WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

July 15, 2019

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

Absent with notice: r. hoogland

Guests: Pramod Khosla, Co-Chair of the 3N Committee on Online Teaching and Associate Professor, Nutrition and Food Science; Sara Kacin, Co-Chair of the 3N Committee and Director of the Office for Teaching and Learning

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of July 15, 2019.

1. <u>Report of the 3N Committee on Online Teaching</u>: Mr. Khosla reviewed the history that led to the formation and work of the committee. The 2013-2021 AAUP-AFT contract mandated the formation of a 2N committee of faculty and administrators to deal with matters related to online education, with a report expected within six months of the contract signing. The committee was ultimately expanded to a 3N committee including representatives from the Union of Part Time Faculty and a total of 12 members. The committee began its deliberations about 14 months ago. The AAUP-AFT letter of intent provided key issues to address, and Provost Whitfield suggested points for discussion. The committee collected information, including the July 2012 Final Report of the Online Instruction Task Force and the AAUP-AFT's proposed article on online education presented in the contract negotiations. The committee surveyed several universities and the Wayne State deans. It found a wide variety of approaches to policies, guidelines, and recommendations for online courses. About 18 percent of our courses are online now.

   Several years ago, Ms. Beale attended a Faculty Affairs Committee meeting with Jim Mazoue, the then leader of the university's online education effort. The faculty's overriding concern was quality control: what is the quality of the online materials; how do we verify that students are the ones participating; are exams monitored to ensure that the student receiving credit is the student taking the exam. The university had no quality controls for these and other issues in place. Ms. Kacin said that quality control is part of the training and development conducted by OTL, but there are no university-wide standards so that is an issue requiring attention as the work proceeds.

   There was variation among the colleges in the handling of intellectual property rights and there is no clear university approach on who owns intellectual property associated with online classes. That is an issue that needs to be resolved.

   It is clear that online courses require more work to develop and instructors asked to create certain courses should receive more compensation. The committee suggested that the university should have a two-tier system in which an instructor who develops a new course should receive more than someone who puts an existing course into an online format.

Mr. Volz mentioned that the workload connected to the delivery of a course online is also different from that in a face-to-face class, often requiring 24/7 responses and simultaneous discussion formats. Mr. Khosla said that part-time faculty have additional challenges in terms of access to appropriate tools, such as high-speed internet and a good computer. The committee suggested that the initial hiring contract, whether for full-time or part-time faculty, should explicitly state what costs will be incurred if teaching online. The committee noted that there are various activities that affect differences in workloads, such as advising graduate students, research, and committee service, and those will need to be considered when determining online compensation.

Ms. Kacin said that there is evidence that the hybrid format, which has both face-to-face and online instruction, is the better way to deliver courses. That means that universities have to provide appropriate support for classes that are entirely online to make the experience as positive as possible. For example, some universities have extended technical support since students are often in courses between 10:00 p.m. and midnight. OTL and C&IT have extended their hours but not yet enough to deal with these issues. Orientation and meetings with advisers present another problem if online students, some as far away as 100 miles, have to come to campus for these meetings. Faculty who teach online also need support services such as instructional designers to upload course content. OTL does not have enough staff to support that now. Students and faculty must pay for captioning services. In addition, faculty who teach online may have to come to campus because they don't have necessary equipment at home, meaning they will have parking costs. Other universities provide compensation for professional development and for on-campus parking. Phone calls to students can also be expensive for online faculty. The committee noted the need to adopt policies that apply specifically to online courses when the university closes due to inclement weather or suffers a power outage, so that students and online instructors know how their particular classes and projects will be affected.

Ms. Kacin and Mr. Khosla were asked if there was a difference in student evaluations for online classes and face-to-face classes. There is not much data with which to compare. The response for online classes is low. OTL has a mid-semester assessment from which they will compare the data for online and face-to-face classes.

Mr. Volz suggested that the amount of assigned reading and the conversations online can be very demanding for students. Mr. Khosla said that it is important that the syllabus for online courses make clear the expected student workload upfront.

Mr. Parrish said that instructor workload is a difficult issue. Collective bargaining in higher education began at teachers' colleges when faculty were not expected to be heavily invested in research so it was quite easy to set course loads. Wayne has traditionally respected the variance in workloads as set by disciplines and departments. Ms. Beale agreed that the concerns around imposing a standard workload are real but suggested that the university should be able to address standards for online courses separately, since there are various unique issues for them.

Ms. Dallas asked if there had been any analysis measuring comparing face-to-face courses with online courses and hybrid courses in terms of students' success when they take the next course in a sequence. Many factors might affect a student's progress such as course workload, employment, and family responsibilities, but having that information would give advisors information to help students plan their schedules.

[Mr. Khosla and Ms. Kacin left the meeting. The report and its appendices will be available online with links provided on the Academic Senate website. Further discussion regarding next steps to establish appropriate guidelines and policies will be set for a future Policy Committee agenda.]

2. Report from the Chair: Provost Whitfield asked the Policy Committee to work with the Student Senate on the students' proposal to adopt Open Educational Resources for courses. He'd like the Academic Senate to work with the Student Senate on other issues that affect academics. We have a more engaged student body and they are eager to move forward with their proposals. Mr. Beavers has spoken with members of the Student Senate about the benefits of their working with the faculty. Ms. Beale has talked with Stuart Baum, the President of the Student Senate, about OER and working more productively with the student liaisons to the Senate committees. Last academic year, several Academic Senate committees discussed the OER proposal but it appears that the student liaisons did not report back to the leadership of the Student Senate. At Stuart Baum's request, Ms. Simon, who chairs the Student Affairs Committee, will meet with Veronica Bielat, the Student Success Librarian, about OER.

3. Report from the Senate President:
    a. Ms. Beale asked the Provost the status of the search for the Dean of the Graduate School and the review of the School. The committee that reviewed the School submitted its report. The interim dean is reviewing it and correcting some of the data. The Provost expects to provide the report to the Policy Committee by the end of July.
    b. Ms. Beale and Provost Whitfield attended a meeting of the Capital Planning and Priorities Committee. The discussions focused on how to fund the renovation of State Hall and whether the university could take on other capital projects at the same time that might require minimal funding but have maximal impact, such as the proposals for addressing some of the pedestrian crossings. The Policy Committee appointed six faculty who teach in State Hall to provide input on the proposed renovations but they have not met yet. Ms. Beale has been invited to attend a meeting with a group of administrators to identify the people who should be consulted about the renovations. Ms. Beale has urged Ashley Flintoff, Director of Planning and Space Management, Facilities Planning and Management, to convene the faculty committee soon. The Scott Hall problem remains high on the discussion list as well—it is expected that some renovations will need to take place to maintain the building in working condition, even though it is expected that it will ultimately be demolished and replaced. The site for a "new" Scott Hall is uncertain and tied to the question about the medical school's affiliations.
    c. A large group of faculty is meeting to prepare an application for a grant from the National Science Foundation to enhance faculty diversity in recruitment and retention efforts. Most of the faculty in the group are in the STEM fields and sociology.

*4. Proceedings: The Policy Committee approved the proceedings of its meeting of June 17, 2019, as submitted.

*5. Academic Staff Professional Development Committee: Stephanie Hawkes, Academic College Enrichment Services, Academic Affairs, served on the ASPDC but has accepted a non-represented position and is no longer eligible to serve. The members are appointed according to Article XXX in the Agreement between the University and the AAUP-AFT. As stated in the contract, Policy Committee and the Provost returned to the original slate of nominees and selected Tishia Browning, Law School, to complete the term that ends at the end of the 2019-2020 academic year.

6. Data Request: Ms. Beale followed up on a request to Provost Whitfield for Institutional Research to make a table showing the total salary for administrative positions (i.e., positions that are generally called "management/confidential" positions like President, Vice Presidents, Associate and Assistant Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, etc.), and compare them to the undergraduate student headcount and graduate/professional student headcount. He suggested that this is similar to the data that the Board of Governors has requested, and should be available within a few weeks.

7. Request for Data on Harassment: In May 2017 the Academic Senate requested statistics from the Office of the General Counsel regarding sexual harassment and sexual assault. We did not receive the information. Policy Committee agreed that Ms. Beale should contact General Counsel Louis Lessem to again request the information. [After the meeting, Mr. Lessem sent a memorandum responding, and Ms. Beale asked that it be updated to the current year.]

8. Student Senate Resolution on Syllabi: The Student Senate sent to the Policy Committee a resolution supporting a Proposal for a Policy on the Provision of Syllabi and Course Information to Students in Time for Registration passed by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) Faculty Council. Policy Committee discussed the pros and cons of the proposal. Some faculty and departments have syllabi for courses that they can easily make available for students, but others do not. Some teaching assignments are not finalized at registration but when the size and makeup of the class are known. If textbooks are used, they may not be fully determined until close to the time for the semester to begin, and if course packets are used, faculty may well develop them over the summer to have ready at the start of classes or plan to develop later classes based on experiences in early classes. Provost Whitfield has discussed the proposal with representatives of the Student Senate and asked the Policy Committee to work with the students on the proposal. The Student Senate wants the Board of Governors to mandate that faculty do as requested. Policy members do not believe that giving students syllabi for courses prior to registration could or should be mandated. Mr. Roth will meet with the President of the Student Senate and they will discuss the issue.

9. Cross-disciplinary Review of Course Proposals: With the change to the RCM budget, there is concern that departments will compete for students by duplicating courses. A method needs to be developed to review proposals to avoid duplication. Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness Darin Ellis wants a faculty group to assess course proposals. Policy discussed who should do the assessments. Should the Senate's committees assess the proposals or should a separate committee be created? Mr. Volz suggested that the task is difficult: he took two courses with the same title as a student, but they had quite different perspectives. Mr. Roth said that identifying the criteria to use with which to evaluate such courses could be difficult. Rather than a university-wide committee, it appears that it would be the dean's role to handle duplication if it occurred in departments within a school. If there is duplication between school/colleges, it should be handled at the Provost's level. Creating a new committee for that purpose seems unnecessary. Perhaps GEOC can devise some general criteria for consideration when it appears that courses developed in different schools may be duplicative, and those courses can be brought to GEOC for consideration.

Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of August 19, 2019