



Personnel Committee

September 29, 2023

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 11:23 a.m. by Governor Gaffney in the McGregor Memorial Conference Center, Room BC. Secretary Miller called the roll. A quorum was present.

Committee Members Present: Governors Gaffney, Kelly, Land, Stancato, Faculty Representative Noreen Rossi and Pramod Khosla, Faculty Alternate Representative; Hayden Johnson, sitting in Student Representative Hassan Ezzeddine

Committee Members Absent: Governors Barnhill and Amal Elsaleh, Student Alternate Representative

Also Present: Governors Atkinson and Busuito, President Espy; Provost Kornbluh; Vice Presidents Chamblee, Clabo, Ezzeddine, Lindsey, Massaron, Poterala, Ripple, Schweitzer, Stemmler, and Wright, Associate VP Hafner, Secretary Miller

APPROVAL OF MINUTES, APRIL 28, 2023

ACTION: Upon motion made by Governor Land and supported by Governor Stancato, the minutes of the April 28, 2023 meeting of the Personnel Committee were approved as submitted. The motion carried.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE UPDATE

Faculty Affairs

Provost Kornbluh introduced Boris Baltes, Senior Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs to present on the ongoing efforts to enhance faculty life on campus. The focus of the presentation is the new faculty teaching track, established through collaborative negotiations with the AAUP-AFT union. The teaching track includes positions such as Assistant, Associate, and Full Professors of teaching, providing job security and opportunities for promotion with salary raises. Teaching faculty receive a minimum 4-year contract after 6 years of service, highlighting the University's commitment to recognizing and valuing teaching roles. The focus of Mr. Baltes' report is on the implementation of these changes.

Associate Provost Baltes reported that following the establishment of the new faculty teaching track, a promotion process and criteria were developed through collaboration between the administration and the AAUP, American Association of University Professors. A committee, referred to as the 2N committee, was formed for this purpose. The promotion process for teaching faculty mirrors that of tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty, involving departmental, college-level, and university Promotion and Tenure evaluations. The promotions, initiated in May, are progressing through the university Promotion and Tenure stage, with the first promotions anticipated in August. This unique approach underscores the emphasis on teaching and aims to elevate the status of teaching faculty within the university. Governor Gaffney asked whether this change is expected to help with retention. Mr. Baltes advised that the hope is that it will, as well as helping with recruitment.

Provost Kornbluh expressed pride in the collaborative process with the union to establish the new faculty teaching track, noting its success. Acknowledging that it will require considerable effort from faculty in the departments, the university is set to evaluate a record number of faculty for promotion this year. The promotion process itself involves departmental, college-level, and university-level assessments.

Mr. Baltes then discussed two key areas. The first pertains to recent hiring activities that began on August 17th, with new hires expected to start in the coming months. The demographic breakdown of these tenure track hires reveals that 54% are female, and 38% come from underrepresented groups. The second area highlighted last year's tenure track faculty hiring, indicating a significant increase compared to previous years, with 59% being women faculty and 36% from underrepresented groups.

Provost Kornbluh discussed two recent national studies on faculty composition at research universities. In the first study, focusing on graduate faculty, Wayne State ranked third in the country for having the most diverse graduate faculty. In a more recent study on different ethnicities, Wayne State is in the top 5 of research universities for the percentage of faculty self-identifying as Black, with only the University of Houston, University of Memphis, and CUNY having higher percentages. Acknowledging the ongoing journey to achieve a diverse faculty, the university is recognized as a leading institution among research universities in this regard. Following the completion of negotiations with the unions for promoting teaching faculty, a broader effort was undertaken to examine factors for tenure track faculty, leading to the creation of a 3N committee involving the administration, Academic Senate, and the union, with Associate Provost Baltes leading the initiative.

Next, Mr. Baltes discussed the review of university promotion factors for tenure track and non-tenure track faculty, aiming to modernize them. Three key areas emerged: diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) activities, public community scholarship and engagement, and interdisciplinary collaborative team-based research. The recommendation is to incorporate these factors without making them mandatory, recognizing faculty engagement in these areas. The goal is to acknowledge collaborative and team-based research, DEI efforts, and public community scholarship on par with traditional research.

Provost Kornbluh advised that the proposed promotion factors will undergo approval and take effect the following year. He noted that this initiative is part of an ongoing effort involving collaboration between the Senate, the union, and the administration to enhance faculty life on campus. There is a plan to examine promotion guidelines for non-tenure track faculty, with a focus on addressing variations in rules for clinical faculty across the university. The goal is to establish a culture that supports regular and equitable promotion to full professor for clinical and research faculty. He emphasized the need to recognize achievements appropriately, regardless of faculty titles, and mentioned some ongoing efforts, including broader grant-funded faculty equity initiatives led by Associate Provost Baltes.

Governor Gaffney commented that the word “community” and its application to activities such as research and service is important and has significance. His understanding here is that the goal is to ensure that the professors' potential contributions in the community, whether through research, service, or other engagements, are duly recognized, and that these factors place greater emphasis on acknowledging and valuing faculty members' involvement and impact in the broader community.

Mr. Baltes advised that over the past decade, there has been a heightened focus on equity initiatives for faculty, particularly in STEM fields. Wayne State has actively participated in such initiatives, including the Gender Equity Advances Retention (GEARS) grant, which is winding down, and a new partnership grant with MSU and OSU called SEIDS (Intersexual Equity In Departments). The GEARS grant concentrated on supporting work-life balance, equitable workloads, and healthy work environments. Faculty Advocacy Networks (FANs) were established to provide peer support, and tenure track candidates work with advisors during the interview process. The SEIDS grant focuses on developing leadership toolkits for Chairs, Deans, and Directors to promote diversity and inclusivity in leadership.

Provost Kornbluh concluded with an update on academic unions. He advised that the contract with the AAUP extends through June 30, 2024, and recently, contracts were signed with the Graduate Student union and the union of part-time faculty over the summer. In response to a question from Governor Gaffney Mr. Baltes advised that the Graduate contract was completed in 2022 and runs through 2025. Provost Kornbluh advised that the part-time contract was agreed on this summer.

Professor Rossi then highlighted the importance of ensuring the successful implementation and understanding of the new promotion factors. She noted that it is crucial for the promotion and tenure committees in various units, such as departments or schools, to be fully informed and educated on the new factors. She stressed the need for a concerted effort to educate committee members to achieve the intended equity in the promotion process. Mr. Baltes concurred.

Governor Gaffney asked about the prevalence of teaching track faculty arrangements in other schools, questioning whether Wayne State is considered a national leader in this regard. Provost Kornbluh advised that the arrangement of teaching track faculty, with substantial job security but non-tenure track, has become more common. Some schools

have tenure track for teaching faculty, but the non-tenure track model with significant job security, as implemented at Wayne State, is gaining popularity. This shift addresses budget challenges and provides stability for teaching faculty. He noted that the increasing popularity is significant, especially for the promotion process, as external letters from individuals at other universities are often requested. Governor Busuito asked for clarification on whether there were plans to broaden the evaluation criteria for promotions to encompass a more holistic approach, as different schools weigh and measure traditional publications and grants differently.

Provost Kornbluh explained that different tracks of faculty exist, and, as an example, clinical faculty have distinct expectations from tenure track faculty. The Medical School already has written guidelines for promoting clinical faculty, which is not currently the case for other schools. The plan is for each school to develop its own guidelines for promoting clinical faculty. Governor Busuito believes those efforts will help the University become more community focused.

Governor Gaffney expressed satisfaction that the new program appears to have effectively eliminated or significantly addressed previous concerns by these professors regarding job guarantees, ensuring that professors no longer experience the stress of not knowing whether they have a job during the summer months. Provost Kornbluh clarified that the new term appointments still involve a notification period, but the lead time has been extended. Additionally, the decision is now based on quality rather than solely on budget considerations, providing a more substantial and fair evaluation process.

Governor Gaffney asked for clarification on what happens after a faculty member completes six years of service. Mr. Baltes advised that after six years of service, if faculty members are renewed, they are eligible for a minimum four-year contract. There is flexibility for units to offer contracts beyond four years if desired. Before the renewal of the four-year contract, a review takes place in the year prior, involving either the salary personnel committee or the Promotion and Tenure committee. This review process continues at the end of the third year of the initial four-year contract, providing opportunities for ongoing assessments. Provost Kornbluh advised that the details of the post-six-year contract arrangement, including the minimum four-year term and the review process, were negotiated, and agreed upon as part of the contract discussions.

DEI INITIATIVES

Next, Donyale Padgett, Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and Interim Associate Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer, began her presentation on DEI initiatives.

Associate Provost Padgett first acknowledged the contributions of Marquita Chamblee, the University's inaugural Chief Diversity Officer, and others on the campus who initiated diversity work, paving the way as these efforts move forward.

Ms. Padgett began with an overview of the Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI), and its role at the University. The focus areas for ODEI include leading

institutional DEI efforts, partnering with units to foster inclusivity, leveraging data (such as from the climate study), supporting DEI events and programs, and advising campus leaders. Ms. Padgett emphasized the importance of clarifying ODEI's role and her work as she begins her third month in the position. Her work will also focus on supporting educational events and programs for vulnerable students, led by the Office for Multicultural Student Engagement. There is also a Learning & Development Series, emphasizing training and development based on feedback from the 2018 inaugural climate study. Initiatives include developing policy for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council, hiring an intercultural training director, and requesting DEI strategic plans from schools and colleges. The current focus is on the implementation process, also a key aspect of Ms. Padgett's work.

AP Padgett then highlighted six areas as strategic priorities for the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI). The focus areas include infrastructure and council work, campus-wide DEI strategic planning, assessment (including a forthcoming climate study), education training and development, building a network between schools and colleges, and strategic initiatives that align with the new president's vision. Ms. Padgett emphasized the need to envision and plan for higher-level initiatives intersecting with DEI under the new leadership.

Significant changes have already begun, particularly in strategic planning through the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council. Working groups have been assigned specific charges, with Phase One dedicated to strategic planning implementation. Phase Two will involve exploring best practices and making recommendations. AP Padgett has continued her listening tour with deans, which will help understand needs and address the question of what will happen with DEI strategic plans from schools. Themes across plans will be identified in 2024 for broader university-level focus and tracking, aligning with industry practices.

The Intercultural Training Director, Alex Boesch, continues his work on intercultural training on campus. Addendum A of her materials provides the content of the courses offered to nearly 300 campus community members who participated in small group sessions. Mr. Boesch conducted assessments of the workshops, and the results indicate high overall satisfaction, effective learning from workshop activities, appropriate activities, value of large and small group dialogues, and the relevance of content to individuals' work on campus, even if not directly involved in DEI work.

The upcoming second climate study is to be launched later this fall. AP Padgett acknowledged the challenges in leveraging climate study results. Addendum B in the background materials provided includes a table detailing ways the previous climate study data has been utilized on campus. The data informed initiatives like SJAC recommendations, the Anti-bullying Task Force, and grant applications. There have been lessons learned from the past process as the next climate study rolls out, including plans to promote it more extensively. There is a commitment to having deeper conversations with the campus community about the data and results, scheduled for this fall, providing an opportunity for another checkpoint with the Board. Governor Gaffney asked who will participate in the climate study, and whether that participation is voluntary. Ms. Padgett

advised the climate study will be taken by faculty, staff, and students, and participation is voluntary.

Governor Kelly asked for the total number of faculty and staff at the University. AVP/CHRO Carolyn Hafner advised that there are approximately 5200 faculty and staff. Governor Kelly acknowledged the outreach efforts, expressing appreciation, but noted that reaching around 300 people, the number who participated in training noted earlier in the presentation, seems to represent a small percentage, approximately half a percent, of the total faculty and staff on campus.

Ms. Padgett acknowledged the challenge of reaching a larger audience for education and training, citing it as a common issue for both universities and corporations. She indicated there was a debate about whether such training should be mandatory. There is a need for resources to be used to expand outreach efforts and make DEI training more relevant for a broader audience. She discussed the importance of building a network with schools and colleges, moving beyond offering sessions, to actively engaging with different divisions on campus.

Governor Kelly understands the reluctance to make training mandatory, but feels that the current approach may not reach a significant percentage of the desired audience. Ms. Padgett acknowledged that education and training are just one aspect of DEI work, and while reaching a significant number of people is essential, it's crucial to recognize that impact can occur in various areas beyond training. She emphasized the need to better understand and assess the overall impact of DEI initiatives on campus and suggested enhancing efforts in this regard. Provost Kornbluh advised that the Academic Senate has revised its rules, establishing a standing DEI committee. This reflects shared governance, indicating that faculty and academic staff are actively involved and concerned about DEI issues from various perspectives.

Governor Gaffney asked if Ms. Padgett could provide some history on this work, suggesting that much of the current DEI initiatives may have originated from the efforts of the Social Justice Action Committee. Ms. Padgett advised that DEI work on campus dates back to around 2014-2015, and started with the GRAD (Greater Retention and Diversity) Task Force. The work has evolved over the years, and initiatives like the Social Justice Action Committee and the Office for Multicultural Student Engagement have played crucial roles. She emphasized the need to collaborate with schools, colleges, and divisions to have a broader impact on campus DEI efforts. There is a growing interest in understanding how to implement DEI initiatives at the departmental and divisional levels, reflecting a desire for broader engagement.

Governor Gaffney asked about the role of the DEI Council. Ms. Padgett noted that the DEI Council has a significant role in strategic planning implementation. Each working group within the DEI Council has been given a charge, with Phase One focused on strategic planning. The council will read DEI strategic plans from schools and colleges, interpret them through the lens of their working groups, and provide snapshot recommendations. This process is expected to help identify themes and priorities for broader university-level initiatives. The DEI Council plays a key role in coordinating and advancing DEI efforts

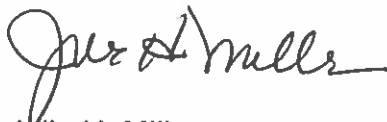
across the campus. This semester their charge is to review those strategic plans, identify divisional needs across the campus and work with them next semester. The council will not be working specifically with each college on their plans, rather it will be looking across the plans to see what things rise to that higher level that can be addressed across the University.

Governor Gaffney asked about availability of training, given the number of people who will be working on DEI initiatives. Ms. Padgett advised that the office will address the training needs identified in the DEI strategic plans submitted by schools and colleges, and be available for further support and collaboration where needed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie H. Miller
Secretary to the Board of Governors