

Committee on Governance: Minutes

Meeting #15: January 10, 2019

Faculty Governance Conference Room (SL 225)

Present: Len Albano (CEE); Kris Boudreau (HUA); Tanja Dominko (Secretary of the Faculty, BBT); Mike Elmes (FBS); Mark Richman (ME); Wole Soboyejo (Provost); David Spanagel (Chair, HUA).

1. Prof. Spanagel called the meeting to order at 10:18 am. The agenda and minutes of meetings 13 and 14 were approved. Kris Boudreau was elected Secretary for the remainder of AY20

2. Faculty/Administration/Trustee Working Group: Prof. Dominko gave an update about the faculty/administration/trustee working group (now called the Bylaws & Governance Working Group or BGWG), which she will also present later in the day at the (Jan. 10) faculty meeting. On Dec. 7, the Board of Trustees approved the BGWG charter (scope, deliverables, timeline, composition, and reporting). The members of BGWG are: President Leshin (Chair); Provost Soboyejo; Trustees Andy Aberdale (Vice Chair of BoT) and Marni Hall; faculty Jim Cocola (HUA), Tanja Dominko (Secretary of the Faculty and BBT), Steve Kmiotek (ChE, selected by the NTT faculty), and Mark Richman (ME). The first meeting of BGWG is scheduled for Saturday January 12, 8:30 am-2:30 pm.

3. Faculty Evaluations of Administrators: COG finalized plans for the 2018-19 faculty evaluations of administrators. COG discussed concerns about the fairness of these evaluations expressed by President Leshin and some members of the Board of Trustees and considered compromises that would enable faculty to give meaningful feedback while minimizing the distraction of unhelpful comments. COG also discussed the possibility of incorporating faculty evaluations into the 360° reviews of administrators conducted by Human Resources. After considering several possibilities, COG decided to resume its practice from several years ago of sending summaries rather than raw comments to the administrators being reviewed. The raw comments would be used to write a narrative overview that would eliminate unrepresentative comments; the summary document would instead focus on major trends and offer constructive feedback. These summaries would be written by the Secretary of the Faculty and the Chair of COG, the only two faculty who see evaluation comments. Each administrator would be given the option of reading the raw comments as well.

After discussing the process for synchronizing COG and HR evaluations and the mechanisms for incorporating faculty evaluations into the 360° review, COG concluded that the Provost would take up these questions with VP Michelle Jones-Johnson and COG would conduct the modified review of administrators this spring, sharing only numerical scores, as in past years, with the faculty.

According to COG's rotation of scheduled evaluations and taking into account that some people have only recently moved into their current administrative roles, four administrators were identified for evaluation this year: Jean King (Dean, Arts & Sciences), Kristin Tichenor (Senior VP, Enrollment & Institutional Strategy), Stephen Flavin (VP, Academic & Corporate Engagement),

and Kent Rissmiller (Dean *ad interim*, Interdisciplinary & Global Studies Division). COG has eliminated some administrators from faculty evaluation (for example, the Chief Financial Officer) because their job performances fall beyond the observation of most faculty. Members of COG have been in touch with the four people scheduled for evaluation to ask for position descriptions and to invite them to give 10-minute presentations at the February or March faculty meeting. The goal is to help faculty understand what each of these administrators does before evaluations are distributed. The Secretary of the Faculty will post the presentations so they are available to all faculty. The email that solicits faculty evaluations will include links to the materials presented at the faculty meetings, making it easier for faculty to be informed when they write their evaluations.

4. Global School: COG resumed consideration of Global School proposal that Provost Soboyejo has been revising in response to COG and other community input. Changes include an academic department that would allow for tenure lines and majors. COG looked at the organizational chart and suggested ways to tighten the leadership structure and ensure attention to on-campus as well as off-campus IQPs. Some concerns were expressed about the continuing vitality of other departments and programs once faculty begin affiliating with and offering courses in the Global School.

COG asked the Provost to clarify his thinking about the financial details for the Global School. The Provost explained that graduate programs could bring in revenue that would help pay for the rest of the Global School as well as research that would enhance WPI's reputation. In addition to new master's programs, the provost suggested certain niche PhD programs that might draw paying students (for example: developmental engineering, policy, leadership; STEM education and Project-Based Learning programs). A concern was raised because the estimates of projected graduate enrollments and the corresponding return on investment had been eliminated from the draft proposal.

COG asked about the role of University Advancement in finding funds for the Global School. COG also asked whether six new TT faculty, which are included in the proposal to provide expertise in areas that we currently lack, would be enough to support these new graduate programs and learned that most of the teaching will be provided by existing WPI faculty.

5. The meeting adjourned at 11:35 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Boudreau
Secretary, COG