

Committee on Governance: Minutes

Meeting #9: November 14, 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), Mark Richman (Secretary of the Faculty, AE), Diane Strong (President's appointment, WBS) Karen Troy (BME).

1. Chair Albano called the meeting to order at 3:03. The agenda was approved as distributed.
2. The minutes for COG Meeting #8 were still in preparation and will be approved electronically.
3. Debrief of November Faculty Meeting
The November 10th faculty meeting was successful in bringing faculty to the meeting, both in person and online. None of the online (or in-person) participants had issues regarding the sound quality of the meeting.

While a hybrid meeting option expands access, there are still faculty members who are unable to attend faculty meetings because of conflicts with teaching responsibilities and childcare needs later in the afternoon. Prof. Richman discussed a meeting with Len Albano (chair of COG), Art Heinricher (Interim Provost) and Arne Gericke (Interim Dean of Undergraduate Studies) to consider ways to adjust the academic schedule to allow more opportunities to schedule faculty meetings to accommodate more faculty members by removing as many conflicts as possible.

In the short term, perhaps the currently scheduled December 8th meeting could be moved to the morning of Monday December 19th (which is the day after B-term ends) with an emphasis on bringing the faculty community together with fewer obstacles, and possibly reviving a past practice of having volunteers provide home baked goods for those who attend in person.

The larger context is trying to find time for professional days during our regular academic year that would create free time for faculty meetings and time for other appropriate uses. Provost Heinricher explained that last year he had begun exploring the possibility of extending the academic year by one week to add flexibility to the academic calendar. Such a change might involve additional expense and affect faculty summer plans.

4. Recently Approved Changes to CTAF
5. With approval of the COG/CTAF motion for the expansion of CTAF, in January the faculty will elect five new CTAF members: three faculty members elected for four-year terms; one faculty member for two years; and one faculty member for one year. COG discussed whether the foreseeable future (next 5-6 years) would still support a course release or additional compensation for CTAF members. Provost Heinricher affirmed this would be the case and suggested after the current spike of applications has been processed this decision could be revisited. He reminded COG that not everyone who was eligible took a course release (some opted for the additional compensation). COG discussed whether providing extra compensation for CTAF would enable the committee to start their work earlier in August, before the beginning of A-term.
- 6.
7. Reorganization of Faculty Handbook
8. At the current pace of editing, the reorganized Faculty Handbook should be ready for distribution to the faculty by early January. There is still work to be done on the Promotions Section and then a final pass to combine all remaining sections and miscellaneous content from the original Faculty Handbook into a single document. For example, the section on faculty grievances that is currently located in the Bylaws section of the original Faculty Handbook will need to be extracted into this new revised section.
9. Research Faculty
10. COG engaged in a discussion about research-faculty without secure contracts who end up teaching additional courses at WPI for extra pay. Perhaps WPI could explore a model for research faculty who would receive a designated salary conditional on securing research funds above and beyond a negotiated threshold. This issue remains even after reorganizing the Faculty Handbook.
11. Discussion on Sexual Misconduct Policy
Chair Albano presented a list of overarching comments and questions that had been sent to WPI's general counsel. He is awaiting their reply.

COG continues to investigate differences between policies. Naturally the Faculty Sexual Misconduct Policy approved in 2018 needs to change because of changes to

Title IX, but why does the non-Title IX interim policy require wholesale change as well?

Provost Heinricher announced that APG will be distributing for comment two new policies, regarding animals on campus and a policy on Indemnification.

12. Process for faculty hiring

13. COG discussed standard processes or guidelines on campus regarding full-time faculty hiring. If the Faculty Handbook had standard documentation regarding guidelines for a faculty hiring process, it could be used to unify a process for faculty hiring, much like how the Faculty Handbook includes specific language regarding the hiring of a department head. Diane Strong (as a current department head) offered to provide documentation regarding the process used in the Business School for hiring faculty.

14.

15. Meeting adjourned at 4:41 pm

Respectfully submitted,

George Heineman

Secretary