

Minutes of FAP Meeting #4 AY2021-22
September 27, 2021
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Meeting Held via ZOOM

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

Absent: Mike Horan (Executive Vice President/CFO)

Agenda

1. Call to Order

Chair Fehribach called the 3rd FAP meeting of the year to order at 4:03 PM.

2. FBC Appointments

Chair Fehribach reported that Assistant Professor Shamsnaz Virani Bhada (ECE) accepts FAP's appointment to fill the remaining TT faculty seat for service on the Fringe Benefits Committee (FBC).

3. Financial/Class of 2025 Updates

The Committee continued discussions regarding inconsistencies surrounding the size of the reported incoming class. As all the students are now incorporated into Workday functions, we hope to have the final explanation at FAP's next week's meeting when CFO Horan will provide the final and accurate report.

4. Approval of Minutes

Amended minutes for Meeting #3 were approved.

5. Departmental Budget Cuts

Chair Fehribach reported that several department heads and other familiar with departmental budgets remained concerned that departmental budgets have not been restored to pre-COVID levels.

AVP Sullivan confirmed that the budgets have been adjusted but none have been fully restored. In part this is a consequence of WPI Forward recommendations that were adopted by the administration and called for reduction of spending across a number of institutional expense categories. These recommendations were adopted with the intent to pass the WPI Forward recommended "savings" onto financial aid and increase accessibility to WPI education. He also mentioned the retirement incentive program that was offered to WPI employees as part of WPI Forward recommendations – this initial expense would reduce the number of employees voluntarily and prevent any involuntary terminations. This significant one time expense was recorded against the operating budget in FY20, a year that ended with a surplus despite all D-term related COVID expenses.

Secondly, COVID necessitated further reductions to the budgets due to uncertainty of future tuition revenues in FY21 and FY22. On a positive note, the total number of budgeted TAs has been significantly increased from FY2021 to FY2022, from 145 to 165.

but significantly increased (165 TAs). Similarly, funds for PLAs and student wages have been fully restored. The Provost's office continues discussions with Deans about their ongoing staffing needs

and is incorporating them into supplemental FY22 requests and into the upcoming budget planning activities for FY2023.

To better evaluate the impact of budgetary reduction on academic affairs, the Committee asked AVP Sullivan to provide comparative data detailing expenditures across all salary accounts (#6000 line) for the past several years. AVP Sullivan agreed that such aggregate numbers would be useful in determining the impact on overall academic budgets.

Several Committee members stressed the need to examine WPI Forward recommendations and to assist the Institute in conducting assessments of impacts that WPI Forward recommendations have already had and will continue to have on the overall future health of the university.

6. **Distribution of HEERF III funds**

Chair Fehribach will contact Andy Palumbo for explanation on how these funds are being distributed among students.

7. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Tanja Dominko
FAP Secretary