



Academic Affairs Committee

June 19, 2020

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Governor Gaffney. The meeting was held in virtual format and livestreamed at wayne.edu. Secretary Miller called the roll. A quorum was present.

Committee Members Present: Governors Busuito, Gaffney, Kelly, Kumar, and Stancato; Brad Roth, Faculty Representative, renèe hoogland, Faculty Alternate Representative; Mannat Bedi, Student Representative and Kamali Clora, Student Alternate Representative

Also Present: Governors Barnhill, O'Brien, and Thompson; President Wilson; Provost Whitfield; Vice Presidents Burns, Cooke, Lanier, Lindsey, Lessem, Schweitzer, Staebler, and Wright; and Secretary Miller

APPROVAL OF MINUTES, May 1, 2020

ACTION: Upon motion made by Governor Kumar, and supported by Governor Busuito, the minutes of the May 1, 2020 meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee were approved as submitted. The motion carried.

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW PROGRAMS

Governor Gaffney asked Provost Whitfield to first present the two recommendations for establishments of certificates for consideration and action by the committee. The committee will then move to the final item on the agenda.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ONLINE GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN HEALTH CARE ETHICS

Provost Whitfield advised that this online certificate program is being offered by the Department of Philosophy in the College of Liberal Arts. The certificate is focused on providing opportunities for graduates at the masters level, and will be online to attract both students from the university's traditional geographic area, and those from outside that area as well. Governor Gaffney asked about the number of required courses for this certificate. Provost Whitfield advised that four of the six courses are required. With no further questions on this recommendation, Provost Whitfield moved on to the next recommendation.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT

The second certificate recommended for adoption comes from the Department of Political Science in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. It is also offered online, and is focused on preparing students to work in private and nonprofit entities on issues changing and impacting social justice. Governor Thompson noted that both certificate programs are self-funded and asked whether that would deter people from enrolling? She asked for clarification on the actual costs of each program. Provost Whitfield advised that the costs for the programs vary, but the costs will be the traditional tuition charged at the graduate level, and be based on the number of courses required for the program. He advised that master's education is not typically subsidized and corporate support has weakened, but these programs still provide excellent opportunities for advancement. The Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has been developing opportunities for philanthropy that supports master's degrees. PhD's are subsidized to some degree through assistantships, and undergraduates from financial aid. If master's degrees are not offered in areas where people really think they can get a job and they can make advancement, they won't take on that financial responsibility.

Governor Stancato believes that if this certificate is marketed as separate from a master's degree, organizations will fund it. Provost Whitfield advised that these certificates are additional credentials adding specialization and the value is in an area where expertise is needed, without costing as much as a master's degree and that is very attractive and very useful for students. Provost Whitfield noted that proper advertising will be needed to distinguish master's degrees and certificates to make sure people understand the difference. Governor O'Brien asked about seeking Title IV funding so students don't have to self-fund. Provost Whitfield noted that Title IV does not cover master's degrees and mentioned the AGRADE program, where an undergraduate and graduate degree overlap. This program is an opportunity for students, even as early as their junior year, to begin to take some graduate level courses. This provides a shorter timeline for completion and some classes might count for both that undergraduate degree and be transferrable for credit into a master's degree. So, in this instance, the undergraduate course is covered by Title IV funding and in some cases counts for credit for a graduate degree.

Governor O'Brien asked if there was Title IV funding for certificates, as the proposal indicates the program is not seeking Title IV federal funding for aid eligibility. Provost Whitfield indicated that Title IV does not provide funding for certificates. Governor Thompson asked for clarification about Knowledge on Demand. Provost Whitfield noted that it is a platform, due to the change to remote learning, and represents a collection of certificates and masters programs online that were pulled together so they could be easily located. It also offers instructors best practices from the Office for Teaching and Learning to help instructors move to an online format. It is also one place where students can find all of that information clearly in order to navigate and find the kind of opportunities that they might be interested in.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Professor Roth and seconded by Governor Busuito, the Academic Affairs Committee recommended that the Board of Governors establish the following two new certificate programs:

- A new Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management, to be offered by Graduate Program in Public Administration (MPA) in the Department of Political Science in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, effective Fall 2020.
- A new Graduate Certificate in Health Care Ethics, to be offered by the Department of Philosophy in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, effective Fall 2020.

The motion carried.

REQUEST TO EXTEND SUSPENSION OF WSUCA 2.34.09.020

Provost Whitfield noted that the ACT and SAT have advised institutions that they are not sure whether they will be able to offer the testing in Fall 2020 and suggested that schools consider extending test optional requirements. This impacts the University's recruiting for Fall of 2021. The administration is recommending extending suspension of this admissions requirement for the Fall 2020 and 2021 admissions cycles. Student Success, Enrollment Management and the Academic Senate have been reviewing our data to analyze the success rate of students relative to SAT scores to try to get a better understanding of their predictability. With that analysis, in the future the university may want to keep some sort of alternate testing or modify how the ACT and SAT test scores are used. Governor Gaffney asked when that internal review will be completed? Provost Whitfield hopes by the end of the summer there might be enough information from the committee. They will be going over student success data from years past and trying to get a good picture of just how successful students are relative to what ACT and SAT may be in general and for other programs, like the APEX program, where there is modified admissions. Governor Gaffney noted that it will help guide an eventual decision because there's still some concern on the Board about efficacy of test requirements for admissions. Governor Kelly asked how many additional staff will be needed in order to consider applications without the use of these test scores. Provost Whitfield advised that the University receives about 20,000 applications annually, and indicated that about 6-8 additional staff will be needed for these reviews. Some students have already taken the ACT/SAT. There may also be some alternative ways that ACT and SAT may be given, but the organizations can't guarantee it and that's why they're encouraging schools to actually consider this change. Governor Kelly asked if the staff would be temporary. Provost Whitfield noted that if this change becomes a permanent part of the admissions requirement process, the staff would be permanent, if not, they would be temporary. Governor Busuito noted he is in favor of this proposal, but asked if it would put the University in any danger from accrediting agencies. He then asked that no student be penalized for poor test results and asked if that could be ensured. Provost Whitfield advised that there is no accrediting issue, and that the University's standards for admissions are published. Students coming in with ACT/SAT scores will not be treated

any differently than people who are coming in under the test optional provision as the committee will try to find an equivalency.

Professor Roth noted that Senior Associate Provost Monica Brockmeyer is working on how to structure the process going forward. The committee is working on a revision of the information that's requested of students to gather information to work with in compensating for the potential absence of the test scores, and then they will be evaluating that information. That short term project is figuring out how this particular cycle is going to go, and then look ahead. The University does not want to deter anyone from taking the test because although the test is optional, the reporting of it isn't optional once it has been taken. It is helpful with respect to other placement issues, such as the Honors College, and the process can be expedited if people did well.

Ms. Bedi asked how the absence of the ACT/SAT scores affects scholarships that incoming students receive. Provost Whitfield noted that scholarships are for students who are admitted and while a GPA is sometimes required, there is not often an ACT/SAT requirement. Other factors used are cognitive, non-cognitive and non-test-based and those will stay in place. A holistic approach is used in specialized areas. Governor Gaffney then asked that a list of the scholarships that use the ACT and SAT be sent to the board.

Governor O'Brien noted that she supports the idea and asked about the process. Provost Whitfield noted that the policy, if approved, will extend through the Fall 2021 class. The committee will work on data collection and revisit the issue in December, when they will be able to review data from the past and through the summer and the fall. Governor O'Brien noted that the test optional policy should be for everyone and believes that the data will support a permanent adoption of this policy. She asked for an assurance that a bad score would not be used against any student.

Regarding fairness with respect to students who have taken the test versus students who haven't, Professor Roth noted that he did not want to see people deterred from taking the exam based on the concern that a bad score will end up being used against them. He wants to incentivize people to take their best shot at the exam with the knowledge that it'll be thrown out if it doesn't help them.

Provost Whitfield noted that test scores are reported and once submitted become a part of a student's admissions file and record and in terms of accreditation, that is a challenge. If there is a process where that is not taken into account, then it would not be a part of that student's admissions process. He suggested a set of processes that should be set up to make it as fair as possible. The committee will need to decide how to review those admissions to give the board as much detail for a full report with all of the information and the data. The plan is to create more of a holistic admissions process similar to what is used with the graduate programs, as the GRE scores or the LSAT scores are not the single indicator. Governor Gaffney summed up the recommendation as an extension of the suspension of the standardized test score requirements for Fall 2021 admission with the understanding that those test scores, if taken, would not be used for admissions

evaluations. President Wilson commented that if students have a very high score, the university will want to use that score to help them get admitted.

In reviewing the discussion, Governor Kelly advised that it was her understanding that some students could not take the test because of the pandemic and the University wanted not to disadvantage them from coming in with an application lacking the test score. The University starts at the point of considering the test score, if it's available, but if it's not available, ensuring that the incoming student is not disadvantaged. The change under consideration is for this Fall enrollment with a possible extension of this policy in December when the Board has more information and will be in a better position to begin discussion of the underlying concept of whether the score is useful at all or whether to use the score, not because it's available, but because it's unfair. She believes that, for purposes of this motion, the committee is not talking about discarding any test scores that have been submitted. The discussion is to not disadvantage a student who can't give us the test score. Provost Whitfield agreed.

Governor O'Brien asked about a scenario if a student applying for Fall 2021 is able to take the SAT and does badly - will be used against them in terms of admissions? If the answer is yes, then she does not support the recommendation. She received an email from a graduate student who asked that the Board also consider the efficacy of the GRE exam, as the individual writing believes it follows a similar path as the SAT/ACT requirement, and has an adverse impact on minorities. She believes other information can be considered, that the GRE is a difficult test to prepare for, and that the university should consider making the GRE optional. Governor Gaffney asked Professor Roth or Provost Whitfield whether they were going through the same analysis of the GRE or is the analysis currently just the ACT and SAT.

Professor Roth noted that the GRE was not being considered at the moment. Governor Gaffney noted if the analysis on the ACT and SAT determined that we ought to be making a change then at that time we could consider the same thing for the GRE as some of our schools relied more on it than others. Provost Whitfield noted that there are individual programs that require the GRE, based upon their own judgement about what they see as success with students. That could be a completely separate question to address because the data does not map exactly the same in terms of the predictability of the ACT and the predictability of the GRE, particularly varying by program. It would be a very different activity to take on and focusing just on the issue in front of the committee, it is the suspension of the requirement for this specific period of time. The ACT and SAT are easier to review because the university uses it uniformly across university and not by program.

Governor Gaffney asked for assurance that during the suspension and through Fall 2021 if a test is taken with a poor result, that additional admissions considerations would be triggered. Provost Whitfield agreed and advised that that is done in many cases already. Other information is collected so that the admission review can be as fair as possible. The university wants to make sure that the students have enough preparation so that they can be successful. The University wants to avoid bringing in a student who might not be ready for a four year university and spend money and not be able to be successful. One

of the University's investments in student success is making sure students have all the things that they need to be successful. He added that it is a very difficult balance, but that is what the university tries to do and that is why there are other routes in terms of admissions considerations.

Governor Kelly noted there is a responsibility as a board member to avoid presenting a personal promise of a college education when there's every reason to believe that a student is not going to be able to succeed and their money is going to be effectively lost. Some test scores come through so low that it is almost certain that the person could not succeed and to ignore those test scores will do a disservice not only to the university, but to the students. Governor O'Brien responded that test optional should then mean the test doesn't matter because the process is supported by other criteria, and the test should not be used to make a definitive decision for admissions. Governor Kelly noted that is not a definitive decision, but it certainly can be part of the decision making.

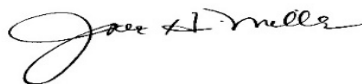
Provost Whitfield noted that this discussion is why many schools are thinking about holistic admission that take multiple factors into account. So, if a student is a bad test taker, but has a great GPA, and they have been active, they have shown other factors which gets them admitted versus a student who might only be a bad test taker and there's no other information on them to help make that decision. Governor O'Brien asked that Professor Roth and his committee come up with a process sooner than later regarding how this is going to be done.

ACTION: Upon motion made by Governor Kelly, and seconded by Professor Roth, the Academic Affairs Committee recommended that the Board of Governors extend the suspension of 2.34.09.020, the standardized test score requirement for admission to the University, approved on May 1, 2020, through the Fall 2021 admission cycle. The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie Hearshen Miller
Secretary of the Board