Minutes of FAP Meeting #27 AY2021-22

April 25, 2022

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Meeting Held Electronically via ZOOM

Members in Attendance: Tanja Dominko, Joseph Fehribach (FAP Chair), Mike Horan (Executive Vice President/CFO), Joseph Sarkis (FBC Co-Chair), David Spanagel (FAP Secretary; RPC Representative); Kris Sullivan (Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs)

Guests: Stacy Chiaramonte (Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies); Andrew Palumbo (Vice President for Enrollment Management)

Call to Order. Chair Fehribach called the 27th FAP meeting of the year to order at 4:02 PM.

1) **Discussion of Enrollment**. VP Palumbo shared a slide that showed recruitment goals for the entering undergraduate Class of 2026. These goals include: maintaining admissions of a class comprised of 40% women, increasing the percentage of underrepresented students of color from 13% to 14%, and establishing new targets such as doubling our typical percentage of entering Black/African-American students to 4% and enrolling a class 12% of whom are Pell Grant-eligible (an index which measures exceptional financial need). To help achieve diversity and inclusion enrollment goals, new values-based admissions and aid score mechanisms (which are not exclusively about student identity categories but also responsive to student commitments) have been developed. Affordability for eligible students will be supported through new Naudin Oswell scholarships (honoring WPI's first Black graduate) and Leslie Small scholarships (honoring WPI's first female graduate).

VP Palumbo noted that WPI has observed more "late-shopping" behavior by applicants and a very competitive environment in which comparable institutions appear to be making aggressive financial aid offers that may push their overall discount rate above 50%. As stated in previous FAP minutes, he reiterated that WPI's enrollment target for the undergraduate Class of 2026 is 1350 and he assured the committee that the intention this year is come in at or below that number if at all possible. With an advertised tuition rate increase of 2.5% and a projected discount rate of 49% in financial aid for new students (and a 47% blended rate for all undergraduates), families should experience an average net price increase of just 1%. VP Palumbo noted the imminent May 1

acceptance deadline means that the size and composition of WPI's entering Class of 2026 should be stabilized by around May 10.

AVP Chiaramonte shared slides with FAP that showed the past several years' worth of graduate tuition revenue trends based on graduate course credit-hours delivered, noting that there has been a modest decline since a peak in 2016-17. Net revenue for 2021-22 is about $35.9 million. Her office projects an estimate of 26,795 graduate course credit hours will be delivered in 2022-23. All the data of the graduate program is tracked in real time and can be viewed with "up until yesterday" immediacy at

https://tableau.wpi.edu/views/GraduateCoordinatorsDashboards/GradCoordinatorsDashboards

One FAP member asked if WPI's Grad Admissions programs have diversity and inclusion goals comparable to the undergraduate enrollment management team's targets. AVP Chiaramonte noted that WPI is still working on developing ways to assess such data for graduate students. Part-time graduate students exhibit greater diversity in many of these kinds of categories than full-time graduate students, but we do not have comparable ways of reporting diversity among the international students and we have no precise handle yet on the overall affordability of our graduate programs. Recent efforts to try to address affordability for grad programs have included the tuition discount for WPI alumni and for veterans.

Another FAP member asked about initial assessments of the effectiveness of having contracted with some online program managers for our graduate programs. AVP Chiaramonte indicated mixed results so far, with a decision being made to terminate the Business Analytics, MBA, and Information Technology programs that we had with AllCampus; but also reporting some success with the online computer science and data science programs being managed through Keypath Education.

FAP members thanked both the visitors for sharing their admissions information with the committee.

2) **FAP/FBC Motion on WPI Employee Retirement Benefits.** With the inclusion of data provided by the Provost's Office, Prof. Dominko presented revised motion language that included input gathered from other FAP members through email exchanges in the past two weeks. After a brief discussion and further work in real time to refine the language to achieve more clarity and the broadest possible

support, the committee voted unanimously with one abstention to approve sending the motion on to COG for presentation and action at the May 10 Faculty meeting.

3) **Approval of Minutes**. FAP's Meeting #26 minutes were approved as amended, with no objections.

4) **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David Spanagel

FAP Secretary