WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

Board of Governors

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
March 27, 2015
Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 10:13 a.m. by Governor Massaron in Room FGH in the McGregor Memorial Conference Center. Secretary Miller called the roll. A quorum was present.

Committee Members Present: Governors Dunaskiss (via teleconference,) Kelly, Massaron, Pollard, and Trent; Linda Beale, Faculty Representative and Jane Fitzgibbon, Faculty Alternate Representative; Kristin Tarp, Student Representative and Jaipal Singh, Student Alternate Representative

Also Present: Governors O'Brien and Thompson, and President Wilson, Provost Winters; Vice Presidents Johnson, Lanier, Lessem, Lindsey, Nork, Staebler and Wright, and Secretary Miller

Governor Massaron chaired the meeting for Governor Dunaskiss, who could not be there in person.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES, FEBRUARY 6, 2015

The Minutes of the Academic Affairs Committee meeting of February 6, 2015 were approved by acclamation, as presented.

Professor Beale noted that on the agenda she is listed as Associate Professor; her correct title is Professor. Secretary Miller will make this correction.

COMPUTING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PRESENTATION

Provost Winters introduced Mr. Joe Sawasky, Chief Information Officer, for a presentation on the Computing and Information Technology Division (C&IT). C&IT provides all the IT services for the University. Its headquarters are in what Mr. Sawasky described as a "very intentionally non-descript facility" on Woodward Avenue just north of I-94. There are also Help Desks in the Student Center and a Help Desk for faculty in the Purdy Kresge Library, as well as a backup data center facility in the Computer Science Department on 5057 Woodward. The Committee members were given a 30-second virtual tour of the main facility, which houses nearly 1,000 servers, has

redundant power generation and cooling, high physical security and serves 24/7/365 as the network operations center for the campus.

Mr. Sawasky arrived at the University in 2007, and since that time the University has more than doubled the number of large-scale enterprise applications for the campus. There are also more cloud-based applications, systems that are not hosted at WSU but are subscribed to over the internet.

An important component of IT in the state of Michigan is Merit, a separate organization headquartered in Ann Arbor and founded by Wayne State, the University of Michigan, and Michigan State University. It helped create standards for the internet in the early days when scientists were trying to connect their computers together, and today there is an extensive high performance research and education network across the state. Merit received two federal stimulus awards totaling $110 million to build a fiber optics network to underserved and un-served parts of Michigan, allowing universities to collaborate and other organizations such as K-12, hospitals and governmental to connect. Mr. Sawasky is currently Chair of the Merit board, and noted that it is an organization of which WSU, as co-founder, should be proud.

There has been progress in technology on the Teaching, Learning, and Student Success area. Mr. Sawasky highlighted four items that are part of the Provost's Student Success technology initiative:

• Degree Works will soon be available, allowing students to manage their degree pathways, monitor their progress toward degree completion, and perform "what if" scenarios should they change their major.
• Wayne State Advising Management System (WAMS) allows students to schedule more easily with their advisors.
• Electronic Change of Major allows students to make their change online rather than walking across campus with paper forms, addressing a request made by the Student Senate a couple years ago.
• Advanced Analytics, where the vast amount of data stored by WSU can be used to inform advisors and students when early interventions and proactive responses are needed to help the student.

Working with University Libraries, C&IT implemented Echo 360 which provides classroom lecture and video streaming for students. It recently passed the one million lecture view mark, and the students find this a valuable service.

The Division last year created an endowed scholarship with the help of Advancement, through generous employee giving, and one-time revenue received from the sale of an innovation to another university. Steven Carpenter was the first recipient of the scholarship, which will be awarded to a student every year.

There have been several successful developments on the research front. WSU competed successfully for a National Science Foundation grant to put in place a high performing research network, allowing researchers from Physics, Engineering, and the School of Medicine, among others, to connect and move large data sets both across campus and to other campuses. Working with the Office of the Vice President for Research, C&IT helped coordinate a large data conference recently held on campus, which was a resounding success. C&IT also is working with TechTown on a technology commercialization for an innovation called Academica, which will replace Pipeline, the enterprise portal on campus. Lastly, Silicon Mechanics Corporation provided C&IT a new high performance research cluster that uses graphical processors instead of traditional CPUs. Those scientists on campus using the processors are seeing an improvement of 90-times higher over their previous computing capabilities, thus accelerating discovery for researchers.

On the community front, Academica, a C&IT innovation, is a new enterprise social portal with modern networking features found on Twitter and Facebook, but with added security since the user ID is guaranteed by Wayne State. C&IT's long-term view is to allow other organizations to use Academica and connect and collaborate using 21st century tools.

Mr. Sawasky informed the Board and the Committee that WSU has a national reputation in the area of advanced software development, listing several software programs recently developed by C&IT. Most recently, Academica was featured in the global publication, *Campus Technology* magazine, and C&IT has received a good deal of positive feedback on that innovation. The upcoming year will be one of change for WSU, centered on digital transformations. Microsoft 365, a cloud-based e-mail and document collaboration system, will be rolled out soon, and a new AT&T cloud-based digital phone system will allow many more new capabilities and integration with mobile devices. After it is fully stabilized in year 3, the campus will see lower operational costs. And this year, Academica, the new social networking platform, will be fully rolled out replacing Pipeline.

Mr. Sawasky declared the biggest challenge C&IT faces is the continued reduction in budgets that have occurred nearly every year since he arrived eight years ago. Information Technology is a capitally intensive business; the Division has excellent employees, but only so much can be done with sweat equity. In comparison to its peers, Wayne State ranks fairly low in IT investment, but high in how many in the WSU community are served by each central IT worker. The C&IT staff members have the heaviest workload among its peer universities, and although they are proud of their efficiency, Mr. Sawasky said there are limits. In another comparison to its peers, Wayne State is the most centralized IT organization; it does, however, work very closely with other members of the University community.

Another challenge of more serious concern is wireless networking. WSU's investments are not keeping pace with the explosive demand for wireless devices. Over the last four

years there has been a tenfold increase in the number of devices that are connected to the wireless network, and the bandwidth consumption of those devices is about double of that of the old devices. Mr. Sawasky said that C&IT is struggling to keep up with providing sufficient WiFi services for the campus.

The last challenge, one not unique to WSU, is cyber security. Everyday C&IT is turning away attacks on the campus, an occurrence true for every organization, but especially for higher education as recently noted in the *New York Times*. C&IT has a small but very capable IT security team, headed by Kevin Hayes, WSU's chief information security officer. Last November Mr. Hayes took part in Governor Snyder's cyber civilian security corps summit at Cobo Hall, and he achieved scores there that no one has yet matched.

With the conclusion of Mr. Sawasky's presentation, Professor Beale asked to what extent C&IT planning groups consult with non-IT "nerds" among the faculty, and where Echo 360 operates right now.

Mr. Sawasky replied that C&IT has an active system of shared governance on campus, including an information steering committee made up of core cabinet members that review major initiative requests, a shared governance committee called the Information Systems Management Committee that looks at all business systems and supports operational systems initiatives, an academic technology advisory group that includes at least one faculty member and a technologist from each of the schools and colleges, and just recently a research advisory group to help researchers in the area of cyber infrastructure. With Echo 360, a faculty committee composed of Academic Senate members provided input early on in the decision, which certainly contributed to its success. Echo 360 has had over a million student views and is implemented in nearly every one of the general purpose classrooms and some of the school and college classrooms such as Nursing and Engineering. Schools and colleges are encouraged to lower their operational costs by moving to Echo 360, and C&IT is subsidizing most of the moving cost for them because in the end it will lower the cost for the University. Concur, on the other hand, is a cloud-based application. It can be configured but not modified, so there are limitations to how the features can be managed. C&IT has received feedback and suggestions for change and will work with the campus community to see what can be done long-term.

Professor Beale followed up, stating that most of the advisory groups mentioned are made up of "nerd" types, and asked if there was contact with average faculty groups. It is good to reach out to researchers, but she is sure there are common uses of technology where non-IT types of faculty could also benefit. Mr. Sawasky agreed that there is perhaps a flaw in the shared governance on the administrative systems side. He will take the comments to the Information Technology Steering Committee, where he hopes there will be more faculty participation.

President Wilson felt it was important to get the students' viewpoint, and asked the student representatives if they feel that WiFi accessibility on campus is meeting their needs. Ms. Tarp responded that demand is really high. It works on certain parts on campus, but oftentimes it is very spotty. Mr. Sawasky said that C&IT conducts regular customer surveys and participates in a national benchmark study called TechWall. Every one of the IT services on campus is in an acceptable range for students, except for WiFi and cellular. The cellular question is driven by underinvestment by telecommunication companies in the Detroit area because it has not been lucrative for them, but that situation is starting to change. With WiFi, it is a matter of capital investment by WSU. C&IT has had budget reductions for eight straight years, and during that time there has been a ten-fold increase in WiFi demand. An investment of about $3 million by the University would double the footprint of the capacity of the WiFi system on campus.

Governor Trent asked why the University is switching from Pipeline to Academica. Mr. Sawasky replied that the main reason is budget reduction. Last year C&IT shed $100,000 on maintenance for Pipeline; this year they are running from quarter to quarter on maintenance until full conversion to Academica. Academica will replace the functionality of Pipeline, but at the same time will introduce a whole new set of features in social networking, so that people can use it to create organically collaborative groups which they could not do within Pipeline. Mr. Sawasky stated he has been impressed with the organic creation of research collaborators and student group collaboration within Academica, all hands-free from any support needed in IT. The venture started with budget, but an innovation has been put into place that no other university has done, and that is to put social networking inside the main application of the University.

Professor Beale asked whether Academica will eventually tie into STARS, to deliver information to students about their performance or that they are not meeting requirements to graduate on time. Mr. Sawasky said that is definitely one of their goals. In the list of the Provost's Student Success Initiatives, a specific item is early alerting of students within their Pipeline activity screen. Provost Winters added that there will be a presentation during the Student Affairs Committee on Advising which will address the issue in more detail.

CHANGE IN NAME OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AFRICANA STUDIES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AND CHANGE IN NAME OF THE (MAJOR) B.A. IN AFRICANA STUDIES TO THE B.A. (MAJOR) IN AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AND CHANGE IN NAME OF THE MINOR IN AFRICANA STUDIES TO THE MINOR IN AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Provost Winters requested approval for the change of name from Africana Studies to African American Studies for the Department, Bachelor of Arts degree program, and the minor program. Normally, a change in name for a minor program would not come to the Board for approval, but it was added to keep everything consistent. She explained that

the discipline has evolved over the last few decades, and the demographic of the students has also changed.

Governor Pollard asked for further explanation of the name change. Professor Melba Boyd, Chair of the Department, said that the change has been discussed for some time, based on the determination that the name would be more effective in reaching and attracting students. Most students who major in and take the classes identify themselves as African Americans, and most of the courses have African American in their titles. The name change does not eliminate the reach of the discipline in terms of the diaspora. The international reach of the department will remain the same with courses on the Caribbean and Africa, but the majority of courses are focused on the African American experience, and the name change seemed a logical move.

Governor Trent asked about enrollment trends in the department. Professor Boyd replied that the major is fairly stable, with 80 active majors on record. However, students do not matriculate at the desired rate, possibly because they represent an academically challenged demographic. A number of students take the courses for their General Education requirements. Professor Boyd added there is a drop in the number of students in the classroom, probably correlating with the drop in the admission of African American students to the University.

> **ACTION** — Upon motion by Governor Trent and seconded by Governor Kelly, the Academic Affairs Committee recommended that the Board of Governors approve the proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to change the department name, major, and minor from Africana Studies to the Department of African American Studies, the Bachelor of Arts in African American Studies, and the minor in African American Studies, respectively. The motion carried.

COURSE MATERIALS FEES ANNUAL REPORT

Provost Winters presented the annual informational report on course materials fees. Departments that find there are specific costs for instruction, special classrooms or materials, are allowed to levy additional course materials fees, and the report represents changes in the fees for the current year. She pointed out there are many fewer requests than last year, and many fewer courses where the fees went above $100 than there were last year. Every one of the fees is reviewed thoroughly on both the department and college level, and Associate Provost Joe Rankin reviews each request until he is confident there is good reason for the increase.

Professor Beale noted the $125 fee in Geology. She did not question its necessity, but wondered whether the department prepared the students and whether the students could absorb the increased fee. Professor David Njus, chair of the Geology Department, replied that the fee is basically a charge for the field trips, which are a necessary part of most geology courses and some are three or four days in length.
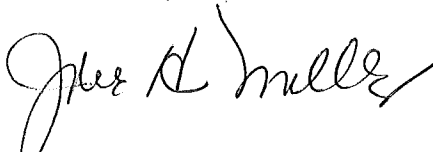
Currently, students pay for their own gas, food, and other expenses. The course materials fee would now pay up front for these expenses.

In response to Governor O'Brien's question about the department budget covering the costs, Professor Njus said that the department has a general fund budget of $19,000 outside of personnel and cannot absorb the costs of the field trips. He added that the department has grown to about 70 majors from only five or ten a few years ago. In addition, students in the environmental science program, which has about 100 majors, also take geology courses. The program is growing, but the budget has not increased. Governor Massaron thanked the Provost and Professor Njus for their reports.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie H.Miller
Secretary to the Board of Governors