Committee on Governance: Minutes
Meeting #24: April 1, 2024
Faculty Governance Office
Faculty Governance Conference Room, SL 225
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Members: 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), Karen Troy (BME).

1. The agenda was approved.

2. The minutes for meeting #23 were approved.

3. COG reviewed the items that will be on the agenda for the April Faculty Meeting. These include a report on Faculty populations, a motion for a vote regarding the mailing list policy from the Community on Information Technology Policy (CITP), and two motions for discussion: one from COG regarding election eligibility, and one from the Fringe Benefits Committee (FBC) regarding its membership.

4. Secretary of the Faculty Richman and COG Chair Heineman reported that the elections for COG, CTAF and COAP have concluded, and the open positions have been filled. They expressed their gratitude for the faculty members who were willing to stand in the elections and especially to those who were elected and have agreed to serve.

   The next round of elections will be held soon for the standing committees. Members of COG will be actively encouraging faculty to volunteer to be on these ballots, which should be ready to distribute a week before the end of D Term.

   COG also discussed the question of adding an additional member to CTRF, to maintain institutional memory on that committee if it continues past its ad-hoc existence of three years. Currently, the terms of all members of CTRF will end at the same time. COG suggested alternative options to share with CTRF, who will get back to COG with their final suggestion.

5. The committee discussed a joint COG-COAP motion regarding the appointment of interim department heads. The committee reviewed the key leadership role played by department heads at WPI, who serve as the link between Faculty and the Administration. Because of the vital work that department heads do, the university must plan for the replacement of these positions when a vacancy is anticipated. When aware that a new department head will be needed, the search for a replacement should begin early in the academic year before that current head leaves. If the vacancy happens unexpectedly, an interim will be appointed to fill the role, and a search for a permanent replacement must begin by the start of the next academic year. The use of interim department heads should

only happen when there is an unanticipated departure of a department head. The motion lays out the process the Provost must follow to appoint an interim department head. It also limits the length that a department could be under the leadership of an interim head to two consecutive years.

A vote on the motion passed; COG will send it on to COAP for their approval, so that this motion may be brought to the Faculty Meeting floor in April and then for a vote in the meeting in May.

6. COG voted to approve a final issue: the Motion to Reinstate the Competency Exam Degree Requirement. The Competency Exam was initially made a graduation requirement on April 1, 1973, but was dropped from the WPI Plan on April 1, 1986. With this vote, COG has rectified this foolish error, and also moved to reinstate Spree Days for all faculty and staff, to coincide with the Comp Exam days, as part of an employee wellness initiative. Any questions can be directed to the Interim chair of COG Fools.

7. The meeting adjourned at 4:28 PM.

Respectfully,

Althea Danielski
COG Secretary