

Committee on Governance: Minutes

Meeting #20: February 26, 2024

Faculty Governance Office

Faculty Governance Conference Room, SL 225

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Members Present: Mark Claypool (CS), Althea Danielski (HUA), George Heineman (Chair, CS), Art Heinricher (Interim Provost), Stephen Kmiotek (ChE), Mark Richman (Secretary of the Faculty, AE), Diane Strong (President's appointment, WBS)

1. The agenda was approved.
2. COG discussed and approved the CTAF/COG motions to a) establish a Procedure for Complaints of Academic Freedom Violations; and b) to modify the Faculty Grievance Procedure based on the new Procedure for Complaints of Academic Freedom Violations. Both motions will be presented to the faculty for its approval at the March 13 faculty meeting. The Academic Planning Committee (APC) of the Board of Trustees provided feedback on the first motion.

The first motion establishes a clear and detailed procedure for complaints of academic freedom violations. The second motion updates the Faculty Grievance Procedure to reflect changes brought on by the first motion. Pending approval of the motions, the faculty handbook will be modified to include both in chapter five.

COG inserted general language in the policy to clarify what is meant by conflicts of interest that would require recusals in the process.

COG discussed the definition of the relevant parties being interviewed, and it was clarified that the AFS (not the complainant) determines the list of relevant parties.

COG also reviewed the informal mediation process and discussed the role of the Provost in these cases. In most of these cases, the mediator will work with the complainant to develop an acceptable solution that remedies the situation for all parties, while the Provost will ensure that the solution is administratively feasible.

COG then discussed the procedures for resolution where the Academic Freedom Subcommittee (AFS) determines that there has been a violation of academic freedom. In this case, the AFS provides its report and recommendations for protective and corrective measures to the Provost, who is responsible for developing and overseeing a management plan to ensure they are enacted.

The APC recommended that AFS members be properly trained on how to conduct these academic freedom investigations. COG believes this type of training would be appropriate and helpful and agrees that the administration should provide this to Faculty who are involved with any investigative process, such as FRC as well as AFS.

3. The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM

Respectfully,
Althea Danielski
COG volunteer secretary