WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

December 10, 2018

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

Guests: Darin Ellis, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs and Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness

The items marked with an asterisk constitute the Actions of December 10, 2018.

1. Academic Analytics: Associate Provost Ellis explained that Academic Analytics is an aggregation of publicly available information largely from government and other accessible databases, such as the British Library, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation. It is a database of all faculty in the U.S. who are full-time permanent employees: either tenure, tenure-track, or research track faculty. Academic Analytics provides a public record of what faculty have done. The information includes awards such as the Nobel Prize or a prize from the National Academy that is public information and can be verified. Each faculty member at Wayne State has access to the information that Academic Analytics has collected about them. It is available through academica at the academic insight link. If there are errors it is best to correct them in the original source.

   It is aggregate data and therefore also allows those who have complete access (currently expected to be limited to Provost's Office personnel and deans) to pull out various kinds of specific comparative data. For example, if you want to know the number of publications in a particular field at Wayne State compared to the number typical in that field generally, you can pull that information out.

   Associate Provost Ellis was reluctant to show the Policy Committee the kinds of comparisons that the database could be used to produce, indicating that the Deans expected to have the first view of it. Mr. Ellis suggested that the information is sensitive, even though it is merely an aggregation of data that is publicly available. But the aggregation itself is a sensitive process because of the way the information can be used. If the information were broadly available a great deal of education would be required to understand what it means.

   Ms. Beale emphasized that the Policy Committee is interested in what the university can do with the data and what kind of metrics it allows administrators to use. She considers it inappropriate not to respond to these questions about the way the database can be used, since we are purchasing access with university funds and the deans plan to use the information, presumably in the selective salary and tenure process. Further, Ms. Beale noted that, at the very least, the Senate President and chairs of the various Senate committees should have access to the data to better understand what kinds of analyses can be done with the software. It is in the public record and these people can treat the information confidentially. There is much

debate about metrics in education: one of the problems is a "bean-counter" mentality, that tends to regard quantitative measurements as more important than qualitative considerations. This is an extension of the problems we have had with building metrics in other data sources.

With Provost Whitfield's consent, Mr. Ellis embarked on some illustration of the ways that the data platform can provide information. The two parts of the platform are the *benchmarking suite* and the *discovery suite*. They are comprised of different tools. Faculty can access their own record in the discovery suite. The discovery suite has a companion product to the research office and to the dean's office. [The Policy Committee would like to have more information on this use, which was not provided at the meeting.] The benchmark suite looks at the institution, the broad field of study, or the department. People are most unclear about the scholarly research index. It is a weighted score across a number of factors that constitute the scholarly productivity or reputation of a person or institution.

The Provost said that because more information is being made web accessible, Academic Analytics searches the web for all the information. The advantage is that the information is collapsed and connected together. People make decisions with little information on which to base them. It is better to have more information on which to base decisions.

A committee member commented that the more data you have and the more aggregating systems you have that can put it together in multiple ways that could be misused by people who make poor judgement decisions, the more it requires transparency. That calls for more openness about how this tool can and will be used.

Provost Whitfield said that if you are going to make a judgment you should share the metrics you are using to make the judgment. Absent the information you need a good institutional research department to use the data you have. We are trying to educate deans. You can't just use the data and not share the metrics used to make the judgment.

Ms. Beale believes the people being rated may not understand that the way a question is asked partly determines the answer. She thinks key people in the Academic Senate should have access to the database, since it is not clear to anyone what kind of questions can be answered without seeing how the system works. The Provost disagreed, insisting that key people in the Senate could ask for information and institutional research will provide the information.

Ms. Beale said that it is a question of checks and balances. Someone not in the hierarchy should look at the information and ask questions about the way information is being used within the administrative hierarchy. She thinks the chairs of some Senate committees and some faculty in the schools and colleges, such as those on the unit budget advisory committees or the tenure and promotion

committees, should have access to the database. It is important that people have a way to see what kinds of things could be asked of the system.

Provost Whitfield believes the expertise of an institutional research department will be lost if individuals try to figure it out. Institutional research is the office that works with academic analytics. There is far more clarity working through institutional research.

Ms. Beale countered that some faculty in each college and key people on the Academic Senate, such as chairs, can serve in the role of checks and balances. Part of the role of the Senate is to serve as a check and balance. Deans and associate deans will have access, and we already have a problem that some administrators provide less than full information to faculty.

Mr. Parrish agreed that the judgment of administrators should be open to question like every other judgment. Other people should be able to determine if what is being presented is sensible.

Mr. Ellis said that under broad fields might be engineering or humanities. The data gets less useful the more the data is aggregated. If faculty teach but don't have research responsibilities, they are not in the database.

[Mr. Ellis left the meeting.]

*2. <u>Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee</u>: Two faculty who had been selected to serve on the university-wide committee earlier in the fall are unable to serve. Policy Committee and the Provost jointly selected replacements.

3. <u>Report from the Chair</u>:
   a. At its meeting of December 7, the Board of Governors approved the change in the number of representatives from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to serve on the General Education Oversight Committee. The change is from four representatives to six representatives.
   b. Provost Whitfield is asking the Policy Committee for its opinion on two issues about tenure and promotion of faculty. First, in past years some faculty have asked that creating intellectual property be considered as a positive factor in decisions about tenure and promotion. Some institutions put it in a separate category. The Provost thought the Faculty Affairs Committee might discuss the request and provide advice. A Policy Committee member noted that if a category were to be added, it should be in the department's promotion and tenure factors. The second issue was whether the members of the University Tenure and Promotion Committee should serve two-year terms or if their terms should be staggered. Provost Whitfield has observed that committee members have a better understanding of the work of their colleagues in other disciplines later in the deliberations. It would be helpful to have continuity of that knowledge the following year. PC members mentioned that selecting some faculty who served on an earlier P&T Committee is helpful and has been done. They will continue the discussions at a later date.

4. Report from the Senate President:
   a. At the December 7 Board of Governors Budget and Finance Committee meeting, Ms. Beale, the faculty representative to the Committee, raised a strong concern about the compensation that the University continues to pay Dwight Monson and Lisa Keane, consultants in the Medical School (in addition to the very high salary for the VP for Health Affairs, David Hefner). She mentioned that the money could have been used to hire academic advisors, support graduate teaching and research assistants and post-docs, and provide travel for faculty. Several members of the Board took up that concern and indicated a need for Board approval of at least some of these kinds of consulting contracts. At the Board's official meeting, the members voted to extend President Wilson's contract by three years with increased compensation. Five members (including the two who are leaving the Board after the November election) voted in favor of the motion and three opposed the motion. The contract will now expire in 2023.
   b. The Board voted to terminate the tenure of a faculty member immediately. Ms. Beale indicated that there were real due process concerns with this decision, both from an academic governance and collective bargaining agreement perspective. Mr. Parrish explained to the Policy Committee that the Board did not follow the procedures in Statute 2.52.01 Appointments, Continuing Tenure, Termination and Dismissal Policies and Procedures for Faculty. The faculty member was denied her rights without due process of law. The AAUP-AFT will file a grievance immediately. The faculty is to be mentored for a full year at which time the case will be reviewed by a three-person committee, a process that differs sharply from the contract and statute. Mr. Parrish added that the politics of the situation is serious. The future of the University is serious. We are in negotiations now with the Henry Ford Health System for the future of the School of Medicine and we are in a weak position. The negotiators, David Hefner, Dwight Monson, and Lisa Keane, will leave the University in six months, though the President expects to continue a permanent VP of Health Affairs position.
   c. Ms. Beale received a number of complaints about lack of campus cleanliness, and urges the administration to respond to these issues.
   d. At the Senate meeting on December 5, a Senate member brought up a problem in the office of Sponsored Programs Administration. When a contract officer leaves the University, the office does nothing to notify people sending email messages that the person has left. The messages are not forwarded to another contract officer. In fact, the SPA website continued to list one employee as the contact person weeks after the employee left the University. Ms. Beale discussed this issue with Steve Lanier and SPA and suggested that an automatic email inform people that a contract officer has left and provide information for contacting another employee. One solution would be to have a secondary email contact for every SPA officer that can be used by the replacement person to pick up any missed contacts and inform those contacts of the new main contact, as soon as anyone leaves.
   e. The U.S. Department of Education posted the proposed regulations to revise Title IX on November 30. There is a 60-day period from the date of the posting during which people may comment on the proposed regulations. Mr. Roth, Mr. Volz, and Ms. Beale will draft a statement for comment by the Policy Committee to be

discussed in early January. The comment will need to be filed right before the end of January.

    f. Because the Board of Governors approved having six representatives from Liberal Arts and Sciences on the General Education Oversight Committee the Policy Committee will have to select two additional members. Ms. Beale will communicate with the other members of the Policy Committee to select the new members via email within the next two weeks.

*5. <u>Proceedings of the Policy Committee</u>: Policy Committee approved the Proceedings of its meeting of November 26 as revised.

*6. <u>Campus Safety Advisory Council Representatives</u>: The Board of Governors Statutes requires the University to have a Campus Safety Advisory Council. Policy Committee appointed renee hoogland, Professor, English, Liberal Arts and Sciences; Kimberly Morgan, Academic Advisor III, Mathematics, Liberal Arts and Sciences; and Jennifer Wareham, Associate Professor, Criminal Justice, Liberal Arts and Sciences.

 7. <u>Reports from Liaisons</u>:
    a. Mr. Roth reported that Counseling and Psychological Services made a presentation to the Student Affairs Committee. CAPS is conducting training for suicide prevention. One version is an 8-hour one-on-one training session; the other is a 15-to 45-minute online training. Despite long wait lists to see a counselor, there are procedures to help students in extreme need. CAPS has a 24/7 hotline through a contract with a professional outside agency. It was mentioned that the Student Senate has had the same presentation as the SAC.
    b. Ms. Dallas reported that she and Ms. Simon attended the Student Success Steering Committee meeting. There was a discussion about the new software Maxient that coordinates student information about academic misconduct, Title IX, non-academic misconduct, and CARE reports.
    c. Ms. hoogland reported that the Faculty Affairs Committee met with Jeff Bolton, Assistant Vice President, Office of University Budget, and talked about RCM.

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Approved as submitted at the Policy Committee meeting of January 14, 2018