



**Administrative Policy Group  
Official Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, April 7, 2021  
2:00 – 3:00 p.m.  
Co-Chairs: Wole Soboyejo & Jeff Solomon**

**Attendees:**

Eric Beattie; David Bunis; Philip Clay; Maureen Deiana; Joseph Fehribach; Dana Harmon; Alicia Mills; Amy Morton; Patty Patria; Craig Shue; Wole Soboyejo; Jeff Solomon; Erin Silva; Donna Stock; Matt Thaler; Olga Klochkova and Rachel LeBlanc

**Minutes:**

1. Approval of March 31, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Jeff Solomon called for a vote to approve the March 31, 2021 meeting minutes.

Profs. Fehribach and Shue and Amy Morton and Patty Patria abstained. All other APG members voted to approve the meeting minutes.

2. Review of the External Service Provider Policy

Maureen Deiana introduced the External Service Provider Policy and described it as a part of the “WPI Forward” initiative designed to identify internal WPI expertise, where appropriate, prior to, or in place of, hiring an external service provider. Ms. Deiana noted that WPI has been spending approximately \$7-\$8M annually on outsourced professionals and utilizing the internal expertise at WPI on at least some of these tasks could result in potential savings of approximately \$800K-\$1.2M per year.

Ms. Deiana then introduced Olga Klochkova who identified the key parts of the policy, including the requirement of first identifying the internal expert(s) prior to engaging external resources to discuss the possibility of doing the work in-house. Mr. Solomon, and Mses. Klochkova and Deiana reiterated that this policy is not intended to rule out hiring external resources; rather, it is intended to determine whether internal resources are available or feasible before doing so. Prof. Fehribach stated that the policy had been previously discussed with the Committee on Financial and Administrative Policy (FAP) and that there were no major objections to it.

Members discussed revising the policy name to more clearly describe its purpose. It was agreed that the name of the policy should be retitled to “Professional Services Policy.”

Members also discussed how this policy references the [Competitive Bidding Policy](#) and how this policy would require competitive bidding for goods or services over \$10,000. Discussion



ensued about the difficulty some divisions or departments would have in competitively bidding in certain situations (e.g., emergencies and/or unique situations that don't lend themselves to bidding).

There being no further questions or comments, Mr. Solomon called for a vote to move this policy proposal into the 30-day comment period. Profs. Shue and Fehribach abstained; all other APG members voted to move this policy proposal to the comment period.

### 3. Catering and Dining Services Policy

Rachel LeBlanc introduced the Catering and Dining Services Policy and described it as part of the "WPI Forward" initiative intending to place better controls on spending "WPI Funds" on meals during internal meetings and certain internal/external events. The intention is that this policy would result in cost savings to WPI. Ms. LeBlanc explained that this policy was presented to FAP and resulted in helpful changes to clarify the criteria for evaluating use of "WPI Funds" for catering/dining.

Members discussed several scenarios to understand whether, or not, "WPI Funds" would be permitted for use for food (e.g., employees working extended hours on a project).

Several members raised concerns that this policy may have a negative effect on employee collaboration and engagement because it would prohibit spending money on internal meetings with fellow employees and this negative consequence may outweigh any cost-savings benefit. Some members also feared that this policy would make employees feel less valued and appreciated and may harm retention efforts.

The members also discussed that cost-savings may be less than anticipated because the "WPI Funds" that may have been used for food at meetings will simply be used elsewhere, i.e., it is not really "saved" money.

Members also discussed renaming "Dining Services" to "Off-Campus Dining" to more accurately refer to spending money for food at local establishments as opposed to campus dining. It was agreed that this change would be made.

There being no further questions or comments, Mr. Solomon called for a vote to move this policy proposal into the 30-day comment period. Profs. Shue and Fehribach abstained; all other APG members voted to move this policy proposal to the comment period.

There being no further policies for review the meeting was adjourned at 3:00p.m.

David A. Bunis  
Secretary, Administrative Policy Group