Committee on Governance: Minutes

Meeting #5: October 3, 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.

3. The minutes for COG meeting #4 were approved with minor changes.

4. Look Ahead to October Faculty meeting (Mark Richman)

5. Prof. Richman noted items agenda items for the October 6, 2022 meeting are all set, which will include a motion from CTAF and COG to enlarge the membership of CTAF (for discussion only) and a second discussion item from CTAF to provide more flexibility in determining the timing of the final tenure review for each probationary faculty member, and a FAP presentation on Executive Compensation at WPI.

6. Reorganization of Faculty Handbook (Mark Richman).

7. Work continued on reorganizing the "Governance" section of the Faculty handbook. The "Governance" section is reorganized to collect all related content that is otherwise spread out throughout the Handbook and its appendices. The new draft comes from but does not include everything contained in Part One of the current Handbook, in which the sections are rewoven and reorganized within themselves.

8.
   In reorganizing the Handbook, attention must be paid to the fact that Part One of the current Handbook (Constitution and Bylaws) requires 2/3rds majority for revision, whereas revisions to Part Two (Policies and Operating Procedures) require a simple majority.

   Work continues on four rewritten sections: Governance, Tenure, Promotions,

Academic Appointments. If work proceeds at the current pace the draft of the reorganized Handbook would be ready to discuss at the February 2023 Faculty meeting. COG hopes to have materials available for review by Thanksgiving; otherwise, they would be available in early January.

9. Sexual Misconduct Policy (Mark Richman)

10. Part Two of the Faculty Handbook, Section 4, Appendix F contains the WPI Sexual Misconduct Policy (most recently one approved by Faculty and Board of Trustees in May 2018). In May 2020, the Trump Administration announced Title IX changes that altered Universities responsibilities and required misconduct procedures. In August 2020, WPI administration issued an interim Title IX & Sexual Misconduct Policy. This interim policy (date June 22, 2022) supersedes all prior WPI policies dealing with Sexual Misconduct including the "2018 Sexual Harassment Policy" in the Faculty Handbook. In June 2022, the current presidential administration announced plans to again change Title IX regulations, affecting changes that had previously been made.

    COG is reviewing the "Interim Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy" and the "Sexual Harassment Policy"(approved in 2018).

11. Can the process we had in place for sexual misconduct that falls outside the Trump Title IX changes remain intact even under the new interim Title IX & Sexual Misconduct policy? What are the changes that must be incorporated for Title IX misconduct? COG will first spend time carefully considering the current interim policy Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy, comparing it to the sexual misconduct policy that was in place before it was superseded by the interim policy, formulating questions and suggestion.   Then COG plans to invite a representative from WPI's general counsel and the Title IX coordinator to a future COG meeting after the Committee has familiarized itself with the interim policy. It would be useful to develop a flowchart for the overall process to follow.

12.

13. Ongoing List of Topics for COG discussion (Len Albano)

14. COG maintains a list of topics we intend to pursue, which include (but NOT in order of priority):

15. a. Definitions and search processes for Academic Administrators

16. b. Compensation in the form of course relief for COAP/CTAF members

17. c. Faculty evaluation of Academic Administrators

18. d. Identify steps to resolve academic policies vs. administrative policies and work to ensure faculty governance is involved when policies affect the academic mission

19. e. Clarification of eligibility for faculty elections

20. f. Definition of time in rank

21. g. Faculty elections process

22. h. Faculty load model

23. i. Formalizing a process for faculty hiring

24.

25. Meeting adjourned at 4:44 pm

Respectfully submitted,

George Heineman
Secretary