



**Administrative Policy Group
Official Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 26, 2021
2:00 – 2:40 p.m.
Co-Chairs: Wole Soboyejo & Jeff Solomon**

Attendees:

APG Members: David Bunis; Philip Clay; Joseph Fehribach; Patty Patria; Craig Shue; Wole Soboyejo; Jeff Solomon; Amy Morton; Donna Stock; and Dana Harmon

Guests: Matt Thaler; Mary Calarese; Patrick Hitchcock; Olga Klochkova; Rachel LeBlanc; Dan Sarachick; Tim Reilly; and Amy Fabiano

Minutes:

1. Vote to Recommend the Catering Services and Off-Campus Dining Policy for Approval by President Leshin

Rachel LeBlanc provided APG with a refresher on this policy, which was initially presented during the April 7, 2021 meeting of the APG. Based on the comments and feedback received during the comment period, the decision was made to withdraw this policy proposal from consideration.

2. Approval of April 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Jeff Solomon called for a vote to approve the April 28, 2021 meeting minutes.

Profs. Fehribach and Shue and Amy Morton abstained; all other APG members present voted to approve the April 28, 2021 meeting minutes.

3. Update on the Travel Expense Policy

Jeff Solomon reminded the APG of their April 14, 2021 meeting, where the group decided not to vote on recommending for approval the Travel Expense Policy to President Leshin at that time. Rather, the policy sponsors would work on Frequently Asked Questions, the comments received during the 30-day comment period would be publicly posted on the APG Site, and the public comment period would be extended for additional comment (after the WPI community had adequate time to digest the forthcoming FAQs). Subsequently, in the April 28, 2021 meeting of the APG, the group agreed to review the forthcoming FAQs and other suggested community messaging (e.g., town halls).



Ms. Calarese then provided additional updates and clarification on the Travel Expense Policy to the group. She informed the group that the FAQs have been drafted and she will share them with the APG following this meeting. She also met with the Travel Management Company (TMC), Direct ATPI, and they would be happy to meet with the WPI campus community at the appropriate time.

The group then discussed possible next steps including an extended comment period that was messaged to the community on April 15, 2021. Several members agreed there was flexibility on this issue because the APG had already satisfied its obligation of a full 30-day comment period; thus, a shorter extended period was appropriate. The group also discussed the timing of releasing the FAQs and scheduling and/or recording information sessions with the TMC so the WPI community could digest the information before beginning an abbreviated extended comment period. The group also discussed the importance of completing all of these tasks such that the program launches on-time (subject to the policy being approved) as of January 1, 2022.

Prof. Shue informed the group that he spoke to the Committee on Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR) and told them that the TCM would be supporting WPI logistics using pcards and travel logistics and not otherwise enforcing policy on pricing or otherwise. Prof. Shue further stated to the APG that clarifying to the WPI community that this policy is not intended to limit traveler autonomy would help win over hesitant community members.

Ms. Calarese expressed some concern that further delay of the policy proposal and/or implementation, may make it harder to get back into the TMC's queue, as – hopefully – the whole world will begin opening up again soon. Mr. Solomon stated that we can work things in parallel: WPI can hire the TMC (finalize the contract) while we work on the additional education and approval processes in the Fall, when the new academic year begins.

Therefore, the APG recommended the following plan of action: post the FAQs as soon as this group reviews and approves them; schedule town halls/information sessions (potentially recorded) with the TMC so they are ready for the Fall; begin the abbreviated extended comment period in the Fall and have this group vote on the policy for approval by President Leshin in time for a January 1, 2022 launch. In parallel, WPI will work with the TMC to ensure that if/when the policy is approved, WPI will be ready to implement the program on time.

4. Vote to Recommend the Fleet Safety Policy for Approval by President Leshin

Ms. Fabiano provided the APG with a refresher on this policy, which was initially presented during the March 31, 2021 meeting of the APG. Ms. Fabiano noted that the APG received seven (7) comments. She summarized them, and the responses, for the group. Ms. Fabiano pointed out the places in the policy that were edited because of the comments. Ms. Fabiano emphasized that this policy is a requirement of the auto insurer.



Dan Sarachick noted that, through active engagement with the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS), WPI can reduce the administrative burden on those who are subject to this policy in various ways, including by reducing the training burden required by the policy.

There being no further questions or comments, Mr. Solomon called for a vote to recommend the policy to President Leshin for approval. Profs. Shue and Fehribach abstained; all other APG members voted to recommend the policy to President Leshin for approval.

5. Vote to Recommend the Professional Services Policy for Approval by President Leshin

Olga Klochkova provided the APG with a refresher on this policy, which was initially presented during the April 7, 2021 meeting of the APG. Ms. Klochkova noted that the APG received four (4) comments and summarized them, and the responses, for the group. Ms. Klochkova pointed out the places in the policy that were edited because of the comments.

There being no further questions or comments, Mr. Solomon called for a vote to recommend the policy to President Leshin for approval. Profs. Shue and Fehribach abstained; all other APG members voted to recommend the policy to President Leshin for approval.

6. Remaining Meetings of the APG for Academic Year 2020-2021

Mr. Thaler noted that there is one more meeting scheduled for June 2, 2021 which will be cancelled, as it is no longer necessary. Erin Silva will schedule the next series of APG meetings for the Academic Year 2021-2022. The membership of the APG will remain the same, with the exception of replacing Mr. Solomon (retiring) and Prof. Shue (rotating off).

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

David A. Bunis
Secretary, Administrative Policy Group