

**Committee on Governance: Minutes**  
Meeting #20: March 24, 2020  
Via Zoom from our Respective Bunkers

**Present:** Kris Boudreau (Secretary, HUA), Tanja Dominko (Secretary of the Faculty, BBT), Tahar El-Korchi (CEE), Glenn Gaudette (BME), Arne Gericke (CBC), Mark Richman (ME), Sue Roberts (ChE), and Wole Soboyejo (Provost).

1. Prof. Gaudette called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm; an amended agenda was approved.
2. The minutes from meeting #19 were revised and approved.
3. COG briefly discussed whether there was a need to make temporary changes to certain academic policies in the wake of our abrupt shift to remote teaching, closing of research labs, and mandate to work from home. COG discussed the possibilities of implementing both a process that would allow undergraduate students to choose pass/NR for their D-term 2020 courses, as well as one that would allow tenure-track faculty to opt to stop their tenure clocks due to disruptions caused by the current work environment. These changes could be made quickly and through faculty governance channels, involving COG, CAP, CTAF, and the full faculty. COG will work with CAP on a temporary grade change policy, and Prof. Dominko will speak with Prof. Deskins (Chair of CTAF) about CTAF's position on a temporary tenure-clock policy change.
4. Evaluation of Administrators: Prof. Gaudette noted that according to COG's regular rotation of administrator evaluations, AY19-20 is the year for evaluations of Academic Affairs overall including the President, the Provost, the Deans of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, and the Institution overall. However, in light of more urgent matters, COG will postpone some of these evaluations, focusing instead on reviews of the President, the Provost, and the overall Institution. The positions not evaluated this year could be included in the AY20-21 cycle or conducted in Fall 2020, with the regular cycle to resume in Spring 2021. For this year, in the interest of time, and because these evaluation questions and the process of disseminating the results have been revised over time and within the last two years, COG will use the surveys in their current form, asking the President and the Provost for suggested revisions to the questions, and leaving the possibility of larger revisions for next year.
5. Re-Draft of the Policy on Policies: Process for Creating and Revising Institutional Administrative Policies: Prof. Gaudette circulated a draft now entitled, "Process for Creating and Revising Institutional Administrative Policies," which is a current version of the policy formerly known as the "Policy on Policies." This document was revised by University Counsel Bunis and forwarded to COG for its feedback. Profs. Dominko and Gaudette indicated that the Board of Trustees wants this policy put in place by May 2020, and that University Counsel Bunis wants the Administrative Policy Group (APG) –which is identified in the document as a cross-functional team with exclusive responsibility for creating, revising, recommending, and publishing institutional administrative policies– to convene within the next two weeks.

COG discussed concerns about the document, most generally that it gives no clear definition of the “Institutional Administrative Policies” (IAPs) that it covers, and describes the effects of these policies on elements of our operations that are themselves not clearly defined. COG members believed that the vagueness of these concepts would grant administrative powers that should at the least be shared among administrative authorities and faculty governance.

Furthermore, several COG members were concerned that as proposed, the Administrative Policy Group (APG), which would oversee the policy making process, has very limited faculty perspective. Specifically, the Chairs of the APG would be the Executive Vice President and the Provost, its Secretary would be the General Counsel, and its members would include the Vice Presidents or their designees (all appointed by the President). The faculty designees on the APG would be the Chair of the Committee on Technology Policy (CITP) and the Chair of the Committee on Financial and Administrative Policy (FAP).

After considering how the document might be modified to protect faculty against administrative overreaches, COG members highlighted issues that need to be addressed by University Counsel before COG can consider the entire document, which depends on these more fundamental concerns. Primarily, these concerns are:

- The extent of authority described in the document is obscure: no clear definition of “institutional administrative policies” is provided;
- The “scope” of the proposed process for creating and revising institutional administrative policies is given in a circular manner (referring back to “institutional administrative polices”), and is only suggested by referring to certain policies that do *not* fall within its purview;
- In all cases, any question or ambiguity over which university process applies to any particular policy would be resolved by the Administrative Policy Group (APG), which itself has little faculty input. This is especially problematic when determining if a policy falls within, or at least partially within, the faculty’s purview.

Profs. Gaudette and Dominko will communicate COG’s concerns to University Counsel Bunis and ask him to attend COG’s next scheduled meeting.

6. Motion to revise Department Tenure Committee membership for faculty whose primary responsibilities are to a program: COG considered a proposal from CTAF that would create Program Tenure Committees (PTCs) to replace Department Tenure Committees (DTCs) for faculty members whose primary responsibilities are to a specific program (with an identifiable Program Director) rather than to their particular home department. The need to replace DTCs with PTCs in certain cases is clear.

The formation of the proposed PTCs would, in many ways, parallel the process used to for Interdepartmental Tenure Committees (ITCs) in the cases of faculty members with interdepartmental affiliations. However, whereas the ITC contains one elected member from the two appropriate DTCs, the proposed PTC would have both elected members come from the DTC of the candidate’s home department. Concern was raised over whether this would minimize the benefit that could come from a more evenly distributed PTC membership.

Concerns were also raised about the workability of having the Department Head from the home department and the Program Director split a vote in joint tenure deliberations. However, the same concern could be raised with ITCs, in which the two Department Heads are currently expected to split their vote.

COG will continue its discussion and communicate with CTAF on the proposal.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:44.

Dutifully submitted,

Kris Boudreau  
Secretary, COG