finance Restart Committee. At the May 6 Senate meeting, he made a commitment to appoint the Senate's chosen representatives to each of the restart subcommittees. The Senate selected 10 people to serve—one on each committee other than Research, where two were selected because of the size. Wilson's not allowing the seating of the Senate President on the only committee on which President Wilson serves does not build trust.

Mr. Parrish noted that there are over 100 administrators on the restart committees. The representatives from the AAUP-AFT and from the Academic Senate make up a small number of the membership.

5. Data Transparency Subcommittee: Policy Committee is creating a permanent subcommittee that will be entitled to access data bases and data information, in particular Academic Analytics, but also other data going forward. The members will include the Senate President, the Vice Chair of the Senate, possibly two members who served on the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Transparency, two members from the Curriculum and Instruction Committee, and two from the Faculty Affairs Committee. PC identified potential members who will need to be contacted to see if they are willing to serve.
6. Inclusive Access: On April 3, Tim Michael, Associate Vice President for Student Auxiliary Services and Chief Housing Office, notified Ms. Beale that he had conferred with Jodi Young, Manager of the bookstore, regarding the impact of the COVID-19 closures on the availability of textbooks. Ms. Young had prepared a letter to send to faculty inviting them to participate in an "Inclusive Access" program. Policy Committee did not support the proposal. Before proceeding they suggested that a small pilot with metrics for evaluating the program be carried out. At today's meeting, Policy Committee considered the appropriate makeup of the committee. PC members will confirm suggested members for Ms. Beale to contact prior to the next meeting. Provost Whitfield will ask the Student Senate for a representative.

7. Updates on Restart Subcommittees: Provost reminded Policy that President Wilson would hold a town hall to update the campus community on restarting the university, including how employees might return and the timing for re-opening campus. Ms. Beale noted that some issues have not yet been adequately addressed and PC discussed some of these issues.

An issue that the research subcommittee needs to address is movements to and from labs and other buildings. It seems to be assumed that researchers can go into a laboratory, work, and then leave for the day; but the faculty who accepted serving as Senate representatives have noted that many clinicians move between the hospital and their research lab in other buildings during the day, creating more possibilities of encountering people. It is difficult to set schedules for labs when people have different functions to fulfill, such as a clinical role. Mr. Kessel suggested that facilities be open on a small scale to see if the plans are adequate or if there are problems to address. [Note: this is the plan behind a re-opening of about 25% of the labs as a first phase.]

The academic subcommittee also should address how faculty will move between their offices and the classrooms. Will students congregate in hallways? Will they practice social distancing and wear masks? If they do not, how will that be addressed? Young people feel invulnerable, that they won't contract the virus or if they do, that the symptoms will be mild. And there may be people—either students or the public—who are intentionally disruptive, like the armed, unmasked protesters in Lansing. Provost Whitfield said that we do not have a way to enforce proper behavior. Dean of Students David Strauss has stressed “norming” and said that there is a lot of room between forgetting and deliberately ignoring guidelines. Ms. Dallas suggested that hall monitors be stationed in large classroom buildings, that access to the buildings be limited, and that the rules for social distancing must be enforced. Others thought, as a public institution, we might not be able to restrict who enters buildings and that monitoring student behavior might not be possible. As the representative on the Housing, Dining and Retail Subcommittee, Ms. Simon noted that last week's meeting also discussed what to do if people do not follow the guidelines but did not come to any final conclusions. It is likely people will not be able to eat in the cafeteria; but will be able to take out food. That subcommittee formed four subgroups to address the various issues.

Multiple PC members expressed concerns about building ventilation systems. It is not clear that any kind of deep cleaning of air ducts is planned. Ventilation systems have been a problem for some time, and may pose a potential source of virus spread if better filtration is not added.

The loss of state appropriation funding, in the range of \$10 to \$30 million or more, will be a major problem for the university.

8. Respondus: Mr. Parrish mentioned the problems in using Respondus for exams. The system is an invitation to cheat, because the instructor cannot control who takes the tests. In the fall his large introductory course will be hybrid with the exams face-to-face. Provost Whitfield suggested that a committee be formed to find an alternative to Respondus. Ms. Beale charged the Curriculum and Instruction Committee and the Faculty Affairs Committee with arranging meetings to discuss the issue.
9. ACT/SAT: The Curriculum and Instruction Committee and the Faculty Affairs Committee will hold a joint meeting on May 27 to discuss the proposal for making the suspension of the ACT/SAT requirement in undergraduate admissions permanent or at least extending it through the 2021-20 year. All members of the Senate will be invited to attend. Joining the meeting will be Associate

Vice President for Enrollment Management Dawn Medley, Senior Associate Provost for Student Success Monica Brockmeyer, and Senior Director of Admissions Ericka Matthews.

10. Faculty Representation on Committees: Policy Committee and the Provost returned to the subject of faculty representation on committees. Provost Whitfield said that Policy Committee needed to make their perspective clear regarding what the issue is and what is expected regarding the appointment of faculty to university committees. They need to articulate clearly what the 'line in the sand' is. Mr. Roth responded that the correspondence on the issue had been quite clear. The Senate needs to systematically engage in discussions and has to appoint its own representatives who report back and share information with the Senate leadership for consideration, rather than have the administration pick faculty who serve in their individual capacity.

The Provost noted that this conversation about representation on committees has a long history at Wayne. When the committee raised the issue about faculty representation on the Restart committees, the President agreed that there could be Senate representatives. The Policy Committee should acknowledge President Wilson's accommodation, or we will not be able to move forward.

Mr. Roth suggested that PC meet with the President to discuss the issue, and Provost Whitfield agreed that a conversation with the President might be useful. The Provost believes the appointment of faculty to committees is better than it has been in the past and has impressed upon Cabinet members that having the faculty perspective is important.

Ms. Beale pointed out that the communications she and the Policy Committee sent to the President had been clear: administrators cannot select faculty representatives to committees and claim they serve a Senate function. The President's refusing to accept the Policy Committee's representative to the Finance subcommittee, while claiming an appointee chosen by the administration can represent the Senate, is highly significant. The President needs to recognize that he cannot simply cherry-pick the people he favors and treat them as serving as Senate representatives. Most leaders recognize that they benefit from having people around them who are willing to share different perspectives, rather than merely going along with the leader's favored position. In submitting the names of their ten representatives, Policy Committee made clear that those ten people were to function as Senate representatives.

The Provost suggested there was a personal issue here, but Ms. Beale disagreed. This is not a question of personalities or feelings. This is an issue of institutional roles—the role of the Senate in shared governance as reflected by having Senate representatives on university-wide committees. The President created the problem when he did not include the Senate in the Restart process at the outset. At the plenary session of the Senate, he admitted his error and agreed to rectify it by having the Senate appoint representatives to each Restart committee. Then he went against his word by refusing the appointment of the Senate President to the Finance committee, arguably the most important of the Restart groups since it will continue to consider budgetary cuts and reallocations as needed through the academic year. The Senate President, elected by the full Senate membership, is an appropriate representative on such a committee (and has served that role in the past). The administrative Chair of the Finance committee selected a faculty member to serve: that person serves in his individual capacity, not as a Senate representative because the administration, not the Policy Committee, selected him.

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Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee of June 1, 2020