

# Minutes of FAP Meeting #6 AY2019-20

October 28, 2019

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

SL 225

Members in Attendance: Nancy Burnham (Chair), Joe Fehribach (FBC Chair), Mike Radzicki (Secretary), Jeff Solomon (Executive Vice President/CFO), Kris Sullivan – Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (via phone)

Absent: George Pins (RPC Representative - Away at a conference)

Ex Officio: Tanja Dominko (Secretary of the Faculty)

- 1) **Call to Order.** Chair Burnham called the sixth FAP meeting of the year to order at 3:05 PM.
- 2) **Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the October 7<sup>th</sup> FAP meeting were read and minor corrections were offered. Professor Fehribach moved and Chair Burnham seconded a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion passed unanimously.
- 3) **Fringe Benefits Committee.** FBC Chair Fehribach reported that the FBC began investigating WPI's health care benefits vis-à-vis chiropractic care. An initial finding is that WPI's current chiropractic care benefit under the Tufts plan is less generous than it was when WPI partnered with Harvard-Pilgrim. However, since Harvard-Pilgrim and Tufts are merging the problem may resolve itself. That said, the consensus was that FBC should continue to investigate the issue. The discussion then turned to the topic of approvals for routine preventative medical procedures under WPI's current health care plan. FAP asked that the FBC also investigate this issue and report back.
- 4) **Workday Issues.** CFO Solomon noted that the administration is moving forward with interviews of research-active faculty to identify specific Workday issues related to the management of grant money. Once again the point was made that a distinction must be drawn between WPI business process issues and Workday issues. For example, the question of whether WPI's hiring process should be streamlined to require more "notifications" and fewer "approvals" is a business process question, not a Workday issue.
- 5) **WPI Forward.** The committee was informed of a rumor circulating across campus that all or most of last year's budget deficit was due to accounts being lost in Workday. CFO Solomon noted that this is not true as mislabeled or miscategorized accounts can always be recovered and, indeed, last year WPI ran a budget surplus.

The larger problem is that WPI's net tuition rate is diverging significantly from that being offered by its peer institutions and WPI's value proposition cannot overcome this relative price difference. According to CFO Solomon's projections, each year WPI is going to need an additional \$10-\$12 million to devote to undergraduate financial aid in order to bring its net tuition rate back to a competitive level. This financial gap can be closed via spending cuts, new revenue sources, or a combination of the two. Indeed, analyzing this problem and making recommendations is the mandate of the WPI Forward working group. Chair Burnham asked that FAP receive regular updates on the working group's progress.

6) **Transparency of the Salary Review Process.** Associate VP Sullivan distributed a document titled: "Overview of the Faculty Performance Management Process" that outlines, in detail, the steps in WPI's salary review process as recommendations move throughout the administrative hierarchy. The origin of the document was the observation that WPI's tenure process is quite transparent whereas its faculty evaluation and salary determination process is not. Chair Burnham noted that at a recent department head's meeting she found out that no WPI department had any written documentation to help guide its faculty evaluation process. Secretary Dominko then handed out a document titled: "Criteria for the Development and Display of Full Time Faculty Workload Policies at Northeastern University" that presents an example of a framework for creating faculty workload policies at the department level.

7) **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Radzicki

Secretary