

Committee on Financial and Administrative Policy; Minutes
Meeting #14; December 4, 2023

Members Present:

Hal Walker (CEAE, Chair)
Rob Dempski (CBC)
Tahar El-Korchi (COG Appointee)
Suzanne LePage (CEAE)
Stephan Sturm (MA)
Kris Sullivan (Associate VP for Academic Affairs)
Mike Horan (CFO)

Guests:

Jane Clapp (Finance and Operations)
Emily Perlow (Dean of Students)

Call to Order

Prof. Walker called the meeting to order at 2:04.

Agenda Approval

The distributed agenda was approved as presented.

Introduction of Visitors and Proposal Discussion

Professor Walker introduced Jane Clapp (Finance and Operations) and Emily Perlow (Dean of Students).

- Discussion on the Proposed policy on payments to WPI students - Jane Clapp (Finance and Operations)
- Jane Clapp provided an overview of the payment process to students. Finance and Operations is in the process of streamlining the process in Workday. The process would optimize finance operations to pay students taking into account faculty needs as well as tax considerations. Jane shared a flowchart that assists the faculty and departments for designating the different categories associated with tuition costs, payment compensation for work-services, travel reimbursement for conferences or workshops, international student compensation considerations, and WPI withholding tax guidelines, etc.
- The new processes should not affect the current hiring of TAs and RAs as managed through the Provost Office.
- The goal is to go live with this new process on January 1st, 2024. Finance will be seeking input and updating the process overtime.
- Prof. Walker thanked Jane Clapp for her presentation and input.
- Discussion on Updated plans for the Quorum - Emily Perlow (Dean of Students)
- Emily Perlow provided an overview on the Quorum activity and strategic plan for the future.
- She stated that there was significant outreach and advertising campaign for the Quorum last year including flyers, adds, sampling trays and discount coupons among others.

- She stated that there are only 11.7 tickets per day, less than 1% of the on-campus employees.
- Pre-pandemic, we had 100 customers per day spending 6 dollars on average.
- Operated at a loss for the last couple of months with a projected annual loss of 52,000 dollars.
- A FAP member asked why is the traffic so low post pandemic?
- Emily stated that our post pandemic retail sales are significantly lower. People are working hybrid and maybe breaking the tradition of going out to lunch. People got accustomed to bringing their lunch and not spending their resources on campus. The location is perceived to be not central on campus. In addition, more people are having zoom meetings during the lunch hour, and the socializing culture on campus has changed post pandemic.
- Emily added that there are more choices for socializing on campus including the Starbucks and other places to grab coffee or sandwiches.
- Mike Horan stated that currently, WPI is incurring a \$50,000 deficit for the Quorum due to the Chartwells cost. If we were to eliminate the Chartwells cost, can we use the Quorum as a place for faculty to gather and socialize? An alternative would be to have a simple and more flexible space that faculty could get a cup coffee and simple snacks and have a meeting and gathering place.
- What would happen if the Quorum closed? The spaced could potentially be used as reservable space as was done prior to the creation of the Quorum with more capacity than the 50 persons it could accommodate currently.
- The committee agreed that a communication to the faculty about the status of the Quorum should be articulated at the next faculty meeting. The community should be informed that important business decisions will be made if the current trends of low volume continue. Emily will make an announcement at the next faculty meeting in December and also explore options of what a change in format might be in D-term or next academic year.
- Prof. Walker thanked Emily for her contribution.
- Prof. Dempski made a short presentation about the Bereavement policy being discussed in FBC.
- A discussion of the policy followed and FAP made a number of recommendations.
- Prof Dempski agreed to discuss the FAP recommendations with FBC and bring the policy back to FAP for a vote at a later date.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

Submitted by: Tahar El-Korchi
B-term Secretary