

**Committee on Governance: Minutes**  
Meeting #3: September 18, 2023  
Faculty Governance Office  
Faculty Governance Conference Room, SL 225  
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm  
Zoom Link:

<https://wpi.zoom.us/j/95482156236>

Members: Mark Claypool (CS), Althea Danielski (HUA), Tanja Dominko (Secretary, BBT), George Heineman (Chair, CS), Stephen Kmiotek (ChE), Mark Richman (Secretary of the Faculty, AE), Diane Strong (President's appointment, WBS), Karen Troy (BME).

1. Agenda was approved.
2. Minutes for meeting #2 were approved as amended.
3. COG will meet Mondays from 4:00 – 5:30 PM during B-term 2023.
4. COG appointment to FAP  
The committee discussed the importance of appointee's familiarity with budgetary matters, previous experience and record of advocacy for academic priorities. As FAP deliberations on institutional financial matters often require that committee members be able to speak openly, ask questions and advocate for the appropriate use of resources to accomplish academic mission, COG agreed that tenured faculty may be best positioned to fulfill this role. The committee unanimously appointed Prof. Tahar El-Korchi (Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering) to FAP for AY 23-24. COG expressed its gratitude to all faculty members who expressed their interest and willingness to serve on the committee.
5. Faculty evaluation of Academic Administrators  
Chair Heineman reviewed the history of faculty evaluations of administrative offices at WPI, which dates back to 1987. The purpose of faculty evaluations is to provide feedback on the effectiveness of administrators as it relates to advancement of WPI's academic mission. Evaluations had been carried out with regularity until 2018, but more urgent faculty priorities and addressing COVID paused this process. Past practice evaluated administrative offices every two years on a rotating schedule. Evaluation instruments have evolved over the years and as of 2018 included 4 broad groupings of position-specific questions that have been developed with input from specific administrators: effectiveness of Leadership, Resource and Personnel Management, Communication, and Campus Climate and Culture. COG anticipates conducting the evaluations of the following positions this academic year; Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Arts and

Sciences, Dean of Business, Dean of Engineering, and the Vice Provost for Research.

6. Proposal to Institutionalize Summer Working Groups to Advance Equity-Minded Faculty Policies and Practices

The committee discussed a proposal submitted by Prof. Chrys Demetry. Over the years several initiative of broad institutional importance have been undertaken by groups of faculty over the summer months. Primarily sponsored by the ADVANCE grant leadership, these initiatives centered on development of equity-guided recommendations to complement policies and procedures outlined in the Faculty handbook. The committee highlighted the importance of faculty-initiated projects and the need to provide a common framework for such activities. COG's recent initiative to formalize faculty- and administration-initiated project opportunities for programmatic improvement within Presidential and Provost fellowships; and existing Global Fellows program were discussed. COG will continue discussing recommendations how to best integrate current and proposed opportunities into a formal mechanism that will benefit both faculty and the institution.

7. Guidelines for searches to fill academic administrative positions

COG has undertaken a review and will propose modifications to the current language of Guidelines for searches to fill academic administrative positions (Part One, Chapter Two, Section 6 of the Faculty Handbook). The section will clarify and modify the search process steps to include guidelines for a) Announcing the availability of an academic position; b) Forming the search committee for Assistant and Associate Academic Deans; c) Evaluating candidates for Assistant and Associate academic Deans; and d) Appointing Interim Academic Administrators.

The committee members agreed that the current practice of Interim administrative appointments frequently leads to subsequent internal search process for permanent replacement where only a single candidate might apply – often the faculty member holding the Interim position. This practice discourages other qualified candidates from applying. The committee will propose guidelines that will alleviate this concern and will attract applications from all qualified candidates.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 pm.

Respectfully,  
Tanja Dominko  
COG Secretary