

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC SENATE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

July 31, 2023

Present: D. Aubert; L. Beale; K. Friedrich; r. hoogland; P. Khosla; M. Kornbluh; J. Lewis; N. Rossi; B. Roth; N. Simon

Absent with Notice: J. Fitzgibbon; S. Schrag

Guests: Catherine Kay, Sr. Dir., Financial Aid; Tim Stemmler, Interim VPR

I. FINANCIAL AID AND HOUSING

Kay was invited to Policy to discuss a proposal for free or reduced housing for qualifying students. The primary issue raised in the proposal that came from financial aid assistants suggests potential ways to aid new students who sign up for housing who may have some financial aid, and may not have understood the long-term costs for housing or how they are going to pay for it. Beale believes there should be some way of giving them advice and provide help through multiple sources before the start of the fall semester. She asked whether there is anything that can be done at this point to ensure that kind of information sharing or advising about housing occurs. Kay confirmed such sharing of information from housing to financial aid can be worked out. In the past, that had been done, but the new structure for auxiliary services and Corvias has made it difficult. There are liaisons who serve as financial aid direct contacts for housing.

Naida Simon explained that new 17- and 18-year-old students are sold on housing at the door without knowing their parents' income and whether the cost is reasonable for them. The monthly cost may appear reasonable, but they may not consider that the fixed cost is for 10 months. As a result, there are students with large balances due for housing despite their tuition being covered by Pell grants and family income: they cannot register for the next year because they owe money beyond the university cut off amount and cannot take loans for past due balances. The financial aid officers talk to these distraught parents who want their kids to continue but have no way to pay the \$13,000 yearly housing costs. And those students cannot get a transcript to go elsewhere with credit from here. This results in lost revenue for the university and Corvias.

Beale suggested the contract with Corvias may limit what we can do, something students should know when signing housing contracts, and they should have the assistance of expert advice. It may be a separate issue, not directly under financial aid, in terms of things we can do to help those students who owe money and are unable to pay. Perhaps the HIGH program can be restructured to be more helpful for students.

Kay explained the family could have an income that cuts them out of need-based aid but still not have sufficient money for housing. Beale asked whether those students are mostly independent. The proposal includes homeless students no longer supported by parents due to extenuating circumstances, not by choice, and we do have a population of these students. Kay is verifying the number of students in this population, identified by the Department of Education, and this information will be shared with Policy when it becomes available. Sometimes students simply answer the question incorrectly, so that process is currently under review.

Beale suggested that the Policy Committee charge the Student Affairs Committee (SAC) and Budget Committee (BUD) with establishing a small joint working group to consider this issue in the fall, gathering information on the HIGH program and any other program that currently exists, including the number of students in different categories who end up in this circumstance. The working group would need to talk to financial aid, residential advisors and auxiliary services to gather data and suggest possible options for handling this problem.

Jennifer Lewis mentioned that some universities require a “University 100” course where students learn about their obligations, budgeting, understanding their expenses and how financial aid assists. Simon noted that such a course would be too late because entering FTIACs sign a housing contract in late spring or summer. The issue is also whether first generation students’ parents fully understand the costs. Lewis suggested the question is whether there is a better approach to make sure that every student who wants to live on campus can have that part of the college experience. Beale agreed: the question for Budget and SAC to consider is whether there is any way that we can make the available assistance better reach the students that need help. renee hoogland also agreed the starting point is that students should be able to have that experience if they want to. We tend to focus on a problem rather than solutions for the ideal outcome and should push to figure out how can we do our best and use all the resources that we have. She supports having a working group focused on this issue.

## II. APPROVAL OF POLICY PROCEEDINGS

The proceedings of the July 17, 2023 Policy Committee meeting were approved as revised.

## III. LEVINSON INSTITUTE FOR BRAIN RESEARCH

Stemmler was invited to Policy to discuss the Ben L. Silberstein Institute for Brain Health. The charter request is for an official five-year charter, although there is no CIAC report.

Beale found it odd that marketing (Today at Wayne, Crain’s Detroit Business) has already described the institute as established despite having no charter. She noted the organizational structure on page seven in which David Rosenberg is listed as chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences as well as director of the institute. All the proposed new faculty for the institute are in his department. It is supposed to be a cross-disciplinary institute; however, the grants funding the first year are from existing grants from three people within the psychiatry department in just one field of psychiatry and another in a different field of psychiatry. How does that make it a cross-disciplinary institute? Noreen Rossi noted there are people in other departments/colleges (i.e., psychology, physiology, pharmacology, oncology, engineering) who would like to be included but have not been approached. Stemmler agreed this is a major problem. He also pointed out a glaring omission from the document: there is no associate chair or vice chair for science outside of the School of Medicine. He has repeatedly told Rosenberg that this institute cannot rely solely on psychiatry faculty. Policy members agreed it must be made cross-disciplinary in order to be an institute and they will not agree to a permanent charter until this is done. It is unclear why Rosenberg has not recognized the necessity of this expansion.

Beale suggested the memos from OVPR and Policy be sent at the same time and point out the importance of genuine cross-disciplinarity through involvement of other fields and schools/colleges such as CLAS, Engineering and Pharmacy. She also considers it problematic that the chair of the department expects to serve as director of the institute because there is a

conflict of interest. Stemmler had already explained this to Rosenberg, but former president Roy Wilson agreed to do it this way; however, there must be an associate director outside the medical school. Stemmler recommended two faculty members (one from the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, one from the IOG) and Rosenberg chose Nora Fritz (EACPHS), but she is nonetheless not listed in this proposal.

Beale highlighted another area of concern. In one of the four different iterations of purpose and mission, it says the president appoints the director, but it reports to OVPR. Policy should recommend that the director be appointed by OVPR. It is problematic that the director be the chair of a department where apparently all the faculty being considered are within that department. On the internal committee, it should say OVPR in consultation with the Academic Senate will select three faculty to serve, a new one each year with staggered three-year terms.

The \$2.5 million budget split four ways was arranged between Stemmler and Wilson. Rosenberg had originally requested more than twice that amount. Beale discussed the projected external funding and grants in the first year totaling \$6.614 million from the existing grants of psychiatry faculty Tanja Jovanovic, Hilary Marusak, Seth Norrholm and Eric Woodcock. The five-year budget projects grant funding from only these four faculty members and there is no information about grants in progress. More information will be requested.

Stemmler discussed additional concerns. The grants listed are only in psychiatry. Neurodegenerative disease was left out of this completely and he questioned how it can be an institute for brain health and not touch neurodegenerative disease. The organizational chart lists three additional endowed chairs and the institute would benefit from an expansion of discussions that endowed chairs come from across the university to be cross-disciplinary.

hoogland noted there should be clinical psychologists and clinical psychiatrists—people who work with people to make that bridge a reality. Stemmler agreed. The impact should cover the whole spectrum, including collaborations with Engineering, CLAS (chemistry and biology) the IOG and MPSI (child development).

Rather than approving a temporary charter, Stemmler and Policy agreed the memos should request these issues to be fixed now before a permanent charter is issued. Lewis agreed to create a first draft and share it with Beale.

#### IV. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Enrollment: Policy members noted that PhDs are at 0% change, mostly at this point from increases in continuing PhD students and a decrease in new PhD students. Kornbluh noted it is hard to tell what the final status will be for PhD students. Master's numbers remain down, although engineering admitted a larger number of international students (which pay more than double), and he remains hopeful they will come.

Last week, the provost met with the consultant on financial aid and admissions whose advice played a role in the improvement of undergraduate admissions. The consultant confirmed our numbers and expectations—the finances of this class appear to be a game changer for us. They reviewed the financial aid and enrollment report (which can be shared with Policy) that breaks students into very small groups (i.e., high achieving students with no financial need, with a little financial need, with a lot of financial need, with full financial need, and broken down by zip codes) and compared the success of these groups to other universities. The area needing the most improvement had been among students with substantial financial need, despite being a school of

opportunity. To improve in this area, we admitted students with a 3.0 GPA test-optional earlier because many of them were from Detroit Public Schools Community District. In the past, they were admitted in June, but they now were admitted in December. The consultant helped us on a bi-weekly basis, targeting students we should contact to remind them to fill out the FAFSA. This resulted in exceptional improvement among students with significant financial need. Given that Pell went up federally and the State of Michigan Scholarship came in for these students, both the university and the students fare better. If this trend continues, by mid-September we will be able to report 50-60% of the entering class pay no tuition and fees. Our discount rate went down significantly (low 30% opposed to mid-40%). The consultants were surprised that our numbers could be up, our discount rate down and our net tuition per student up.

All the honors students qualify for the \$5000 gold scholarship, and honors students with a 3.83 GPA or higher receive an additional \$2000. This year we offered 4000 scholarships to honors students instead of the typical 2500, and it looks like we will have between 500 and 600 honors students—the largest honors class by far—without reducing qualifications without expending more funds because of the Michigan and Pell grant funding. He anticipates a bigger class than expected with lower discount rates and higher qualifications (20% accepted were above a 3.83 GPA).

Almost all the Michigan schools are up, but this is not true nationwide. For example, there was an article about Virginia Commonwealth cutting their budgets significantly. Just a year ago, the provost indicated that he saw VCU as a school that we might learn from, given that it is a quality R1 university with a very poorly resourced student body.

There was a sharp decline in the percentage of 18-year-olds going to college during the pandemic. New evidence indicates this will not be the case in Michigan, which is returning to the pre-pandemic percentage of 18- year-olds going to college. It is clear the university must spend money recruiting in the 10th and 11th grade rather than only 12th grade. There is a new effort across the state of Michigan providing guaranteed admission in which we will participate. We will publicize admitting students with a 3.0 high school GPA, especially in areas of the state not usually targeted. Kornbluh reported that Chicago is doing the same thing, so we will qualify to be on a list of schools that students graduating with a 3.0 from a Chicago school can attend. Nationwide, a 3.0 high school GPA is a good predictor of success in college regardless of grade inflation. He pointed out MSU will likely admit more students below a 3.0 this year than we do, which is interesting.

Dean of Libraries and School of Information Science: The new Dean of Libraries and School of Information Science Paul Bracke will start October 15th.

## V. REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

NEH grants: An announcement went out about two NEH grants available per campus. Faculty must apply through administrators and applications are due to NEH by September 20.

Espy Oath of Office Ceremony: President Espy's oath of office ceremony is scheduled for August 22nd at 4 p.m. Beale encouraged Policy members to attend.

WSU DEI Council: An announcement went out through the Office of the President about the establishment of the DEI Council which will be advisory to the Chief Diversity Officer. Kornbluh pointed out this was reviewed by Policy and the final version was edited by Beale. He gave direction to move forward with the announcement. He did not go forward yet with the

foreign influence document because the language around “foreign relationships” has to be improved.

WSU Foundation meeting: Beale reported on the recent meeting of the WSU Foundation board. As a member of the board, she receives the foundation’s tax Form-990 and was interested to learn that on December 31st, 2021, the foundation transferred around a half million dollars to two different Cayman Island companies. These are essentially mailbox companies in a single building run by a Cayman Island law firm to be able to report as non-U.S. companies for tax purposes.

Kornbluh explained the university did make the decision to move a significant percentage of the endowment into private equities from public equities because that is where most universities have made more money over time. Our percentage of private equity ownership remains relatively small, but the strategy is to increase those investments.

The Chronicle’s Bootcamp for Future Faculty Leaders: Beale discussed the announcement for the \$695 one-day virtual workshop on faculty leadership for faculty sent by Sara Kacin (Asst. Provost Faculty Development and Success) that merely says the university will support “some faculty” without indicating how many nor what the criteria are for deciding who receives this support. It would have been helpful if the criteria had been discussed with the Senate.

Kornbluh noted this is part of Boris Baltes’ office’s mandate to support faculty development, and it is likely that a committee will choose the faculty. The university will pay for up to five attendees to participate.

UROP Committee process: Beale met with Kelly Dormer (Assoc. Director, Strategic Academic Initiatives) and Darin Ellis (Assoc. Provost for Academic Programs) to discuss the UROP Committee process and the slump in the number of awards because of the pandemic. They discussed how to reestablish a process and will create a draft to discuss with Policy.

Faculty brunch: There will be a faculty brunch on August 27<sup>th</sup> before the New Student Convocation.

Marketing: Beale shared that she had to look up the Hilberry for a memo she was preparing and came across the Wikipedia page that was completely out of date. The introductory paragraph gave a very off-putting description for anyone searching Hilberry at Wayne State. She sent the Wikipedia page and link to marketing and communications’ VP Michael Wright who appeared to have little concern, noting it was Wikipedia. Beale responded that Wikipedia can be edited and suggested we should update key topics there periodically. Carolyn Berry noted that Nick DeNardis (Sr. Dir. Digital Communications) would look into it.

AI syllabus language: hoogland questioned when the AI language will be distributed because faculty have started working on their syllabi. Beale confirmed as soon as Lewis provides the one-page document for distribution at the new faculty orientation, she will use that and distribute it with the AI report to faculty through the listserv.

## VI. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT CHANGES

Brad Roth explained that a question about faculty being informed about grade changes caused him to revisit the changes made to the student code of conduct on grade penalties. (We had bracketed the question of grade appeals, since those are currently handled on a college-by-college

basis: although there must be a grade appeals process, it is decentralized in its application with no guarantee that faculty are kept in the loop about how grade appeals are being handled.)

The Senate did approve changes to the Board of Governors statute on the question of incorporating faculty participation more formally into the processes by which academic dishonesty penalties apply. As the material distributed for this meeting demonstrates, there are multiple typographical errors in the Board of Governors statute amendments posted on the BOG website, and the amended statute leaves out one entire amendment. This needs to be corrected, presumably by Julie Miller as Secretary to the Board of Governors.

Furthermore, the statute sets out processes that are supposed to be followed, but apparently no one is overseeing the implementation, which requires a year-end report to faculty about academic dishonesty penalties. Accordingly, there is no reason to believe that anyone is paying any attention to this or that faculty are receiving the report required at the end of the academic year about what in the aggregate is being done in these areas. It is unclear what can be done to ensure implementation of the notice and reporting requirements.

Kornbluh requested an email outlining what needs to be fixed that he can forward to Julie Miller. He will also make sure that Academic Affairs has this on their annual calendar, so that the deans' reports will be generated and then shared.

## VII. EQUITY AND MERIT RAISE DISSATISFACTION

hoogland raised this issue with Policy because many people are upset that the equity and merit raise processes have not been very transparent. People who received an equity increase were informed but there was no uniform notice to those who were turned down. She understands that people have been up for an award multiple times who many might consider deserving, yet failed to get the equity raise. Only about 10 people out of 50 in CLAS—all of whom were carefully selected by departments received the award, suggesting that the equity process is not working. Another person had complained that the faculty raise was at least \$1000 less than the teaching faculty increases.

Beale asked whether the complaint about teaching faculty is about the equity funding or the promotion funding, noting that those are two different issues. hoogland agreed but thinks the issues are entangled because they affect people at the same time and people are upset about both—the feeling of discontent about one matter fuels other feelings of discontent. She noted that some faculty have been ranked as number 1 two years in a row for the equity adjustment without receiving it. This makes people unhappy because the process is not transparent. The lack of notice about not getting the award makes it worse. Beale noted this notice issue was raised last year: she thought Baltes agreed that there would be notice this year to those who were declined. Kornbluh explained that people who were nominated but declined for equity raises received a letter that said everybody who had received equity raise had been notified and if they did not get a letter notifying them of an award, they did not get an equity raise. He indicated that this form of notification was worked out with the AAUP.

Kornbluh added that equity funding is part of the union negotiations which agreed on a certain percentage raise each year, part of which is merit. The merit process is governed at the departmental level (or college for non-departmentalized colleges) and not by the central university or the college. After the contract was negotiated, the university agreed with the union (because the union gave this away in negotiations) that a certain amount of money each year of

the contract will be put into equity: this year the amount was \$200,000. Nominations came up from the departments, to the deans, to the provost.

Lewis shared that she had been unaware that she was not being paid as much as other people in her rank when the union encouraged her to request an equity increase and provided language to put in the letter request. She did not get it two years ago and did receive a response saying there are many requests that could not be satisfied and suggesting that she request again next year. She requested again this year and did not get it again. If it is true that she is not aligned with others in her rank and continues to do well, what is going on here?

Kornbluh responded there was no negotiation around the terms of equity rewards to require all who were ranked 1 to receive an award. In the first year of the equity awards when there was only \$100,000 in the pot, he made the decision to make all the awards to junior faculty—i.e., they used the ranking but only for untenured faculty members who were inverted in their departments. This year with a pot of \$200,000, they followed the departmental rankings but still had to select from among those rated 1 because there was not a sufficient amount to provide appropriate awards to all.

Rossi commented that faculty understand the process for selective salary merit awards. It would be helpful, for example, if the provost had said the awards last year were going to junior faculty and awards this year by ranking but selecting among those rated 1. How such equity funding is to be distributed needs to be made clear to faculty who are put forward.

Kornbluh pointed out this is the last year that this will take place under the current agreement. There will be a new agreement for next year which will be determined through the union negotiation. The union must put forward a process they want, and we will negotiate over that.

Beale asked whether there is a university-wide report available to share. The provost talked about inverted junior faculty, but there are likely departments where women faculty are paid considerably less than men faculty or where there are other factors in play. Danielle Aubert responded that is challenging because the research done is out of date within a year.

Kornbluh considers it important to retain faculty but the salary structure at the university mitigates against rewarding success. As a result, we have difficulty retaining successful researchers. Equity based upon seniority is a complicated issue, and the union-negotiated salary approach tends towards an across-the-board approach. At the retreat with the deans next week, the provost will raise the issue of how to handle merit salary increases to retain and recruit quality faculty.

hoogland suggested that equity increases should also consider other work that faculty do—not just research. If we are talking equity, we should consider workload and the things that individuals take on. These are matters not really covered by the selective salary process. There are good citizens of the university who do considerably more work than meets the eye. Kornbluh agreed: when he was dean, he had dictatorial control over raises and faculty salary and rewarded the people who kept departments running, who were excellent teachers and excellent in service, the same way he rewarded excellent researchers. We do not do that here. There is nothing that precludes this university from paying more for that kind of good citizenship, and that is what he will propose to the deans. But if that goes into effect, faculty salaries will show wider differences: a deep commitment to equity as equal compensation mitigates against rewarding excellence.

Simon noted an issue impacting academic staff with seniority who are at the top of their rank: new hires make \$3000-\$5000 more even though the existing staff have to train them. They are active in their department, have ESS, service and professional development, and they are getting angry. Kornbluh noted that both he and the CFO support hiring new people at significantly less than salaries paid to existing people in the same jobs. HR policies have often encouraged paying new hires the same as someone who has been in the position 20 years. This is another issue that they are engaging.

Beale suggested there is more nuance in “equity” than is being acknowledged. Equity does not mean everybody is paid the same, but rather that people are paid fairly for what they do. Beale shared the typical example from the report that was done on the equity pay gap issues about seven years ago. There were women faculty who were doing the same teaching, getting the same excellence ratings, publishing, but also doing a lot more service, especially intersectional women who are both Black and female and therefore called on for service, but these women were still paid less than their male colleagues who were engaged in teaching and publishing but performing significantly less service. That is an equity issue. Equity does not mean that if you hire somebody for the same "job description" they have to be paid the same "pay" as anyone else who holds that position, even with much more experiential knowledge about the job. It sounds like HR is making those arguments, although it could be a market-based argument that workers won't accept a job unless paid a market rate. It is not clear if HR really understands the markets well enough to make those arguments.

Aubert suggested confusion occurs when merit for selective salary and equity are discussed at the same time. Some departments hold separate meetings on the two issues. Another problem is the lack of transparency: the selective salary committee makes a recommendation, but the dean re-ranks the recommendation or adds new people.

Beale suggested that the contract will need to consider how to establish guidelines and amounts for equity increases, as well as mandating certain processes such as full transparency about criteria, and clear notice to each individual about the final decision. Surely some improvement can be made over what is currently done. One thing is certain: equity is not an easy thing to talk about, describe or pin down.

Kornbluh agrees this is a major issue at this university. The larger discussion of being an R1 university and an inclusive university that treats people as equally as possible while rewarding engaged, meritorious behavior is needed. Our union contract has created a flatter salary scale compared to most places.

#### VIII. POLICY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS SEPTEMBER 6 PLENARY

Beale suggested that the Policy Committee election at the September plenary be handled by requesting that voting members bring a laptop or phone so that the elections can be run through the Zoom polling system rather than Qualtrics or other more complicated election software. If the internet is out, we will be prepared to use paper ballots. Additionally, she suggested the Senate plenary be solely in-person attendance; as in the past, members who cannot attend will need to provide early information to the administrative assistant so that their absence can be excused. Members agreed.

The other question is whether we should continue the lunches prior to the start of the meeting. It did seem to create more collegiality among members. Policy members supported the lunches and suggested ordering fewer to lower costs. Kornbluh agreed.

Beale will invite President Espy to give the State of the University message at the plenary. She asked Kornbluh if he knows whether Espy plans to hold a Senate reception afterwards. The provost confirmed she will.