

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC SENATE  
PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

September 9, 2019

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

Absent with notice: V. Dallas

Guests: Kristen Chinery, Research Archivist, Reuther Archives; Dawn Medley, Associate Vice  
President for Enrollment Management

The item marked with an asterisk constitutes the Action of September 9, 2019.

1. Race Card Project: Ms. Chinery informed the Policy Committee about the partnership the university formed last fall with the Race Card Project. Michele Norris of National Public Radio began the project. She asked people to write six words about race or cultural identity on cards and return them to her. There are almost 100,000 cards in the collection from across the country. The university formed a partnership with the project last fall. The Library System set up walls in all the libraries and in several other buildings on which people could post comments for the project. The cards filled out here will be kept in an archive in the Reuther Library. The cards were used as instructional tools for the many classes that visited the Reuther this past year. Reuther hopes to initiate data projects where students analyze the subject, their experience with the cards, how many times certain words were used or certain themes were covered. Ms. Chinery is interested in knowing if there is a more strategic way to incorporate the cards into classes.

Ms. Chinery also said that the Aspen Institute, an international nonprofit nonpartisan forum for values-based leadership and the exchange of ideas, has a BRIDGEBOX with cards for certain topics or a particular place, like Wayne State. Those cards are used for conversations and classroom activities and study. Ms. Norris will visit campus in the spring. The Reuther Library wants to have a BRIDGEBOX session in conjunction with her visit. The Bridge cards are used to begin small group discussions. Questions are developed based on the cards. For example, a person gets a card where someone identified their race or cultural identity. The student has to take on the role of the person who wrote the card and engage in dialog as if they were the person who wrote the card. Activities are developed based on the roles. Ms. Chinery will meet with the Faculty Affairs Committee about the BRIDGEBOX project.

2. Report from the Chair:
  - a. On Wednesday, September 18, the Mike Ilitch School of Business will induct three members of the business community into its Entrepreneurship and Innovation Hall of Fame. The inductees are Marian Ilitch, co-founder of Little Caesars Pizza and founder and chairwoman of Ilitch Holdings, Inc.; Florine Mark, president and CEO of the WW Group; and Bernard D. Moray, chairman of Gorman's Home Furnishings & Interior Design.
  - b. Provost Whitfield met with the new faculty hired using the interdisciplinary hiring process. The next theme for interdisciplinary hiring will be on social and behavioral determinants, but that will depend on the fiscal year 2020 budget.

c. The most recent EmpowerED podcast is available.

3. Report from the Senate President:

- a. The most recent enrollment report shows a total of 26,900 students, a decrease from last year. The number of continuing students has increased but the number of new undergraduate and graduate students has decreased from last year. Most of Michigan's state universities, other than the University of Michigan and Michigan State University, have had a 3% to 5% drop in enrollment. Policy Committee discussed the challenges the university faces that affect enrollment. Businesses and school districts ceased paying tuition for their employees to get master's degrees. The number of high school graduates has decreased and will continue to decrease for some years. The number of international students seeking master's degrees has dropped, in part because of the Trump Administration's policies. Enrollment in community colleges has decreased. The local community colleges appear not to view themselves as the front-end to a four-year degree. Their students are going into trade careers. Provost Whitfield said that we must prepare and attract more domestic students to graduate programs. Ms. Beale noted that this is a long-term problem that requires action.
- b. The student organization day is Wednesday, September 11.
- c. The Keith Center in the Law School is cooperating with the Square One project at Columbia University for a Detroit roundtable on the future of justice. There is a paper competition for undergraduates, masters, and professional students.
- d. The Policy Committee expects to get the nominations for the Article XXX committees in October. The procedure for nominating and selecting members of the committees is governed by the Agreement between the University and the AAUP-AFT. Article XXX states that the membership of the committees should be completed in the winter term so the members begin their terms the following fall term. We are working with the Provost's Office in hopes that these committees can be appointed earlier in the future.
- e. A faculty member wrote a letter addressed to Ms. Beale claiming that the Policy Committee was falsely accusing him. Ms. Beale responded that neither his conduct nor the investigation of his conduct are the subject of the memo. The memo is about academic freedom and the gag order issued by his department chair and dean.
- f. After the Policy Committee met with President Wilson on August 26 about academic freedom issues, the President responded on September 6. Policy is drafting a response to be finalized before the Senate meeting on September 11.

[Associate Vice President Medley joined the meeting.]

4. Enrollment Management: Ms. Medley told the committee about a new program with Dell, Inc. whereby free refurbished laptops will be provided to first-time full-time Pell eligible freshmen starting this fall. To the extent there are still laptops available, other students will be able to purchase the refurbished laptops for \$150.00. The university is using some general scholarship money and unrestricted endowment money to cover the cost of the computers. To date about \$9,000 from the general scholarship funds have been spent. Typically, 50% of our freshmen class is Pell eligible.

Although the FTIAC class this fall is smaller than last year, it is our second-largest. Total fall enrollment is almost 28,000 [sic]. Enrollment Management is instituting a system where students are able to identify as multi-racial and multi-ethnic, compared to our prior reliance

solely on designations used by the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS). Ms. Medley anticipates that the diversity of our freshmen class will increase because they are able to identify as multi-racial and multi-ethnic. Allowing students to include a variety of races or ethnicity is respectful of how they self-identify. The new numbers will be used within the university and shared with the Board of Governors, but we must continue to report using the prior single category to IPEDS. In a similar development, the university is moving toward allowing applicants not to indicate gender. Enrollment Management is also working with student groups to provide a Middle Eastern designation on forms.

Policy Committee had asked about the process for adjustments to student financial aid when students study abroad or are supported through the University Research Opportunities Program. Ms. Medley said that financial aid is constrained by federal guidelines, so students have to request budget adjustments for specific needs. Policy asked how the administration is ensuring that students know that they can seek adjustments. Ms. Medley replied that some of the types of costs for which adjustment is possible can be put on the website, but there may be others that could be included in the application process. The Financial Aid office has flyers with examples. Federal regulations prohibit the university from marketing budget adjustments, but advisors can provide flyers to inform students. The application form also lists broad types of adjustments that can be requested.

The Warrior Way Back (WWB) program has garnered attention. To qualify, undergraduates have to be out of the institution for two or more years and have a past due balance of \$1500 or less. One hundred forty two students started in the program. Other students seeking information may not qualify but can be helped in resolving their problems. For example, some students don't have a past due balance but have defaulted on federal loans and were helped to resolve that problem. One student paid down his debt so he could qualify for the program. Twenty WWB students have already graduated, and three more finished this summer. Nineteen did not continue. Students are asked to enroll in three out of four terms to continue to be eligible. Ninety-seven students are continuing this fall and 36 new students began the program. The number of credits students need varies. One person had zero credits and a balance of \$400.00. Some needed 60 credits to complete the degree. Counting debt forgiveness and additional tuition, the university received a positive return of \$368,988 on the program last year. The ages of the students range from 25 to 60. The average age is 39. Advisors meet with those who express interest in the program to determine if they are eligible for WWB and check to see if federal assistance, veterans benefits or employer tuition benefits are available. Ms. Medley has talked with about 135 educational institutions, community-based organizations, and national foundations that are looking to Wayne State University as a leader in this program.

During the discussion that followed, Ms. Simon suggested that key information about where to find the different student services offices needs to be added to the kiosks on campus, such as the fact that admissions and financial aid are in the Welcome Center. Ms. Medley indicated she would follow up on that.

In an earlier meeting Ms. Medley and the Policy Committee talked about tax transcripts and tax forms. Previously when students went through the financial aid process, the U.S. Department of Education required them to submit a tax transcript. This was very confusing. Unless a person was a tax preparer, they may not know that they could print their tax transcript from a

computer. The financial aid lobby asked that students be allowed to submit tax forms. That change increased automation in the financial aid office, and the hiring of additional staff resulted in a significant reduction in the number of students who were verified by the start of classes. The office is 21% ahead in financial aid packaging this year.

Latonia Garrett is the Director of the Student Service Center (SCC). Financial aid and student services professionals are available. The freshmen moving into campus housing went through the center with a better process this year. Financial aid officers and student services were available to assist students and their parents. The Welcome Center was arranged so students feel that it is a central place for them. The staff at the SCC referred students to the Student Accounts Receivable office and the bursar when necessary, and wait lines for service were greatly reduced. Automated phone messaging was down to about ten minutes. Email response time still needs improvement. Students can now access an artificial intelligence bot for financial aid information. They do not have to email or call the office. They can go through the entire financial aid cycle with the AI chat bot.

Ms. Hoogland asked if students have received their first financial aid payment. Ms. Medley said the university can disburse the check ten days before the start of the term for the students who have everything in place. They also try to disburse the checks on the first day of classes to students who are in the process 10 days before the start of classes. Other students who are in the verification stage must be cleared by their professors before they receive a check. Students can buy their books if they have not received their financial aid check. The university has a book voucher program and a student emergency loan program.

Ms. Simon asked about scholarships. As an example, a full-time student receives a merit scholarship of \$5,000 when s/he enters as a freshman and fulfills all the requirements to continue the scholarship. If their major awards juniors and seniors an additional \$2,000, how much money, she asked, would the student receive? Ms. Medley said the students would receive \$7,000. There are, she said, three competing issues regarding financial aid, endowed scholarships, and other Wayne State processes. Previously, Wayne State was not calculating budgets for all students so they received too much money. That was resolved. With the institution of Academic Works, the university has a 95% tally of the available endowed awards, the memorandum of understanding for the awards, and the timeline for the awards. We were not always compliant with federal regulations with the way or the timing in awarding financial aid or scholarships and in some cases over-awarded students more than the “cost of attendance” (a flexible calculation that takes into account tuition and fees and other expenses). Overawards are not federally compliant.

Ms. Simon continued. Even if a full-time junior has no additional differential tuition, the student’s \$5,000 award, which is only \$2,500 for a semester, is probably less than expenses so it appears a \$7,000 total would not be an over-award. Students were upset when they did not get the full \$7000. Ms. Medley said the awarding of scholarships to freshmen is decentralized so that working with the timelines and the colleges for freshmen is different than working with sophomores, juniors, and seniors. The Office of Financial Aid is hoping to work with the deans and Human Resources to ensure the best treatment for all students. Ms. Medley noted that the university funds many students to full tuition and fees with the Access program, a gap fund. Since it is a gap fund, it may mean students do not receive anything more, but she’d like to work with the flexibility that exists between full cost of tuition and fees

and full cost of attendance to retain the Access program but allow students to keep their full awards.

Ms. Simon mentioned that there is some confusion about the requirements students have to meet to keep merit scholarships they received as freshmen. Some advisers may be insisting on 15-15-0, but students must take 30 credits in an academic year as either 12-12-6 or 15-15-0. Ms. Medley confirmed that that was correct.

[Ms. Medley left the meeting.]

Provost Whitfield added to the comments about WWB. The university is seen as a leader because we have changed our business process. In the past, we held transcripts and registration when students owed money. Changing that system hasn't been easy because it goes against basic business practices.

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6. Centers and Institutes Advisory Committee – I: Policy Committee reviewed the nominations it had made for the committee. David Moss, Law, and Cathryn Bock, Oncology, Medicine, have accepted the appointment. One more is needed. Policy Committee will take up the question at its next meeting. The Policy Committee and the Provost each nominate three faculty and then they consult on the final appointment and select a chair.
7. Centers and Institutes Advisory Committee – II: This committee reports to the Vice President for Research, Stephen Lanier. The same procedure is used to appoint the members as is done for CIAC-I. PC will revisit the question at a later meeting when Vice President Lanier can attend.
8. Standing Committee Assignments: Policy Committee changed some of the committee assignments. They mentioned some issues that committees might address this year. The Research Committee will discuss the policy on research misconduct. Curriculum and Instruction will deal with institutional learning outcomes and the degree in general studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Student Affairs Committee will have a joint meeting with the Facilities, Support Services and Technology Committee about advising and will discuss open educational resources. Policy Committee members selected the committees on which they will serve as liaisons.

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Approved as revised at the Policy Committee meeting of September 23, 2019