

Committee on Governance: Minutes

Meeting #4: September 26, 2022

Faculty Governance Conference Room, SL 225

3:00pm – 4:30pm

Present: Len Albano (Chair, CEAE), Althea Danielski (HUA), Tanja Dominko (BBT), George Heineman (CS), Art Heinricher (Interim Provost), Suzanne LePage (CEAE), Mark Richman (Secretary of the Faculty, AE), Karen Troy (BME).

1. The agenda was approved as distributed.
2. The minutes for COG Meeting #3 were approved with minor changes.
3. Look Ahead to October Faculty meeting (Mark Richman).
Prof. Richman noted three items that will likely be on the agenda: FAP will give a presentation on executive compensation; CTAF will discuss flexibility in determining the year of tenure review for probationary faculty members; and CTAF will discuss a potential plan to increase the size of the Committee's membership.

In two faculty meetings last year (April 14th and May 10th) and the first faculty meeting of this year (September 1st), Prof. Strauss (IGSD) announced and asked for faculty input to a draft resolution calling on WPI to divest from fossil fuels. Prof. Richman shared that there have been meetings including Prof. Strauss, interim President Soboyejo, and interim Provost Heinricher that may result in a broader statement on behalf of the faculty describing a larger decarbonization effort at WPI, in which the resolution to divest the endowment from fossil fuels will remain a critical element. While such discussions continue, Prof. Strauss will give a brief update, but this item will not be brought for full discussion to the October meeting.
4. Update on COG appointment to Fringe Benefits Committee (FBC).
Assistant Professor of Teaching, Courtney Kurlanska (DIGS), has accepted COG's nomination to serve a three-year term on FBC, and this appointment has been communicated to the FBC Chair, Prof. Dempski (CBC).
5. Reorganization of Faculty Handbook (Mark Richman).
Prof. Richman shared a "Governance Section" document that contains a reorganization of large parts of Part ONE of the existing Faculty Handbook. COG has continued commenting on and editing the reorganized "Tenure Section" document.

Reorganizations to the “Governance Section” will bring together items on related topics and make it easier to find relevant information and material that otherwise is currently spread throughout the Faculty Handbook. In its final form, the section will be a far more useful guide for committees, committee Chairs, and the entire faculty.

6. CTAF proposal to expand the number of members.
CTAF is working with COG on a proposal that increases CTAF membership from 6 to 9 in order to handle the anticipated increase in the number of tenure cases over the next few years. Additionally, they aim to establish clear rules for selecting the Chair and Secretary for CTAF. Since CTAF elections will occur in January, it would be ideal to have a motion approved by December. COG will work on the details for conducting these elections to ensure an orderly increase in CTAF membership.

Prof. Richman will work with Prof. Claypool (Chair of CTAF) to describe the proposed CTAF motion within the context of the draft of the reorganized “Governance Section” of Faculty Handbook.

7. Meeting adjourned at 4:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

George Heineman

Secretary