



## **Student Affairs Committee**

**April 29, 2022**

### **Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 10:52 a.m. by Governor Kelly in the Student Center Ballroom. Secretary Miller called the roll. A quorum was present.

**Committee Members Present:** Governors Busuito, Gaffney, Kelly, Kumar, and Stancato; Naida Simon, Faculty Representative; Jane Fitzgibbon, Faculty Alternate Representative; and Veronika Gawrys, Student Alternate Representative

**Committee Members Absent:** Danishi Bedi, Student Representative

**Also Present:** Governors Barnhill, Land, and Thompson; President Wilson; Provost Kornbluh; Vice Presidents Burns, Ezzeddine, Lindsey, Johnston, Massaron, Schweitzer, Staebler, and Wright; and Secretary Miller

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES, JANUARY 28, 2022**

VP Miller advised she had received two corrections on page 4 of the minutes, from Naida Simon, and those corrections have been made and reflected in the minutes posted on-line for the committee. The corrections were in the first paragraph. On line 6, the word "of" was replaced with an "or", and on line 9, EAE was replaced with EAA.

**ACTION:** Upon motion made by Governor Kumar and supported by Governor Stancato, the minutes of the January 28, 2022, meeting of the Student Affairs Committee were approved with the above corrections noted. The motion carried.

### **PRESENTATION: UPDATE ON STUDENT SUCCESS AND ENROLLMENT**

Provost Kornbluh called on Vice President Ahmad Ezzeddine for the presentation. VP Ezzeddine began with an overview of student success and retention, graduation rates, and recruitment and enrollment measures for the coming fall. He noted that great strides and improvement in retention and graduation rates over the last few years have been made.

Student recruitment has shown declines across the country, but the University's numbers are trending positively by adjusting to the changing needs and expectations of students.

VP Ezzeddine then introduced two colleagues, Dr. Darryl Gardner, Senior Director for Academic Student Affairs, who will be leading many of the student success programming, and Erica Matthews Jackson, the Senior Director for Undergraduate Admissions, who will discuss recruitment and enrollment.

Dr. Gardner began with an update on the progress of the 6-year graduation rates, which have now reached almost at 60%, and the progress on all student groups, which is the goal of the next strategic plan. There was a 10% jump in African American graduation rates last year and a similar increase projected for Latinx in the fall. He added that with that increase, they expect Latinx graduation rates will reach 50%. He noted that as they reached the end of the Distinctly Wayne strategic plan, almost all student groups had reached the 50% graduation rate, except for black students, and advised that there was added commitment to improve those numbers through coordinated efforts around campus.

Retention has been relatively flat in recent years, however they did not meet the institutional objective of 85% for 2nd year retention. They have been able to strategically deploy the Higher Ed emergency relief funds through the CARES Act, distributing \$1 million of those dollars to students, leading to a 94% retention rate in 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> year retention rates for new FTIACs, and progress is expected on that 2<sup>nd</sup> year retention metric next year.

Dr. Gardner advised that the University has been using the National Student for Student Engagement survey (NSSE), administered by Indiana University. That instrument was designed more for traditional 4-year residential institutions, with about 1500 institutions across the nation using it. It has not been a good fit for Wayne State's unique student population. An instrument that was better suited to the WSU population was developed at Wayne State by leveraging faculty expertise, cycle metrics and survey and instrument design, in collaboration with every corner of the campus, including significant involvement from the Academic Senate. The NSSE was a very lengthy instrument, issued every three years, and less than 10% of students completed it. As part of their review process, they found that undergraduate students were receiving more than 100 surveys, creating a culture of survey fatigue. The new instrument, developed at WSU, called the SWEET survey, will consolidate many of those surveys, and provide rich reports and data to those groups that were able to bring their interest into this new initiative. The SWEET survey will be deployed annually, with a goal to increase student participation. Hearing from students on an annual basis will inform deployment of resources and services, creating a virtual cycle of continuous improvement.

Next, Dr. Gardner provided highlights of the Warrior 360 program. The focus of this program is to transition away from conditional admissions, and leverage the strengths of the APEX Scholars and the Warrior VIP programs into a single program model. This year will see the final cohort of the APEX Scholars program. A new pre-First Year Experience opportunity has been created for those students coming through the Warrior VIP program, with the intent to eventually blend these models, and support students from recruitment to graduation.

Another transition involves moving away from the traditional advising model to better leverage campus partners providing student support. The new configuration is the use of a success coach model with a team working with students to support non-academic and academic needs, and reliance on the student's major advisors to do the heavy lifting for advising. This will allow students to connect to their advisors in their academic programs from day 1, encouraging belonging and engagement and organizing students around their academic and career interests. Key components include academic success coaching, the pre-First-Year Experience, and reimagining, redesigning and redeploying student leaders and peer mentors in a new role. The FYS program is a key initiative that has contributed to student success over the past 10 years and will be infused into this program.

Finally, Dr. Gardner advised that the Office of Multicultural Student Engagement (OMSE) is undergoing a reorganization and they will begin a search for a Senior Director for OMSE, as well as a search for a director of the new Black Student Support Center which will open soon. All of the programming efforts coming out of that office will be formally connected to this new Warrior 360 model.

Next, Ms. Jackson presented an update on the application cycle and enrollment for undergraduate students, including 1<sup>st</sup> year students and transfer students. Over 15,600 applications were received this year, and applications were up 8% compared to the same time last year. Forty-eight percent of the applications received were test optional compared to 46% test optional received last year. Admits were up 8% with over 9,700 students admitted.

May 1 is decision day, the date by which students pay their enrollment deposit signaling their intention to enroll. Wayne State has rolling admissions. For other institutions, May 1 signals the last day that a student can confirm plans to attend. Wayne State's enrollment cycles through August 1<sup>st</sup>, providing students with additional time to apply and advise of intention to enroll. The orientation reservations are down 20% from the previous year. Students pay a \$50 enrollment deposit to reserve their orientation reservation, but that fee can be waived for students with an expected family contribution of \$5000 or below.

Undergraduate enrollment throughout the country fell by 3.6% in 2020, and 3.1% in 2021. The total undergraduate decline of 6.6% from fall 2019 to 2021 was a loss of just over 1 million students. College applications were increasing with applicants applying to more schools, creating competition for the same students. Michigan public 4-year institutions saw enrollment decline by 9.5%, or just over 17,000 students from 2020 to 2021, in addition to the 3.8% decrease from fall 2019. The estimated college enrollment for Michigan for the coming fall is 430,017 students.

Ms. Jackson advised that enrollment is impacted by these demographic changes, with fewer students that are high school age, based on the birth rates in Michigan. There are about 99,000 students graduating from high school every year and not all of those students choose to go to college. The University will need to focus on making sure that

more students are college-ready or know that college is an option and then bridge that cost barrier for students.

The drop in public 2-year institution enrollment had an impact on the University because a significant portion of transfer students come from community colleges. The University has a dedicated transfer student success center and dedicated pathways and partnerships with local community colleges where these transfer students come from.

Increasing enrollment every year begins with the prospects, i.e., the students that are eligible to come to college. In previous years, the names of every SAT and ACT test taker in the state could be purchased, but since COVID, there has been a 30,000-student decline in the prospect pool. Efforts to find more students included college search websites like NICHE and CAPPEX or College Express. Students go to either Google, to these college search platforms or to institutional websites to search for colleges, and the University is now on three of those platforms.

Ms. Jackson advised that student engagement strategies and the increase in strategic communications and campaigns have increased yield. Outreach and activities include visits to high schools every year, and participation in college fairs. The fall recruitment season begins in September and goes through the beginning of December. For more than 20 years, Wayne State hosted the only Detroit college fair for Detroit students. There are also fall and spring open house events. The Campus Visit program is one of the most important programs because students who come to campus are also more likely to enroll. Wayne State also has a high school advisory board with 25 high school counselors, mostly from southeastern Michigan, and feeder schools participating. The University has a counselor in Grand Rapid and Chicago for expanded outreach and recruitment through college search platforms and strategic communications campaigns.

Ms. Jackson discussed a number of initiatives designed to recruit new students. They have a campaign, designated for high school seniors going through the college application process, to inform them about important scholarship and FAFSA deadlines. The Heart of Detroit tuition pledge and the Wayne Access awards remove significant barriers for students in need, and cover up to the cost of tuition and fees. Wayne reaches out to current high school juniors, providing information about Wayne's access and affordability. School and colleges are writing to their admitted students, providing connections and contact information. Faculty, staff, and current students are encouraging students to come to Wayne State and sharing their Wayne State story. She shared one example from the Mike Ilitch School of Business' Board of Visitors, who write personal letters to their admitted students to let them know about their career paths and the value of their Wayne State education.

Wayne State has received awards for being a transfer-friendly institution. VP Ezzeddine advised that they have been successful at enhancing the partnerships with the local community colleges.

The majority of community college transfers come from six community colleges, and about 40% of transfer students come from other 4-year institutions. Applications are up and 63% of them are from community colleges while 36% are from 4-year institutions.

VP Ezzeddine then discussed some of the university's transfer initiatives. He noted that advisors from Wayne State go to the community colleges and meet with the advisors from the colleges, advising students. There are virtual and in-person weekly meetings with Wayne County, OCC, Schoolcraft, and Macomb. The university is connected with the Michigan Transfer Pathways initiative and has agreements stipulating that students from any community college who come in with an associate degree can transfer to Wayne State. This last year Wayne State had the largest number of community college transfers in the state.

Governor Kelly asked what the drop in enrollment was for 2021. VP Ezzeddine advised that there was a decline of 5%. Governor Kelly noted that it was her understanding that the Michigan public 4-year institution enrollment drop rate was 9.3 to 9.5 percent overall and VP Ezzeddine concurred. Governor Kelly then asked for clarification on the discount rate, and whether it had gone down from 50% to 40%. Ms. Jackson advised that in 2018 the discount rate was closer to 50%. After optimizing financial aid, the discount rate this year is about 40%. Governor Kelly asked for further clarification.

Ms. Jackson explained that the university had done a deep review of their merit scholarship program. The former award program used levels of Gold, Green, and Warrior scholarship awards. The amounts of those awards made the discount rate higher. Financial aid optimization examined what it would take for a student to attend Wayne State, but not discounting the tuition so much that money was given away. Savings from the changes in the merit awards provided institutional aid to students with the highest need based on their FAFSA. Now there are programs like the Wayne Access award that can provide full tuition and scholarships to students who have the most economic and financial need.

Provost Kornbluh advised that an outside consultant has been retained to help guide this change. Governor Kelly asked if the 40% reflects need-based plus merit. Provost Kornbluh advised that it is a combination of need and merit. VP Ezzeddine advised that this is part of the prioritizing between the awards used to attract students and those used to support student needs. The University needs to remain competitive while meeting the optimal provision of scholarships and financial aid and deploying resources accordingly.

Governor Kelly then asked for clarification of the aid distributed. Ms. Jackson advised that of the 2900 incoming students, about 41% received the Wayne Access award. Their full tuition and standard fees were covered based on their financial need and their FAFSA. Provost Kornbluh advised that the federal government's PELL awards cover the first part of their need and institutional aid comes on top of that coverage.

Catherine Kay, Director of Financial Aid, advised that awards like the Heart of Detroit or Wayne Access do not cover the full tuition and fees, they cover the gaps of what is not

covered by other awards. For the 2021 to 2022 period, those programs provided approximately \$4 million in such funding, about the same as the previous year.

Governor Kelly asked if there were statistics indicating how many students who begin their studies do not expect to complete in four years, or don't expect to complete in six years. Dr. Gardner advised that students are not surveyed in that regard. Most students finish in five or six years.

Governor Kelly asked if there were statistics in that regard. Dr. Gardner advised that the 4-year graduation rate is expected to be over 30% this year, and the 5-year graduation rate over 50% this year, on trend with last year. Provost Kornbluh advised that charts of historical changes in four, five and 6-year graduation rates would be provided. He advised that the changes in the general education requirements have made it more possible for students to graduate in 4 years.

Governor Kelly asked VP Lindsey whether the state legislature considers 4-year graduation rates when it appropriates money. VP Lindsey clarified that they consider 6 year graduation rates. Governor Kelly appreciated the information provided, and found it helpful.

Governor Thompson asked what the percentage of black students was in the population in 2011 when the graduation rate was 7.6%. Dr. Gardner indicated that he did not have that data on hand, but advised that there was a decline in black student enrollment over that period. He noted that in 2020, there was the largest number of black FTIACs in over a decade, which followed increased efforts on access. Governor Thompson asked about some of those efforts.

Ms. Jackson advised that in terms of recruitment, there was increased support for all students of color, particularly students in Detroit. She added that an update was made to the admissions application as well, which allowed students to identify as "I am more than one race", and with that change, there was a slight decrease in the number of students who identify as just African American. There was an increase in the number of students who identify as 'more than one race' with African American being one of those races.

She added that WSU entered into partnerships with groups that focus on college access for students, particularly Detroit students. In addition, there are K-12 initiatives, and pipeline programs through a number of colleges. One in the College of Engineering has after school programs at schools in Detroit. They are also trying to move beyond recruitment initiatives just at the time of college application, and adding programs that provide access to students earlier on in their schooling. In terms of recruitment, these and other programs help increase access and address affordability. She noted that the majority of the students not filing FAFSAs this year were the neediest students and students from underrepresented communities.

President Wilson advised that it was better to have actual data, and he was able to pull up historical data. In fall of 2011, there were 483 black full-time FTIACs. That number

decreased to 377 in 2013 and then further decreased in the fall of 2016 to 272. In the fall of 2020, the highest over the past decade, it was 492.

VP Ezzeddine advised that in addition to the Detroit public schools, they are also focusing on the outer rings of Detroit, as there has been a lot of population migration from the city to Southfield and Farmington Hills. VP Lindsey also advised that Admissions and Community Affairs are working closely together to expand some outreach efforts over and above the school to community partners, including spaces where not only students, but parents and influencers gather.

Governor Busuito advised that the unique composition of the student body is reflected in the University's social mobility rankings and believes that tells the story. Governor Gaffney asked how many employees were on each of the university teams working on these initiatives. Ms. Jackson advised there were 10 admissions counselors. VP Ezzeddine added that there are staffing needs in the Student Success area, and Provost Kornbluh advised that he would get that number to the Board.

### **ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK**

Provost Kornbluh advised the committee that extracurricular activities are very important to students and student life, and that he wanted to include an update on Alternative Spring Break on the agenda for this meeting. These activities are under the auspices of the Dean of Students, and he introduced David Strauss, the Dean of Students, for the presentation, and to introduce student participants present at today's meeting.

Dean Strauss advised that Alternative Spring Break Detroit began in 2004. Alternative Spring Break is a national program, where students travel to other cities for community based projects. Here at Wayne State, they saw no need to go to other cities, but rather to focus on learning and volunteering at home.

This project has also led to the establishment of the Volunteer Hub, a website as part of the Get Involved platform to connect students to volunteer opportunities, and to have volunteer organizations post their volunteer opportunities so that students can take advantage of them. He then introduced Brandon Shamoun, Assistant Director of Student Involvement, a Wayne State alum who now works in the Dean of Students Office, to introduce two student leaders.

Mr. Shamoun serves as the advisor for the program, and is an alumnus of the ASBD program, when he participated in 2012. He believes the program is more than just a volunteer experience in the city it is an immersive experience for students volunteering, learning, eating and playing within the city during spring break. He advised that in recent years, students stay overnight on campus or within the city 6 days, 5 nights. He then introduced two student leaders to share their experience with the committee. They were Niharika Dantuluri a 3-year Physical Therapy doctoral student from Troy, Michigan, and Sara Ellias, who is a senior Biomed physics major and Physics minor from White Lake, Michigan.

Niharika Dantuluri

I'm a 3<sup>rd</sup> year doctoral student with the PT program. I went to undergraduate here and I'm continuing my graduate. I have a B.S. in Psychology in Health Sciences from here and then moved into Physical Therapy. So, this year we had 50 student participants with 21 different volunteer sites and over 3000 service hours that we clocked over that week-long program. We worked with issues of education, diversity and inclusion, student security and housing stability, and arts and culture, and we recommended that all of our student team leads take one day apiece to work on some of these areas, and so these are the sites that we worked with this year. I won't list them all out, but a few of like the keynotes, we worked with kids at the Children's Center, with artists, with Men's Artist Guild, we worked outdoors in urban gardens, with Open Avenue Farms, and also with soup kitchens, with Focus Hope and also, we worked with student athletes at the Downtown Boxing Gym, just to name a few of the things that we did this year. So, with the incredible funding that we had, we were able to go virtual during the pandemic and then came back stronger than ever this year. So, as I stated, personally talking about ASBD, I've been here over 5 years, I'm probably one of the longest running and it's been a joke that I'm going to take other credits, come back in a few years. I've always loved to volunteer but ASBD holds a special place in my heart. I joined ASBD because a friend encouraged me to because I wanted to, I wanted to do something different during my spring break and I completely fell in love with it. I fell in love with Detroit, being on the ground and getting to meet all those people was completely different from anything I'd ever experienced before. One reason I kept coming back is that it kept showing me something new every year. I'd learn about a different non-profit or a different people or I would learn about new restaurants or new programs and events that were happening in Detroit, and then after spring break I would drive my friends there, so we kept growing and growing year after year. And the other reason is definitely the people. My friends in undergraduate were Healthcare Science students and my friends now are all Physical Therapy students. So ASBD completely takes me out of that. It helps me learn about dance majors and business majors, political science and art majors, so I really get to experience the world in a completely different way than I get to do in my day-to-day life, and I experience the city from a completely different perspective, because as you can imagine a medical student might have a lot different to say about Detroit than an art student would. And as a PT student, many of my professors have said that my biggest ability is being able to talk to my patients and getting them to understand where I'm coming from and me understanding where they are coming from, and I definitely learned that during my experience at ASBD. I learned about all different walks of life. I've worked with the elderly and disabled, I've worked with kids, I've worked with athletes over my 6 years, and as a healthcare student, it's so easy to get lost in the system, but working with those people and hearing their perspective about healthcare and about Detroit has really helped me stay focused. Again and again, ASBD brings me back to where I want to be, which is at the grassroots of Detroit and it takes me, again and again, and it brings me back to why am I, really, really here. It's actually one of the biggest reasons I decided to stay at Wayne State for my doctorate, because getting to see Detroit in that perspective really made me fall in love with not just the city but with the university, what we could accomplish with just a week and what we can accomplish within a year, and so with that I'm going to turn it over to Sarah, who is my fellow student coordinator who I met 4 years ago at ASBD and who has been my friend ever since.

Sara Ellias:

I'm a senior Biomed physics major, Physics minor and I've participated in ASBD all 4 years at Wayne State. This year we would like to note that Wayne State partnered with SHARE

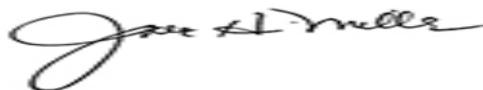
Detroit, they helped us pick some of the non-profits that we collaborate with, so it was a new opportunity to collaborate with a local non-profit to find partners that we'd be working with, and they helped us find some new non-profits that we hadn't worked with, so it was really wonderful to be able to collaborate with them. And as mentioned previously, Volunteer Hub also grew from ASBD, so these really allow students to engage year-round in volunteer opportunities. I like to think of ASBD as catalyst to new friends and opportunities and it really is an in to a series of beginnings, so as far as the year round opportunities go, personally after I participated in ASBD, I was inspired to join Circle K, which to me was a part of, that's like ASBD all year round so to speak. We volunteer and that's something I've been engaged in ever since participating in ASBD my first year and it's been really wonderful to see even since this past ASBD, students have joined Circle K and are running for positions. And that just goes to show the wonderful connections you make. A lot of students more so than ever since the pandemic have expressed feelings of disconnect within the city and then on a friendship note, so it's really wonderful seeing the students coming in knowing just a few people at the university and they leave with about 30 new friends. So just some quotes, we had some students share that ASBD is the most impactful and profound experience that they've had at Wayne State. One person from this past year's program said, "I feel more in tune with Wayne State and I'm hoping to continue volunteering at various organizations", and another student says, 'it really attracts a vibrant mix of people which made it more meaningful.' So, giving 1<sup>st</sup> year students this opportunity, as well, is very wonderful because it can lead to their involvement throughout the next 3 years and personally, I can attest to that. Because I can remember my first year at ASBD. I applied because I wanted more friends, and I was really scared. I was terrified to do the program as I didn't know anybody, and then I left with a new perspective of the city, of the University, and it was very valuable in terms of self-discovery. It really gives a realistic perspective, especially as a student aiming to pursue a career in healthcare, I have first-hand experience seeing the impact of and the discrepancies in the social determinants of health, and I can definitely attest the ASBD is helpful for any career aspiration and any-year student or major or career goals.

Governor Kelly thanked the presenters for sharing their perspectives with the committee.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie H. Miller  
Secretary to the Board of Governors