

**Committee on Governance Meeting**  
**Meeting #4 (2016-17)**  
**Monday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Noon – 1:15 pm**  
**Faculty Governance Conference Room (SL 225)**

In Attendance: Leonard Albano, Bruce Bursten (Provost), Tanja Dominko (Chair), Glenn Gaudette, Eleanor Loiacono, Mark Richman (Secretary of the Faculty), Elizabeth Ryder (Secretary), Suzanne Weekes

Invited Guest: Craig Shue (Chair, Committee on Information Technology Policy)

1. The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM and the Agenda was approved as distributed.
2. Announcements  
Prof. Richman explained that he was informed at the start of A-term that the Board of Trustees at its last meeting in May 2016 decided to limit eligibility for Faculty appointees on its Academic Planning Committee (APC) to full professors only, and as a result have asked Prof. Burnham to step off the APC. COG will nominate two full Professors who are willing to serve - from whom the Trustees will select one to fill the unexpired term of Prof. Burnham.
3. COG meeting minutes #3 from September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 were approved as amended.
4. COG unanimously selected Prof. David Adams (BBT) to serve as an alternate member of the Conflict Management Committee.
5. Committee on Information Technology Policy (CITP) endorsement of the proposal of IT Services division to migrate faculty/staff email from the current system to Office 365  
(Guest: Prof. Shue, Chair, CITP)

CITP has endorsed IT's decision to migrate faculty/staff email from the current system to Microsoft Office 365 on Oct. 18 at 10 PM (during break, 5 hours after grades are due). This will increase the space available for each faculty member (from 2 Gb to 50 Gb), increase security, and reduce cost to WPI. Prof. Shue provided assurances that Microsoft will not be able to mine our data or use it for advertising; that the agreement is FERPA compliant; and that WPI owns the data. While Microsoft will offer support for this service, WPI staff will continue to be available for support as well. COG urged Prof. Shue to explain the change in a *clearly* worded email message to the Faculty and briefly at the October 14 Faculty meeting.

Prof. Shue left the meeting at this point, and Prof. Gaudette arrived.

6. Response to concerns from faculty members on the COAP's proposed changes to the promotion criteria

In the context of current efforts to revise our promotion criteria and processes, concerns have been raised within the WPI community and within COG that the membership of COAP does not represent the diversity of our Faculty. Structurally, of course, the members of COAP are restricted to full professors. The current membership of COAP includes only men.

In addition to verbal comments, COG received six emails with concerns regarding diversity after COAP's open meeting concerning promotion criteria on September 7. One of the emails expressed these concerns particularly poignantly:

*I believe that proposals for new promotion criteria and procedures should be developed by a subcommittee consisting of an equal number of COAP members and COG members that includes women and associate professors. While it seems clear that COAP members are genuinely committed to improving our promotion practices and are seeking input from the community, six male full professors are not close to representative of the Faculty. The promotion process belongs to all of the Faculty, not just full professors. And while all of us have our particular blind spots and implicit biases regardless of gender, the collective blind spots and implicit biases of a group of males who have succeeded in the system that we're trying to improve and in a system that is especially dissatisfying to women is problematic. In fact, it feels oppressive. A more diverse group with a broader set of perspectives has a better chance of inspiring a sense of confidence and fairness and, most importantly, developing proposals that a large majority of faculty will support, including men and women across career stages.*

*Sincerely,*

*A tenured faculty member*

To address this issue, the following motion was made:

*For the purpose of developing proposals for new promotion criteria and procedures, and for the purpose of bringing those proposals to COAP and COG for their approval and for joint recommendation to the Faculty, **a subcommittee should be formed by COAP and COG (consisting of three current or recent members of COAP and three current or recent members of COG) that includes women and an equal number of associate and full professors.** The subcommittee should complete its work by **no later** than February 1, 2017.*

COG agreed that for the benefit of the Faculty, in particular, and the University, in general, proposals for new promotion criteria and procedures should be brought forward by a diverse group with a broad set of perspectives in order to inspire the confidence and the sense of fairness needed to gain the support of a large majority of the Faculty.

The committee discussed appointing faculty members outside of COG and COAP to the proposed subcommittee but agreed that a diverse group could be constituted from among the current and recent members of the two committees. It was also understood that if COAP were in the meantime to introduce revisions that, in the view of the diverse subcommittee, addressed broad faculty-concerns in a manner that assured the support of a large majority of the Faculty, then the subcommittee would likely finish its work much sooner than February 1.

Prof. Weekes left the meeting at 1 pm.

After further discussion, the **motion passed** with 6 in favor, 1 abstention, and 1 absence.

Prof. Dominko will reach out to COAP regarding the above motion within a day.

7. The meeting adjourned at 1:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Ryder, Secretary