

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

June 29, 2020

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

1. Report from the Chair:

- a. Center for Peace and Conflict Studies: Frederic Pearson is stepping down as the Director of the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies. Provost Whitfield expects to have a small group review the center prior to appointing a new director. He will consult with the Policy Committee when he appoints members. Mr. Roth, who is a member of the center's campus advisory committee, said the center's work covers both local and international programs and projects. It has a range of activities in the Detroit area. The center has an undergraduate co-major and co-minor and a graduate certificate. The new director should be aligned with the mission, the values, and the future of the center. Ms. Beale thinks centers should be reviewed regularly and a written report provided. It would be helpful if the Senate saw the annual reports. The Provost occasionally receives reports from centers.
- b. The Labor Studies Center was reviewed, and Provost Whitfield will share the review with Policy Committee.

2. Report from the Senate President:

- a. De-Escalation Training: The Wayne State University Police Department (WSUPD) has been named the national and regional headquarters for the National De-escalation Training Center. This hybrid de-escalation training is specifically designed for law enforcement officers, providing special assessment and situational skills training that is noted to reduce conflict and avoid potential tragic scenarios for citizens and officers. Ms. Beale believes the program is important at this time because of the Black Lives Matter movement and the various incidents of over-militarized reactions of some police across the country.
- b. Fall Enrollment: The latest numbers for the fall term show that undergraduate enrollment continues to rise and graduate enrollment is declining compared with the same period last year. Ms. Beale suggested that Policy Committee meet with the Graduate Council and Amanda Bryant-Friedrich, the new dean of the Graduate School, shortly after she joins the university to discuss graduate enrollment. Decreased enrollment has a negative impact on our research status because graduate students work with faculty on research and we are dependent on them for teaching. Provost Whitfield said that participation in recruitment by the dean was included in the posting for the position. Most of the decline is in the master's programs and among international students. The decline in Ph.D. students is not as great. The university, the Provost said, needs to develop a pipeline to attract domestic students. Marketing for individual colleges would be very costly. Ms. Beale commented that departments and schools have to do the groundwork to attract students.
- c. Native American Statement. In April the Student Senate submitted to the Academic Senate a resolution they passed entitled "Supporting the Creation of a Campus-wide Provisional Land Acknowledgement and to Respect the Legacy of Native Peoples." The Student Senate wants the statement to be read before public meetings. Policy Committee had suggested a single wording change to the statement and the incorporation of pronunciation guides. The Native American groups did not want to make the wording change but did a recording of the

statement and a phonetic pronunciation of the names of the several Native American tribes and the Native American name of what is now the city of Detroit. Ms. Beale will send a statement of support for the proposal.

- d. New Student Orientation. Ms. Beale will prepare a statement for the virtual new student orientation program.
 - e. Zoom Recordings. The university Zoom license will erase class recordings after a certain time period because they think the recordings should not be shared because of privacy issues and the recordings take up significant cloud space. Faculty may want to say those recordings elsewhere.
 - f. Centralization of IT functions. President Wilson announced that all IT functions would be centralized. The change was not discussed with any Senate committees or with the Council of Deans. Although AVP Hubbard mentioned it as something he supported, it was not recommended by the Budget Planning Council. The change is a problem for areas that require confidentiality and privacy and for programs that have special technology needs. The quality of IT support varies across campus, and C&IT support is much slower and less helpful than school support. Provost Whitfield said the administration has talked about centralization for a long time, and that AVP Hubbard is working with the deans to accommodate the needs of the schools and colleges. Mr. Hubbard doesn't have a plan yet because he is working with the deans to redistribute IT personnel to meet the needs of the units.
3. Summer Meetings: Ms. Beale mentioned the issues that Policy Committee will need to cover during the remainder of the summer. Weekly meetings will begin mid August. Policy Committee will meet with the President's Cabinet on September 23. She suggested to the President that Policy Committee and the administration each contribute two items to the agenda. The restart committee will make its recommendations in July and recommendations for budget cuts will be sent to the Board of Governors at the beginning of the new academic year. The PC will meet July 20, August 3, August 17, and then weekly.
 4. Social Justice Action Committee: President Wilson sent the draft charge for the Social Justice Action Committee (SJAC) to the Policy Committee. Ms. Beale noted that it is appropriate for the university to take action on these important issues. She would have liked the President to try to build the committee into the shared governance process rather than create a top-down administrative committee. The charge states that the SJAC is the overall committee charged with examining internal policies, procedures and practices to identify bias throughout the campus that may disproportionately disadvantage historically marginalized peoples and to "recommend specific actions to eliminate the identified bias and to advance social justice and equity for historically marginalized peoples at Wayne State University." The subcommittees are: campus climate; intercultural training and education; diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); policing; student success; hiring and retaining faculty; and hiring and retaining staff. The chairs of the subcommittees will be members of the overall committee and the President (or designee) will chair the overall committee. Marquita Chamblee, the Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer, will serve as ex-officio to all working groups and to the larger committee. Michael Wright, Vice President for Marketing and Communications and Chief of Staff, will also serve as ex-officio for each working group and the larger committee representing the President's office. All members of the working groups and the SJAC will be required to participate in implicit bias training produced by Ohio State. The final report is due in November. Ms. Beale had suggested that this project be given a year so that genuine workable recommendations for change can come out of the process. Nonetheless the project is important in the context of the national discussion of structural racism and other 'isms'. It is appropriate that the university consider specific actions that could make the campus more welcoming and address real hurdles.

The charge, Ms. Beale said, would have benefited from making it clear that the goal is to identify the hurdles to equity and to consider solutions to those hurdles to create a more equitable environment. Mr. Parrish questioned whether it is a serious undertaking because the charge does not mention a budget to implement recommendations. Ms. Beale agreed that increasing diversity, equity and inclusion will require financial support. Mr. Beavers took the bias training in connection with the search for the chief financial officer and found it worthwhile. He noted that slowing the work might result in nothing being accomplished, which would be a problem.

Ms. Beale would have preferred for this to be done through a shared governance process that identifies solutions to deal with hiring and retention. Mr. Roth added that to hire and retain diverse faculty we need a broad understanding of the hurdles in the different disciplines and that we need a different organization than what is suggested by the framework. There will need to be considerable input from various organizations across the campus, in a very short time frame. Mr. Beavers noted that the Pay Gap Analysis Subcommittee will want to contribute to the discussions because they spent a lot of time looking at the issues related to faculty salaries. Ms. Beale noted that this long-term systemic issue requires faculty buy-in, which tends to require more time to talk about the issues and target solutions to specific areas. In her response to President Wilson, she suggested that if this sort of ad hoc administrative process is set up outside the shared governance process, the reports should come to the Senate for review (by Faculty Affairs, the Curriculum and Instruction, the Facilities and Support Services, and the Policy Committees) before going to the President and Board of Governors for action, as in the General Education reform process. There was no indication that this was considered.

Ms. Beale assumes that the President will involve the Senate committees in the process in some way. Policy should solicit self and other nominations from the current members and from the newly elected members of the Senate.

Provost Whitfield advised the committee not to think about the situation in terms of how they deal with the administration or the speed with which the administration is moving. People want to see change immediately so pressure and urgency are reflected in the design of the committee. The Provost agreed that the charge could be clearer because it is easier to select committee members when there is more clarity. The hurdles may be obvious to some people, but not to everyone. The work will be intense. The Provost recommended that Policy be thoughtful in selecting its representatives. He understood that the timeframe to identify representatives might be longer than originally announced. He agreed with Policy that the goals should be articulated because that will help in understanding why there are several subcommittees and why the issues were not combined into one committee. Some centralized goals are points from which the committees can begin their work, and he suggested that goals be identified in the next few days. Trying to complete the work by December is an attempt to meet the external desire for immediate action. Although we want to show that action is being made in December, the work should not be truncated. The issues are very difficult. He also responded to the questions about bias training. Search committees are given the training. The pools of candidates have improved since the training has been done.

Mr. Parrish added that the AAUP-AFT has had a group dealing with social justice issues for a year. Provost Whitfield asked that they give him information about their work as it might help the SJAC in its work.

5. Shared Governance: Ms. Beale spoke with President Wilson about shared governance. The President sent her a draft statement regarding "faculty representation" on presidential

committees. The President and Ms. Beale agreed to meet quarterly and the Policy Committee and his Cabinet will meet once in the fall and winter terms. Ms. Beale also asked for a statement about the importance of the Senate and its role in shared governance. In his draft statement, President Wilson laid out his recommendations for selecting “faculty representatives” to presidential and other university-wide committees. He continues to interpret the Senate Bylaws to require a slate of nominees from which he can choose who serves. While he agreed to have Senate representatives on all presidential committees, he indicated that he would appoint other faculty selected by him in a number that could equal but not exceed the Senate nominees that he accepts. Policy members considered his proposal problematic and disrespectful of shared governance. In the past the Senate selected most of the faculty members for committees, but a president might add one or two faculty to cover areas of expertise that the Senate did not include in its appointees. Our past practice has also been that the elected Senate President represents the faculty on a variety of university-wide committees, including the Foundation Board, the capital planning and priorities committee, the budget planning council. In the past, the Senate President was automatically the faculty representative on the high-level finance committee (consisting of university President, Provost, CFO and staff, and Senate President); but this year President Wilson refused to seat the Senate President on the restart finance committee. The President’s proposal didn’t include an explicit statement about respect for the shared governance process that Ms. Beale thought he had agreed to provide. His proposal is very close to his views of a limited role for the Senate in governance as stated when he met with the Policy Committee on May 22, to which the Policy members strongly objected.

Provost Whitfield advised Policy Committee to consider the President’s memo as a draft and that they discuss it with him. This is an opportunity to clearly share their perspective on these issues. If a particular point does not resonate with the committee they should state why and make specific suggestions. Policy needs to come to consensus on what they want and propose that.

Ms. Beale agreed. One of her main concerns is the role of the Senate President. No administrator should be able to avoid interacting with the Senate President. The role of the Senate President who is elected by the elected members of the body has to be recognized as a critical part of shared governance. The Senate President has a broader perspective because of working closely with Policy and the other committees and hearing from individuals. It is very important that a person’s perspective is heard by the administration even if they don’t like it and even if they don’t like the person. They should be willing to listen to the ideas. The role of the Senate President has to be respected. If it is not respected, shared governance is not respected. Furthermore, the Senate, as the instrumentality for the faculty and academic staff to share their views with the President and Board, must be able to select the faculty and academic staff representatives to committees, else it really is of little consequence. The President says that Policy should always send him three names from which he would pick who serves. We have a past practice of appointing the Senate President to some committees, a past practice of naming our representatives to some committees, and a past practice of giving the President nominees from which he selects the committee members in some cases, though we have never viewed that as a proper interpretation of the Board’s statute. Ms. Beale objects to the President’s statement that he needs to select in order to “balance” the composition of the committees. That is what the Policy Committee does when it considers appointees.

Mr. Parrish believes the Senate should tell the President that the Policy Committee designates who represents the Senate. That is a basic concept of shared governance. Shared governance is a natural process of conflict. Mr. Roth suggested that if the President has a problem with

certain voices not being on a committee, he could return to Policy and state why he wants a person on the committee. Then the Senate should decide whether to put that person forward. Ms. Hoogland agreed with Mr. Parrish and spoke in favor of Mr. Roth's approach. The Policy Committee's selection of committee representatives is a very careful process. It should be pointed out that the Policy Committee is not biased and is very careful in selecting representatives. She believes that Policy is more knowledgeable about faculty and academic staff because Policy itself represents various areas of the university community. Provost Whitfield suggested that the President could indicate, when he asks for Senate appointees, that he believes certain faculty could be useful and the Senate could consider those suggestions in making its determination of the Senate representatives.

Mr. Roth noted that there remains the question of what President Wilson thinks the role of the Academic Senate is. The Senate has a role that has to be defended. The Senate needs to be assertive about its role and the fact that we are not here just for him to consult with when he happens to be interested in our opinion. The Senate is a constitutional check on the President and is recognized as representing the voice of the faculty and academic staff of this institution. Ms. Beale said that is what she asked of the President. She had hoped Policy Committee could talk reasonably with him and move forward. His response is a small step forward. Maybe we can respond in a way to get a better step forward.

Mr. Parrish pointed out that the Senate has had good leaders and some who were not very effective, but the basic principles are the ones we have to stand by. We can always change what was done in the past. The principles are important. The principle is that the Academic Senate interprets its own bylaws. The Senate stands up for shared governance by representing itself, and it can choose its own representatives.

Ms. Beale agreed that the Senate should be able to designate its own representatives. The President adding faculty to committees should be an extraordinary circumstance, and he should present his reasons to the Policy Committee. Better still, if he had someone who he considered a good candidate, he could provide that person as a suggestion to Policy to consider when he asked for Senate representatives. Provost Whitfield agreed with that idea, suggesting that it might be helpful if there were information about faculty who are not on the Senate, information about their areas of expertise, their qualities, background, and experience. The Senate then could work with the President to find people who have the background needed for particular committees.

Policy Committee will draft a response to President Wilson along these lines. [The response was sent to President Wilson on July 11.]

6. Survey (SWEET) Meeting Update: Ms. Simon reported that originally the Student Success staff wanted the committee to look at 500 questions without knowing what information was expected to be garnered from the survey. They will look at Senior Associate Provost Monica Brockmeyer's Student Engagement Journey and develop questions in view of what they want to learn. William Hill, the Interim Assistant Dean of Administrative and Organizational Studies and Theoretical and Behavioral Foundations, had a series of surveys with different questions for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Also under discussion is giving an exit survey to seniors.
7. Inclusive Access: Mr. Beavers said that the Inclusive Access Committee began reviewing the list of classes to participate in the pilot program. They will look at the criteria for determining

what information they want from the evaluation process. He will give Policy Committee the draft when it is available.

8. Waiving the SAT/ACT Admissions Requirement: The university has made the SAT and ACT tests optional for students who did not have the opportunity to take one of them because of COVID-19. Monica Brockmeyer was to give data to the Senate committees that are looking at the possibility of permanently making the tests optional for undergraduate admission. Ms. Brockmeyer has not provided the data. Ms. Beale asked Provost Whitfield if he could get the data for the committees.
 9. Restart Committee: Ms. Beale reported that the committee sent a flyer about the training and the daily screening. They are working on syllabus language. Everyone was asked to complete a survey. They are working on a draft of the human resources guidelines.
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Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of August 3, 2020