Present: Len Albano (Secretary, CEE); Nancy Burnham (PH); Tanja Dominko (BBT); Tahar El-Korchi (Chair, CEE); George Heineman (CS); Mark Richman (Secretary of the Faculty, AE); Susan Roberts (CHE)

Absent: Wole Soboyejo (Provost)

1. Prof. El-Korchi called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

2. The agenda was approved as distributed.

3. The minutes of COG meeting #21 on February 7, 2022 were approved with modifications.

4. Preparations for the February Faculty Meeting:
   Prof. Richman reviewed the agenda for the upcoming Faculty Meeting on Thursday, February 17th. There will be four motions brought forward for a vote. Two are the COG motions to modify the Committee's membership to guarantee representation by nontenure-track (NTT) faculty and to establish the Committee on Teaching and Research Faculty (CTRF) as a formal *ad hoc* Committee of the Faculty. The third is the joint motion from the Committee on Financial and Administrative Policy (FAP) and COG to revise the membership of FAP. These three motions have been modified since their initial presentation at the January Faculty Meeting. The last motion is from the Committee on Academic Policy (CAP) to establish a temporary *Pass/NR* policy for terms C, D and E of the current academic year. CAP will also give a brief report on the complications associated with modifying the criteria for satisfactory academic progress. Following these four motions, Prof. deWinter (HUA) and Prof. Smith (CS) will give an update on progress made since the January Faculty Meeting toward addressing the challenges of academic and home life. In addition, Prof. Demetry (MME; Director, Morgan Center for Teaching and Learning) will give a brief presentation on the results of the 2021 COACHE Survey. Prof. Demetry is Co-Chair of the COACHE Survey Steering Committee.

5. No Classes Wellness Day – Update on Plans and Goals:
   Prof. Richman gave an update on "WeConnect: A day to reconnect" that is planned for February 24th. He informed the Committee that Provost Soboyejo met with the Deans, Philip Clay (Senior VP for Student Affairs), Greg Snoddy (Assistant VP & Dean of Students), and Prof. Roberts, representing Department Heads, to promote awareness and discuss plans for the day. Activity centers will be within the Campus Center and the Recreation Center, and the proposed activities have been evolving through the grass-roots efforts of students, faculty, and staff. An announcement to the WPI community should be forthcoming from the Administration.

6. CERT Campus Policies – Community Input:
   Over the weekend, COG members received an email message from a group of faculty members who expressed concern over the February 11th announcement about changes in the masking requirement. The faculty members are disappointed that this change in masking and other COVID policies were

not discussed in a forum to understand the evidence and rationale behind this shift in policy. The timing of the announcement forced faculty members to devote time over the weekend to figure out how to manage courses, student and personal concerns, and the management of students in other academic contexts. COG discussion of this email message led to a larger discussion of the fact that faculty have been flexible and accommodating to the CERT policies that impact academic matters, but Faculty Governance has not been formally asked to collaborate in the decision process. Not having the time to discuss and anticipate policy changes is another source of stress on faculty well-being.

7. <u>Review of COG Motion for Changing Its Membership and Establishing CTRF:</u>
In anticipation of the upcoming faculty vote, Prof. El-Korchi commented that the latest versions of the two motions are based on collaboration with the TRT Council and faculty input at the January Faculty Meeting. The individual elements of each motion were discussed and agreed upon.

8. <u>Codifying Norms of the Faculty Search Process in Departments:</u>
Prof. El-Korchi shared a draft proposal from a faculty member to update the Faculty Handbook to codify the faculty search process in departments. The proposal raised questions on how prescriptive should the Faculty Handbook be with balancing faculty input and the ability of Department Heads to make hiring decisions. The Faculty Handbook does address the search processes for Academic Administrative and Department Head positions, but there is no defined process or guidelines for hiring faculty members. COG members felt that guidelines can be developed for the different categories of faculty hires. These guidelines would address faculty input into the search process and provide Department Heads with some flexibility. In addition, Prof. Roberts felt that Department Heads should receive some training on this topic.

9. The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Leonard Albano
Secretary, COG