

**WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE**  
**January 19, 2017**

**To:** The WPI Faculty

**From:** Mark Richman  
Secretary of the Faculty

The fifth Faculty meeting of the 2016-2017 academic year will be held on **Thursday, January 19, 2017** at 3:15 pm in **Olin Hall 107**, with refreshments at 3:00 pm.

1. Call to Order M. Richman
  - Approval of the Agenda
  - Approval of the Minutes from 12-16-16
  
2. Opening Announcements M. Richman
  
3. President's Remarks L. Leshin
  
4. Provost's Remarks B. Bursten
  
5. Committee Business
  - Committee on Governance (COG) T. Dominko
    - Motion to Revise the Faculty Handbook Description of the Committee on Appointments and Promotions
  
  - Committee on Appointments and Promotions (COAP) P. Hansen
    - Motion to Modify the Criteria for Promotion to Full Professor
  
6. Old Business
  
7. New Business
  
8. Closing Announcements
  
9. Adjournment

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**  
**Faculty Meeting Materials, January 19, 2017**

	Page
1. Faculty Meeting Minutes: December 16, 2016	3
2. Committee Business	
Committee on Governance (COG)	8
• Motion to Revise the Faculty Handbook Description of the Committee on Appointments and Promotions (COAP)	
Committee on Appointments and Promotions (COAP)	14
• Motion to Modify the Criteria for Promotion to Full Professor	

**WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE**  
**Faculty Meeting Minutes**  
**December 16, 2016**

**Summary:**

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Announcements
3. President's Remarks
4. Provost's Remarks
5. Committee Report: COG
6. Special Report: VPR
7. Closing Announcements
8. Adjournment

**Detail:**

1. Call to Order

The fourth Faculty meeting of the 2016-2017 academic year was called to order at 10:10am in OH 107 by **Prof. Richman** (ME). The meeting agenda and the consent agenda (including the minutes from November 17, 2016 – with two minor changes) were approved.

2. Opening Announcements

**Prof. Shue** (CS), for the Committee on Information Technology Policy (CITP), explained that the goal is to reach 75 percent migration from Blackboard to Canvas by the spring 2017 semester and that D-term will be the last term in which Blackboard is still active. He encouraged all those who haven't yet migrated to Canvas to contact the ATC to help with the transition.

**Prof. Dominko** (BBT), for the Committee on Financial and Administrative Policy (FAP), announced that the committee had been consolidating policies pertaining to the Faculty, and that the policy on phased retirement, which currently is posted only on the Human Resources website, will soon be incorporated into the Faculty Handbook as well.

**Prof. Albano** (CEE) reported on a follow-up to the 2015 Task Force Report on Promotion. He announced that COAP and COG have established a working group to look at three specific areas: (1) mentoring and professional development; (2) review of promotion cases for NTT faculty members; and (3) the appointment/reappointment of Professors of Practice. The members of the working are Prof. Albano (CEE), Prof. Aravind (PH), Prof. Brisson (HUA), Prof. Heilman (CBC), Prof. Roberts (CHE), Prof. Skorinko (SSPS), and Prof. Wulf (BUS). He indicated that the group would be reaching out for input in C term, and he encouraged everyone to respond.

**Prof. Hakim** (ECE) described charitable work he has undertaken to help Colombian children in need, and thanked all those on campus who have already made contributions to the cause.

**Prof. Richman** (ME) expressed his understanding that many who are present at today's meeting may have taken time away from their grading of final exams and projects to attend, and as a show of his appreciation he shared some good-natured time-saving grading tips.

3. President's Remarks

**President Leshin** described her recent trip to Israel as a member of Gov. Baker's delegation on economic development. The purpose of the trip was to attract Israeli start-up companies (in digital health and cyber security) to Massachusetts. She thanked Dean Oates and others at WPI for their work to launch a WPI project center in Israel in January 2017.

**President Leshin** thanked the faculty for its hard work this past year, for their work with students, and for the exciting research and other collaborations that are taking place across campus. President Leshin announced that this year the Trustees' Celebration of Faculty Achievement will be a dinner (on February 23) for all full-time faculty

members in honor of the Wall Street Journal recognition that the WPI faculty is first in the country in teaching/research balance.

#### 4. Provost's Remarks

**Provost Bursten** congratulated three colleagues: Prof. Mosco (MA), who was recently named WPI's first Fellow of the American Mathematical Association; and Prof. Argüello (CBC) and Prof. Ram Mohan (PH), who were recently elected Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

**Provost Bursten** announced that Ms. Anna Gold, from California Polytechnic San Luis Obispo, will be joining WPI on March 1, 2017 as our new University Librarian.

**Provost Bursten** announced that the search committee for the Dean of Arts and Sciences will be co-chaired by Prof. Weekes and VP Tichenor, and that a search firm had been selected. He asked all faculty members to spread the word about the search and to make all efforts to see that we get a large pool of qualified applicants.

**Provost Bursten** described a recent meeting of approximately 30 faculty and staff members to brainstorm about ways to infuse sustainability throughout the curriculum. In addition, there was a recent meeting of the Sustainability Advising Committee, chaired by Prof. Orr, that highlighted such campus-developments as bike share, electric vehicle charging stations, a sustainability engineering minor, and new IQPs related to sustainability. He encouraged everyone to think broadly about improving WPI's sustainability, and to send all related ideas to [green@wpi.edu](mailto:green@wpi.edu).

#### 5. Committee Report

##### COG

**Prof. Dominko** (BBT), for the Committee on Governance, described a series of proposed revisions to the Faculty Handbook description of the Committee on Appointments and Promotions (COAP). (See **Addendum #1 COG Proposed Revisions to Faculty Handbook Description of COAP – Dec 16 2016**, attached to these minutes.) Several of the proposed revisions have been taken directly from suggestions made by the Task Force on Promotions. Prof. Dominko emphasized that the purpose of her presentation was to engage as many faculty members as possible with the goal of putting forward a final proposal that reflects a strong collective faculty consensus.

**Prof. Dominko** described a first category of proposed revisions: changes to COAP's nomination and election process, membership, and recusal process. COAP members would be elected in a two-stage nomination and election process exactly parallel to and simultaneous with the process currently used to elect CTAF members. The number of COAP members would be increased from six to seven in order to provide a recusal mechanism parallel to that used by CTAF. A Joint Promotion Committee consisting of six COAP members and a nominator and advocate both chosen by the candidate would be formed to consider each promotion case. The exact role and voting privileges of the nominator and advocate are to be determined based on further input from the faculty. A recusal process would be put in place that would not allow any COAP member to serve on the Joint Promotion Committee if he or she were from the same department as the promotion candidate, and it would require recusal of any member of the Joint Promotion Committee due to conflict of interest. This exactly parallels the CTAF recusal process. Finally, Prof. Dominko included in this category of revisions the clarifications (of current practice) that the term of service on COAP is three years, that no member may serve successive terms, and that Department Heads, Deans, and the Provost are not eligible to serve.

**Prof. Humi** (MA) asked if non-tenure track faculty members would be eligible to serve on COAP. Prof. Dominko explained that the proposal maintains the current restriction to full (tenured) professors.

**Prof. Rulfs** (BBT) appreciated the common sense suggestions in the proposal, and she was especially glad to see a recusal mechanism put in place. In view of the fact that the nominator and advocate can come from outside the candidate's department, she suggested that it might be worthwhile to include formal input from the candidate's department.

**Prof. Boudreau** (HUA) was in favor of every proposed change, except she thought that in addition to six members of COAP, the Joint Promotion Committee might include the Department Head and an elected department member (both as voting members) and an advocate as a non-voting member.

**Prof. McNeill** (ECE) was very much in favor of having the nominator and advocate present for all discussions of the promotion case including at the meeting with the Provost in the case of a disagreement between the Provost and the Joint Committee. However, because the nominator and advocate are chosen by the candidate, he did not think that they should serve as voting members of the Joint Committee.

**Prof. El-Korchi** (CEE) was strongly in favor of the recusal process. He thought that the advocate in particular would be knowledgeable about the candidate's field and contributions, and should be included in the deliberations throughout. Prof. El-Korchi pointed out that the President should be included in the list of those ineligible to serve on COAP.

**Prof. Gericke** (CBC) was concerned that the candidate's department was not included in the formal process. He thought that strong faculty governance required a robust department input beyond just the Department Head.

**Prof. Dominko** (BBT) explained that the current proposal relies on a culture at WPI that recognizes that accomplishments after tenure do not necessarily fall into disciplinary-specific categories. Instead inter-disciplinarity is encouraged, and the possibility of an outside nominator and advocate reflects that culture.

**Prof. Wills** (CS) believed that if we think that it is important to develop a departmental mentoring process, then someone from that mentoring committee (perhaps the Department Head and one other member) should be brought into the promotions process.

**Prof. Hansen** (HUA) explained that COAP is broadly supportive of the elements of the proposal presented so far, and expressed his appreciation for the feedback expressed concerning department roles in the promotions process.

**Prof. McNeill** (ECE) clarified that formulation of the department promotion committees is not part of the current proposal. He expressed his doubts that a department promotion committee would function well in large departments and for many faculty members whose activities may be best understood by people outside the department. He suggested that immediately after receiving tenure, faculty members might choose a nominator and advocate who would provide mentorship until promotion. As a result, he was in favor of the Joint Committee as described in the proposal.

**Prof. Roberts** (ChE) thought we should strike a balance between, on the one hand, having formal departmental input into the promotion process, and, on the other hand, allowing for the success of candidates whose contributions are interdisciplinary.

**Prof. Beck** (CS) pointed out that the tenure process oftentimes requires judging the contributions of candidates whose work is interdisciplinary. So the problem of doing so is not unique to promotion.

**Prof. Gatsonis** (ME) appreciated the efforts by COG to make the promotions process much like the tenure process. He pointed out that in the tenure process the departmental members of the Joint Tenure Committee begin the deliberations with their minds not yet made up about the case. By contrast, the nominator and advocate in the current proposal are chosen because of their support for the candidate. Prof. Gatsonis was reluctant to entirely decouple the promotions process from the candidate's department. He suggested that the nominator should be the Department Head while the advocate would be chosen by the candidate, and that both would serve as voting members of the Joint Committee.

**Prof. Humi** (MA) suggested that the members of COAP (rather than the nominator and the advocate) be empowered to solicit the external reference letters for each candidate. **Prof. Hansen** (HUA) explained that COAP is working on a description of its own procedures that would give responsibility for soliciting the letters to the full Joint Promotion Committee, which in practice might place a significant part of the responsibility on the nominator and the advocate.

**Prof. El-Korchi** (CEE) pointed out that while in many ways we are making the COAP procedures parallel to the CTAF procedures, there are important differences between tenure and promotion that we need to respect, as well. He pointed out that unlike receiving tenure, promotion to full professor is not mandatory and that there is no time line for such promotion. **Prof. El-Korchi** surmised that the purpose of providing a path to promotion without department input was to allow a candidate to circumvent departmental biases and politics, and he thought that such options should be maintained in the current proposal.

**Prof. Dominko** described a second category of proposed revisions: changes to COAP's responsibilities. The proposal would focus COAP's responsibility for recommending changes in TTT promotion criteria to changes in the criteria for promotion from associate to full professor (because CTAF is responsible for criteria for promotion from assistant to associate professor), and it would add to COAP's charge the responsibility for recommending changes in criteria for appointment and promotion of continuing non-tenure track faculty members. In both cases, the proposal would require that such recommendations be made in collaboration with COG in order to broaden the faculty governance input in these matters beyond full professors. In addition, the proposal would leave the review of initial appointments of associate professors with tenure entirely to CTAF in the same manner that CTAF alone currently reviews tenure cases that also involve promotion to associate professor. **Prof. Rulfs** (BBT) clarified that COAP would not be involved in reviewing such initial appointments.

**Prof. Hansen** (HUA) expressed the view that eligibility for tenure and eligibility for the rank of associate professor are separate matters, and thought that to combine the two would require changes to CTAF's responsibilities as well as to other parts of the Faculty Handbook that refer to the conferral of tenure. In that case, he thought that it would be consistent to have initial appointments of full professors with tenure reviewed only by COAP. He explained that the larger objection was to the phrase "In collaboration with COG....," which would treat COAP differently than all other faculty governance committees and would make COAP a subcommittee of COG. **Prof. Dominko** explained that the promotion criteria belong to the entire faculty, and asking for collaboration with COG on recommending changes to promotion criteria was done to expand the diversity of representation beyond the restriction on COAP's membership to full professors. She listed the separate types of recommendations that COAP makes to the Provost (for promotions and appointments of TTT's and continuing NTT's, as well as reappointments of Professors of Practice and review of requests for sabbaticals) and to the President and the Provost (concerning Department Heads' appointments and evaluations) that require no input from COG to demonstrate that under the proposal COAP would continue to function fully as an independent committee.

**Prof. deWinter** (HUA) made the point that it might also be worthwhile to have a group broader than the full professors on COAP to consider the promotions of continuing non-tenure teaching track faculty members and reappointments of Professors of Practice.

**Prof. Gatsonis** (ME) was in favor of giving COG some responsibility for recommending changes in promotion procedures. He cited past changes to the tenure procedures coordinated by COG, and surmised that it was much more comfortable for faculty members to confront COG members than it would have been to confront CTAF members with disagreements over the changes. As a member of CTAF at the time, he was happy to stand back in open meetings and have COG solicit feedback. He thought the phrase "In collaboration with COG..." was appropriate and took nothing away from COAP.

**Prof. Gennert** (CS) observed that the proposal separated COAP's operational responsibilities from its policy-making role. While the operational role is unchanged, in his view it made sense to get input from COG on the policy-making recommendations in order to have a broader group represented. He was in favor of the proposed change.

**Prof. Dominko** described the final few minor changes in the category of updates to reflect current practice. The new language would explicitly list COAP's responsibilities to make recommendations to the Provost concerning appointments and promotions of continuing non-tenure track faculty members. The new language would clarify that COAP plays a role in the evaluation of Department Heads but not in evaluating other administrative officers, and that COAP does not necessarily consult with Department Heads before making promotion recommendations to the Provost.

## 6. Special Report

**Prof. Vernescu** (VPR, MA) explained that the current Conflict of Interest Policy has not been updated in thirteen years, and he gave a brief description of why and how the proposed policy had been updated. (See **Addendum #2 VPR Presentation on Revised Conflict of Interest Policy – Dec 16 2016**, attached to these minutes.) He pointed out that the changes to be presented have been discussed within the OSP, and with the Chief Compliance Officer, CGSR, and COG. The revised policy would combine the annual conflict of interest form and the individual conflict of interest forms required for each submitted PHS and NSF proposal into a single paperless (InfoEd) form to be filled out once per year, with updates required if circumstances change. The revised policy will also be more clear

about what must be disclosed in order to lower non-compliance risks for individuals and for WPI. This is consistent with meeting the increased scrutiny we are receive from funding agencies as the volume of our research increases. For all researchers, we will follow the relatively strict NIH rules. The revised policy includes additional federally required reporting, training, record retention, and rules for sub-recipients from the uniform guidance rules. Finally, the Conflict Management Committee's composition has been changed to account appropriately for these changes.

**Ms. Harnisch** (Dir. OSP) emphasized that the current policy will be in effect until all feedback from the faculty is received. **Prof Vernescu** indicated that at that point, the revised policy will be presented to the Board of Trustees for its approval

**Prof. Gaudette** (BME), as the current Chair of Conflict Management Committee, observed that the new policy will reduce burden for faculty members. He also indicated, as a member of COG, that changes suggested by COG have been incorporated into the proposal, and as a result COG is in support of the revised policy.

**Prof. Richman** (ME) explained that the original intention was to bring this revised policy to the Board of Trustees in November, but the process was slowed down to afford more time for COG and CGSR to give their input and there is now still two extra months for further input before it will be considered at the February Board meeting.

**Prof. Weathers** (BBT) asked if the details of the questions to be asked and the type of information to be gathered will be available to the faculty for its feedback. **VPR Vernescu** explained that the form to be used for researchers would be identical to the one required by NIH and could easily be made available.

#### 7. Closing Announcements

**Dean Soboyejo** (ME) announced that three Deans (in A&S, BUS, and Eng.) had decided to make a joint effort to maximize our impact by coalescing campus efforts in education, research and community outreach. With this in mind, he explained that a mini-retreat would be held on Monday Dec. 19 for all faculty members to explore the possibilities of interdisciplinary research and educational initiatives as they fit within WPI's Strategic Plan. There will be short presentations by research sub-group leaders, followed by presentations on innovation, sustainability; and project-based learning. He emphasized the importance of having the faculty generate these ideas and encouraged everyone to attend.

**Prof. Richman** reminded all in attendance to enjoy the President's Holiday Luncheon, which was about to begin.

#### 8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:35am.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Richman  
Secretary of the Faculty

#### **Addendum on file with these minutes:**

- 1. Addendum #1 COG Proposed Revisions to Faculty Handbook Description of COAP – Dec 16 2016**
- 2. Addendum #2 VPR Presentation on Revised Conflict of Interest Policy – Dec 16 2016**

**Date:** January 19, 2017  
**To:** WPI Faculty  
**From:** Committee on Governance (Prof. Dominko, Chair)  
**Re:** Motion to revise COAP's Faculty Handbook description

**Motion:** The Committee on Governance (COG) recommends and I move that the current language describing COAP's membership, responsibilities, nomination and election process, and recusal process be revised (in Part One, Bylaw One, Section VI of the Faculty Handbook) as described below.

**Details of the motion:**

Current COAP Description: (with each change identified by numbered footnote for reference in the "Rationale," underlined words to be deleted, and *italicized* words to be changed according to the corresponding footnote in the "Proposed COAP Description" that follows.)

**VI. The Committee on Appointments and Promotions (COAP)** consists of *six*<sup>#1</sup> elected Faculty Members holding the rank of Professor, with no more than one representative from any one academic department or program. COAP is concerned with criteria for academic appointments and promotions. It *advises the*<sup>#2</sup> Provost on *individual*<sup>#3</sup> appointments above the rank of Assistant Professor, on academic promotions from Assistant to Associate Professor that occur prior to the scheduled tenure review year, and on academic promotions from Associate Professor to Professor, after consultation with the appropriate Department Heads and others concerned<sup>#4</sup>. It makes recommendations to the Provost regarding recipients of sabbatical leaves. It makes recommendations to the Faculty for changes in recognized titles of academic rank<sup>#5</sup> and *criteria of eligibility thereto*<sup>#5</sup>. The Committee represents the Faculty to the President and Provost in consultation on appointment and performance evaluation of academic administrative officers.<sup>#6</sup>

Proposed COAP Description: (with each change identified by numbered footnote for reference in the "Rationale," underlined words added, *italicized* words changed, words ~~struck through~~ deleted from the original December 2016 proposal, and ***boldfaced italicized*** words added to the original December 2016 proposal.)

**VI. The Committee on Appointments and Promotions (COAP)**

Roles and responsibilities

COAP is concerned with criteria for academic appointments and promotions. In collaboration with COG<sup>#5</sup>, COAP makes recommendations to the Faculty *for changes in criteria for promotion from Associate Professor to full Professor and for changes in criteria for appointment and promotion of continuing non-tenure track faculty members*.<sup>#5</sup>

COAP *makes recommendations to*<sup>#2</sup> the Provost on *initial*<sup>#3</sup> appointments ~~of Associate Professors without tenure and all full Professors~~ ***above the rank of Assistant Professor***, on academic promotions from Assistant to Associate Professor that occur prior to the scheduled tenure review year, on academic promotions from Associate Professor to Professor, on initial appointments of Associate and (full) teaching and research Professors, on initial appointments of Professors of Practice, on academic promotions of continuing non-tenure track Faculty members to the Associate and (full)



teaching and research Professor levels, and on reappointments of Professors of Practice.<sup>#7</sup>

COAP makes recommendations to the Provost regarding recipients of sabbatical leaves, and represents the Faculty to the President and Provost on appointment, reappointment, and performance evaluation of academic Department Heads.<sup>#6</sup>

#### Membership and Election Procedure

COAP consists of *seven*<sup>#1</sup> elected Faculty members holding the rank of Professor, with no more than one representative from any one academic department. Department Heads, Deans, and the Provost are not eligible to serve on COAP. The term of office for this committee is three years, and no member may serve successive terms.<sup>#8</sup>

Nominations and elections for COAP are conducted by the Secretary of the Faculty. The election procedure is as follows: The Secretary prepares a nominating ballot listing eligible Faculty members by department and distributes it to all members of the Faculty, with instructions to nominate up to one person from each department. The member of each academic department who receives the largest number of nominations and is willing to serve if elected is then placed on an election ballot to be distributed to all members of the Faculty. The number to be elected annually will rotate from three to two to two in successive years. Vacancies to unexpired terms will be filled by the same nominating and election procedure as for full terms.<sup>#9</sup>

#### Joint Promotion Committees and Recusal

For the purpose of considering each promotion case, a Joint Promotion Committee is formed, consisting of six **voting** members of COAP, and a **non-voting** Nominator and a **non-voting** Advocate.<sup>#10</sup> If the candidate and one of the COAP members are from the same department, then that COAP member is recused from the Joint Promotion Committee automatically. The Joint Promotion Committee also will consider whether any of its members should be recused due to direct conflict of interest. In the event of no departmental overlap or conflict of interest, the selection of the six COAP members to sit on the Joint Promotion Committee will be governed by COAP procedures developed to lead to an overall pattern of recusals distributed over the COAP membership so as to ensure appropriate participation for each COAP member. If recusal of two COAP members is necessary, then the most recent qualified past Chair of COAP will serve for that particular case. The Joint Promotion Committee is chaired by the Chair of COAP. If the Chair is recused, then the Joint Promotion Committee is chaired by the senior-most elected member of COAP participants.<sup>#11</sup>

#### **Rationale:**

The changes proposed in the motion are identified by footnotes (#1 to #11) throughout both the “Current COAP Description” and the “Proposed COAP Description” (numbered in the order in which they appear above). These changes fall into four general categories described (as “•” bulleted items) below:

- **Changes in Nomination and Election Process, Membership, and Recusal Process:**

- **Footnote #1 – Change:** “(COAP) consists of *six* elected Faculty Members holding the rank of Professor” *to* “COAP consists of *seven* Faculty members holding the rank of Professor.”

Rationale: This change was recommended by the Task Force on Promotions. Increasing the number of elected COAP members from six to seven, will make it possible to recuse one COAP member from each promotion case. The flexibility to recuse one member from each case will parallel the recusal mechanism used by CTAF, and will allow COAP to recuse one of its members due to any conflict of interest.

- ***Footnote #9 – Add:*** “Nominations and elections for COAP are conducted by the Secretary of the Faculty. The election procedure is as follows: The Secretary prepares a nominating ballot listing eligible Faculty members by department and distributes it to all members of the Faculty, with instructions to nominate up to one person from each department. The member of each academic department who receives the largest number of nominations and is willing to serve if elected is then placed on an election ballot to be distributed to all members of the Faculty. The number to be elected annually will rotate from three to two to two in successive years. Vacancies to unexpired terms will be filled by the same nominating and election procedure as for full terms.”

Rationale: This recommendation was made by the task Force on Promotions to elevate the importance, status, and primacy of service on COAP. The proposed election procedure is exactly parallel to the CTAF election procedures.

- ***Footnote #10 - Add:*** ”For the purpose of considering each promotion case, a Joint Promotion Committee is formed, consisting of six voting members of COAP, and a non-voting Nominator and a non-voting Advocate.”

Rationale: The (proposed) formation of a Joint Promotion Committee that formally includes the Nominator and the Advocate will ensure that in each case the Nominator and Advocate play a more significant role in the promotion-deliberations. This will improve the level of communication between COAP members and those who know the promotion candidate’s qualifications best. However, because the Nominator and Advocate will be selected by the promotion candidate in part because of their support of the promotion, they will serve as non-voting members of the Joint Committee. Currently, four positive votes from the six COAP members are required for a positive recommendation for promotion. Any change to this practice may be proposed by COAP in a separate description of its promotion procedures.

- ***Footnote #11 – Add:*** “If the candidate and one of the COAP members are from the same department, then that COAP member is recused from the Joint Promotion Committee automatically. The Joint Promotion Committee also will consider whether any of its members should be recused due to direct conflict of interest. In the event of no departmental overlap or conflict of interest, the selection of the six COAP members to sit on the Joint Promotion Committee will be governed by COAP procedures developed to lead to an overall pattern of recusals distributed over the COAP membership so as to ensure appropriate participation for each COAP member. If recusal of two COAP members is necessary, then the most recent qualified past Chair of COAP will serve for that particular case. The Joint Promotion Committee is chaired by the Chair of COAP. If the Chair is recused, then the Joint Promotion Committee is chaired by the senior-most elected member of COAP participants.”

Rationale: The recusal mechanism proposed here is consistent with the recommendation of the Task Force on Promotions, and exactly parallels the recusal process used by CTAF. The need for a recusal mechanism due to conflicts of interest is clear. In addition, (like the CTAF procedures) the proposal includes an automatic recusal of any COAP member in the same department as the promotion candidate. This is to eliminate the current non-uniformity in which certain candidates may have more departmental representation on the promotion committee than others.

- **Changes in Responsibilities (to the Faculty and to the Provost):**

- **Footnote #5: - Change:** “(COAP) makes recommendations to the Faculty for changes in recognized titles of academic rank and criteria thereto.” **in order to:**

- o **Add:** “In collaboration with COG...” for recommendations of changes in criteria.

Rationale: Explicitly stating the collaboration between COAP and COG will formalize cooperation by both committees whenever such recommendations are contemplated. This change will improve the diversity of those within the Faculty governance structure (beyond full Professors) formally involved in making such recommendations.

- o **Focus specifically on** recommendations “...for changes in criteria for promotion from Associate Professor to full Professor...” and additionally on recommendations “...for changes in criteria for appointment and promotion of continuing non-tenure track faculty members.”

Rationale: This change focuses COAP’s involvement specifically in criteria for promotion from Associate professor to Full professor. This is because the criteria for promotion from Assistant professor to Associate professor are primarily concerns for CTAF. Modifications in CTAF rules have historically been handled in collaboration between COG and CTAF.

Also, in order to provide a mechanism for changing and adding to the criteria described in the Faculty Handbook (Part Two, Section 7) for non-tenure track Faculty members, this change also explicitly states COG’s and COAP’s collaborative involvement in recommending changes to the criteria for appointment and promotion of continuing non-tenure track Faculty members.

- o **Delete:** “...in recognized titles of academic rank...” from the recommendations for change made by COAP.

Rationale: The recognized titles of faculty members serve as a University-wide definition of the faculty at WPI. Changes and additions to these titles have in the past been coordinated by COG in appropriate collaboration with CTAF, COAP, Department Heads, and the Provost. Recent examples of COG coordination of this type include the elimination of the Instructor title (in April 2014), and – over a three-year period – the introduction of titles for non-tenure track Faculty members, including appointment, evaluations, and promotion procedures for continuing non-tenure track Faculty members (concluding in March 2012).

- **Updates (to properly reflect current practice):**

- **Footnote #4 - Delete:** “...after consultation with the appropriate Department Heads and others concerned.”

Rationale: COAP does not always consult with the promotion candidate’s Department Head, and “others concerned” is vague and ill-defined. The extent to which Promotion Committees consult with others is a procedural matter that should be provided in a separate description of promotion procedures.

- **Footnote #7 - Add:** COAP makes recommendation to the Provost “...on initial appointments of Associate and (full) teaching and research Professors, on initial appointments of Professors of Practice, on promotions of continuing non-tenure track Faculty members to the Associate and (full) teaching and research Professor levels , and on reappointments of Professors of Practice.”

Rationale: This change reflects the new responsibilities of COAP that were assigned when the non-tenure track Faculty structure was put in place in 2012. These added responsibilities are outlined in the Faculty Handbook (Part Two, Section 7, Subsection E) but were never incorporated into the Faculty Handbook charge for COAP.

- **Footnote #6 - Replace** evaluation of “...academic administrative officers...” **with** evaluation of “...Department Heads.”

Rationale: This change reflects current and past practice, in which COG has been responsible for the Faculty evaluations of administrative officers and COAP has been involved with Department Head evaluations.

- **Footnote #8 – Add** “...Department Heads, Deans, and the Provost are not eligible to serve on COAP. The term of office for this committee is three years, and no member may serve successive terms.”

Rationale: These additions are purely to clarify the current and intended practice, and they are parallel to the CTAF membership rules.

- **Editorial Changes (for clarity):**

- **Footnote #2 – Change:** “...advises the Provost...” **to** “...makes recommendations to the Provost...”

Rationale: This is purely an editorial change that reflects the common description of the relationship between COAP and the Provost in dealing with promotion cases.

- **Footnote #3 – Change:** “...individual...” **to** “...initial...” in reference to COAP’s involvement with appointments of newly hired faculty members.

Rationale: This is an editorial change that better explains that COAP’s involvement in such appointments occurs when Faculty members are *initially* hired.

**Implementation:**

If approved, the wording will take effect on July 1, 2017. Nominations and election of three new members of COAP will be carried out in spring 2016 simultaneous with the nominations and elections of new COG and CTAF members.

*The new COAP election rotation will be as follows:*

- Three new members of COAP will be elected in spring 2017 for terms that begin on July 1, 2017 and end on June 30, 2020.
- Two new members of COAP will be elected in spring 2018 for terms that begin on July 1, 2018 and end on June 30, 2021.
- Two new members of COAP will be elected in spring 2019 for terms that begin on July 1, 2019 and end on June 30, 2022.
- This rotation will repeat beginning with elections in spring 2020.

**Date:** January 19, 2017  
**To:** WPI Faculty  
**From:** Committee on Appointments and Promotions (Prof. Hansen, Chair)  
**Re:** Motion to modify the Faculty handbook description for criteria for promotion to full professor

**Motion:** The Committee on Appointments and Promotions recommends and I moves that the existing “Promotion: Criteria for Promotion in Academic Rank” (Handbook, Part Two, Section 1.D, page 2-7) be replaced with the following:

### **D. Promotion**

The principal reason for establishing academic ranks is to recognize various levels of contribution and to encourage the continued professional growth of individual faculty members. The faculty consists of individuals with diverse and often unique capabilities who make a variety of contributions that advance the scholarly community as well as the institution but cannot be measured against rigid and narrow criteria.

#### **D.1.1. The Criteria for Promotion**

The candidate for promotion to associate professor should have demonstrated high quality teaching and high quality scholarship/creativity as well as the promise for continued high quality performance in these areas. Evidence of service at an appropriate level is expected.

The candidate for promotion to full professor should demonstrate continuing high quality teaching and high quality scholarship/creativity as well as a record of scholarly contributions that demonstrates a positive external impact beyond WPI as appropriate to the candidate’s area of expertise. Evidence of service at a level appropriate to the rank is expected.

The specific standards to assess performance in teaching, scholarship, and service for promotion to full professor are similar to those for promotion to associate professor, with the added expectation of scholarly contributions that demonstrate a positive external impact beyond WPI. Contributions to WPI may demonstrate an external impact if they are disseminated and recognized externally. In every case, the high quality and positive external impact of scholarly contributions must be recognized by peers within WPI and by knowledgeable people external to WPI. While it is expected that these criteria describe the great majority of cases, there may be exceptional candidates whose unique contributions, while not conforming to these guidelines, are deserving of promotion.

#### **D.1.2. Definition of Scholarship**

To recognize the full range of scholarly contributions by faculty, WPI endorses an inclusive definition of scholarship. Scholarship exists in a continuum of diverse forms of knowledge and knowledge-making practices. Scholarship may be pursued through original research, making connections between disciplines, building bridges between theory and practice, communicating knowledge effectively to students and

peers, or in reciprocal partnerships with broader communities. The common characteristics for any scholarly form to be considered scholarship are: it must be public, amenable to critical appraisal, and in a

form that permits exchange and use by other members of the scholarly community.

Candidates for promotion may make contributions to the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application and practice, the scholarship of teaching and learning, or the scholarship of engagement. Contributions may be in one area or multiple areas across the continuum of scholarship. Scholarly contributions to any area or areas are valued equally by WPI.

The following descriptions of areas across this continuum of scholarship indicate the scope of each domain, but they are not intended to be exclusive or exhaustive. The forms that scholarship take along this continuum will vary by discipline, department or academic division.

### **Scholarship of Discovery**

The creation or discovery of new knowledge involves creative and critical thought, research skills, the rigorous testing of researchable questions suggested by theory and practice, or active experimentation and exploration with the goal of adding to knowledge in a substantive way. The scholarship of discovery is usually demonstrated through publication in peer-reviewed journals and books, presentations at scholarly conferences, inventions and patents, or original creation in writing or multimedia, artistic works, or new technologies.

### **Scholarship of Integration**

The scholarship of integration includes the critical evaluation, synthesis, analysis, integration, or interpretation of research or creative work produced by others. It may be disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or multidisciplinary in nature. When disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge is synthesized, interpreted, or connected, this integrative scholarly contribution brings new insight. Integrative or interdisciplinary work might include articles, policy papers, reflective essays and reviews, translations, popular publications, synthesis of the literature on a topic, or textbooks. The scholarship of integration may be shared through any form such as those typical of discovery, application, teaching, or engagement.

### **Scholarship of Application and Practice**

Scholarship of application involves the use of a scholar's disciplinary knowledge to address important individual, institutional, and societal problems. The scholarship of application and practice might apply the knowledge, techniques, or technologies of the arts and sciences, business or engineering to the benefit of individuals and groups. This may include translational research, commercialization, start-ups, technology transfer, assistive technologies, learning technologies, or applied research supported by industrial or corporate partners or by government agencies. Contributions to the scholarship of application and practice are shared with stakeholders and open to review and critique by stakeholders and by peers.

### **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**

The scholarship of teaching and learning is the development and improvement of pedagogical practices that are shared with others. Effective teachers engage in scholarly teaching activity if they undertake assessment and evaluation to promote improvement in their own teaching and in student learning. Scholarly teaching activity becomes the scholarship of teaching and learning when faculty members make their teaching public, so that it can be reviewed, critiqued and built on by others, through publications, presentations or other forms of dissemination.

### **Scholarship of Engagement**

The scholarship of engagement involves collaborative partnerships with communities (local, regional, state, national, or global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources. Examples of the scholarship of engagement might include, but are not limited to: community-based programs that enhance WPI's curriculum, teaching and learning; educational or public outreach programs; other partnerships with communities beyond the campus to address critical societal issues, prepare educated citizens, or contribute to the public good. Contributions in the scholarship of engagement are of benefit to the external community, visible and shared with stakeholders, and open to review and critique by community stakeholders and by peers.

### **D.1.3. Documentation in the Promotion Dossier**

The candidate for promotion to full Professor will submit a promotion dossier representative of their overall career, with an emphasis on work since tenure and/or promotion to Associate Professor. The promotion dossier will include the following: a curriculum vitae (CV); a personal statement of teaching, scholarship, service, and impact; a teaching portfolio to document high quality teaching; sample scholarly artifacts and a citation index and other indicators to demonstrate the high quality and external impact of the candidate's scholarly contributions.

- The **CV** provides comprehensive documentation of the candidate's professional experience and accomplishments in teaching, scholarship/creativity, and service.
- The **personal statement** provides a reflective summary and description of the candidate's professional accomplishments and scholarly contributions. Typically, the personal statement will include sections on teaching, scholarship/creativity, service, and external impact.
- The **teaching portfolio** provides documentation of the candidate's high quality teaching. A teaching portfolio presents representative teaching materials and evidence of their effectiveness. Typical elements in a teaching portfolio include a reflective statement of the candidate's approach to teaching and learning, samples of teaching materials, and measures of teaching effectiveness or materials that demonstrate student learning.
- The **sample scholarly artifacts** provide documentation of the high quality and external impact of the candidate's scholarly contributions. For most candidates, the sample scholarly artifacts will be three peer-reviewed articles that have been published since tenure and/or promotion. However, scholarly contributions may be documented and disseminated through a variety of artifacts besides peer-reviewed articles. The continuum of artifacts through which knowledge may be documented and disseminated matches, in its inclusiveness and variety, the continuum of scholarship. Sample scholarly artifacts must be publicly available, amenable to critical appraisal, and in a form that permits exchange and use by other members of the scholarly community.
- **Citation index and indicators of external impact.** All candidates for promotion must submit a citation index and any other indicators of external impact appropriate to their scholarly contributions. The citation index should include all citations of the candidate's publications, presentations or other scholarly contributions. Additional indicators of external impact might include reviews of the candidate's work, press and media coverage, downloads of scholarly materials, awards and recognition, or any other indicators that the candidate's scholarly contributions have had an impact beyond WPI.

Overall, the candidate should use this documentation to present the case that they have achieved the criteria for promotion. Scholarly contributions may combine or cut across traditional categories of teaching, scholarship/creativity and service. The candidate is invited and encouraged to use the promotion dossier to make arguments for the quality and impact of their work using these categories or in other ways if those other ways are appropriate to the form and impact of their scholarly contributions.

In addition to the above materials submitted by the candidate, the Committee on Appointments and Promotions will add three other sources of information to the complete promotion dossier: 1) Summary student ratings for all courses taught at WPI in the last five years. 2) Responses to a teaching evaluation sent to a random selection of former students and alumni whom the candidate has taught in the last five years. 3) Letters of appraisal solicited by the committee from internal and external peers for a confidential evaluation of the materials submitted by the candidate for the promotion dossier.



#### **D.1.4. Criteria for Evaluation of the Promotion Dossier: Quality, Impact and Peer Review**

The candidate's promotion dossier and the criteria for promotion (sections D1.1 – D.1.4) will be sent to peers within WPI and to knowledgeable people external to WPI for an independent assessment of the quality and impact of the candidate's teaching, scholarship, service. These letters of appraisal will be read only by people who are directly involved in the evaluation of the nomination for promotion and they will not be shown to the candidate or to anyone else. This section provides additional guidance to reviewers for this assessment.

An assessment of **high quality teaching, high quality scholarship/creativity, and service** may be based on any material in the promotion dossier, including the CV, personal statement, teaching portfolio, peer-reviewed scholarship, peer reviews of sample scholarly artifacts, or indicators of external impact. Traditional measures to assess quality do not necessarily accommodate all areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. Nonetheless, the following six standards have been identified to evaluate quality across diverse areas: clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation, and reflective critique (Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff, *Scholarship Assessed*, 1997). Since the dossier includes the candidate's reflective critique in their personal statement, peer reviewers are invited to apply these six standards to assess the candidate's teaching, scholarship and service in the promotion portfolio.

**External impact** beyond WPI should be assessed based on the relevant standards in the areas of the candidate's scholarly contributions. Thus, the starting point to assess external impact is the candidate's personal statement, which should identify the area or areas of their scholarly contributions and indicate examples of external impact beyond WPI. While quantitative measures such as the number of refereed publications and citations or the level of external funding will remain important indicators of quality and impact for many scholars, WPI recognizes that the weight assigned to such measures varies widely between academic fields as well as along the continuum of scholarship. Thus, evidence of external impact beyond WPI might include: funding from multiple sources; peer-reviewed articles or presentations in well-regarded journals or conferences; books; reviews, citations or impact factors; downloadable curriculum; patents; films, broadcasts, software, or computer games; discussion of research in legal cases, policy reports, or the media; keynote addresses; workshops for other institutions, regional, national or international societies; artistic exhibitions, performances or productions; K-12 outreach and educational programs; journal editorships; leadership of academic programs or centers; or impact on external communities through teaching, scholarship or service. These examples of external impact are illustrative and do not limit other ways that a candidate might demonstrate external impact.

**Peer reviewers** should be experts in, and therefore appropriate evaluators of, the area or areas of the candidate's scholarly contributions. Where appropriate, external reviewers may include experts whose institutional affiliation is beyond the academy if they are well-placed to testify to or evaluate the quality and impact of the candidate's scholarly contributions.

All reviewers—internal and external peers, members of promotion committees, or academic decision-makers—are reminded that **implicit and explicit bias** has been shown to occur in every aspect of a faculty career that is evaluated. Empirical studies have shown that letters of recommendation for women and men differ in gendered ways: letters for women are often shorter, less detailed, and reinforce gender stereotypes. Women faculty and faculty of color also may face bias in student ratings of teaching or in mentoring and sponsorship. The choice of area for scholarly contributions (e.g. interdisciplinary, qualitative, community-engaged, theoretical, or digital) may result in comparatively less funding or fewer citations but nevertheless demonstrate high quality and impact in forms appropriate to that area of scholarship. The Committee on Appointments and Promotions highlights potential sources of bias in this description of the criteria for evaluation of the promotion dossier so that all reviewers at every stage of the review process will be aware of potential implicit and explicit bias and take care to limit opportunities for such bias to influence the

consideration of each nomination for promotion.

[End of Motion]

**Rationale:**

This motion is one of several to be developed by the Committee on Appointments and Promotions in response to the Report of the Task Force on Academic Promotion. Changes to procedures for nomination and the composition of the review committee will be proposed separately. The existing criteria for promotion require high quality teaching and high quality scholarship/creativity, demonstrated leadership in one of those areas, and some appropriate degree in activities of service to WPI.

To provide improved clarity for the criteria for promotion to full professor, this proposal:

- Reasserts the central importance of high quality **teaching** and high quality **scholarship/creativity**
- Redefines leadership as scholarly contributions with an **external impact beyond WPI**
- **Broadens** the definition of **scholarly contributions** to include the scholarship of *discovery, integration, application and practice, teaching and learning, or engagement*
- Expects a level of **service** appropriate to the rank
- Affirms that **exceptional candidates** whose unique contributions, while not conforming to these guidelines, may be deserving of promotion
- Defines material for the **promotion dossier** and provides **criteria for the evaluation of quality and impact**
- Articulates an inclusive definition of **peer reviewers**
- Highlights and attempts to limit the role of **implicit or explicit bias** in a promotion review

High quality teaching *and* high quality scholarship continue to be required for promotion to full professor because both are essential to the core mission of WPI. Tenured faculty are expected to make contributions to all areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. Without continuing scholarly contributions from the tenured faculty, WPI cannot fulfill its mission to educate men and women and to create, discover and convey knowledge for the public good. WPI does not award tenure and promotion to associate professor for high quality contributions in one area only. Likewise, WPI does not award promotion to full professor without continuing contributions of high quality in both teaching and scholarship/creativity. This longstanding commitment to excellence in teaching and scholarship is one of WPI's greatest strengths and most precious assets. The fundamental commitment by the faculty to high quality teaching and high quality scholarship is directly responsible for WPI's outstanding academic reputation and its recent recognition by the *Wall Street Journal* as the best school in the nation for combining scholarly research with classroom instruction.

"External impact beyond WPI" defines the standard by which to judge when high quality scholarly contributions reach a threshold that merits promotion to full professor. In the past, "leadership" in teaching or scholarship has been considered problematic, especially for someone putting forward a case for promotion based on leadership in teaching. Excellent teaching by itself does not indicate leadership without demonstrating external dissemination and impact. Teaching and learning is a well-developed area of scholarship, and its quality and impact can be assessed by peers within WPI and by knowledgeable people external to WPI, like any other area of scholarship. External impact beyond WPI is specific enough to motivate faculty to make contributions that are disseminated and recognized beyond our campus and flexible enough to accommodate a variety scholarly contributions.

Scholarship is defined along a continuum in order to recognize and reward the variety of scholarly contributions made by faculty. Scholarly contributions may be in any one area or in multiple areas across the continuum of the scholarship of discovery, scholarship of integration, scholarship of application and practice, the scholarship of teaching and learning, and scholarship of engagement. These

broad categories of faculty work have been the subject of wide-ranging discussion in the academy for the last 25 years. WPI has been a national and international leader in several of these domains without using these terms in our own criteria for promotion. By reconsidering scholarship from this perspective, scholarly contributions also may be understood as combining or cutting across traditional categories of teaching, scholarship and service.

The criteria expect candidates to provide “evidence of service at a level appropriate to the rank.” Service remains a critical responsibility of all tenured and tenure-track faculty. Over the past year, the committee considered language that would have required high quality service, significant service, or substantial service, and received consistent feedback that such expectations would be unclear, “raise the bar,” and form unreasonable standards for promotion. Instead, a level of service appropriate to the rank recognizes the importance of service and acknowledges that the appropriate level for promotion to full professor is contextual to each candidate’s unique contributions. Inclusive definitions of scholarship and impact provide more effective ways for contributions that might be disparaged or undervalued as service to be respected and rewarded as scholarship. In addition, this approach highlights the potential for contributions that cut across teaching, scholarship, and service to demonstrate a level of service appropriate to the rank.

Each candidate for promotion should use the documentation in their dossier to define the area or areas of their scholarly contributions and to demonstrate their external impact. New sections that describe the documentation in the promotion dossier and the criteria for evaluation by internal and external peer reviewers also provides clarity for candidates, so that they will know what to submit and how it will be reviewed. The candidate’s personal statement and other documentation should make the case for the high quality and external impact of their scholarly contributions. Mentoring by department heads as well as by colleagues at WPI and by peers at other institutions will remain essential for candidate to present their case for promotion effectively and persuasively.

By adopting an inclusive definition of scholarship that gives equal standing to the scholarship of engagement and the scholarship of teaching and learning, WPI is making a bold change that provides multiple pathways to professor, especially for women faculty. Several studies indicate that women faculty are more likely to be promoted to full professor when the criteria are broadened to include teaching, engagement, and inclusive definitions of scholarship. In addition, by highlighting for reviewers at all stages of the review process the adverse effect of implicit or explicit bias on the review of candidates for promotion (especially women faculty and faculty of color), these criteria should help to limit the influence of such bias during the promotion review.

This proposal reasserts the faculty’s commitment to the mission of WPI while providing multiple and flexible paths for promotion. Recognizing the variety of faculty contributions to WPI and articulating the expectation of an external impact beyond WPI are equally important if the university is to achieve the aspiration to elevate its stature, enhance its reputation, and be recognized the world’s leading global polytechnic.