

Committee on Governance: Minutes

Meeting #1: August 27, 2019

Faculty Governance Conference Room (SL 225)

Present: Kris Boudreau (HUA), Tanja Dominko (Secretary of the Faculty, BBT), Tahar El-Korchi (CEE –via Zoom from Oculus Province in Morocco), Glenn Gaudette (Chair, BME), Mark Richman (ME), Susan Roberts (ChE), Wole Soboyejo (Provost *ad interim*).

1. Prof. Gaudette called the meeting to order at 3:08. The agenda was approved with modifications.
2. COG committee membership: Prof. Dominko noted that the President has not yet made her appointment to COG.
3. COG appointments: After identifying one vacancy in each of two committees — Research Development Council (RDC) and Committee on Information Technology Policy (CITP)— COG identified nominees for each vacancy. Professor Gaudette will contact these faculty members to see if they are willing to serve.
4. Proposals for formation of new departments: COG has received a proposal from Professor Xiao, Director of Robotics Engineering, for the formation of a Department of Robotics Engineering. Prof. Gaudette will inform Prof. Xiao that the proposal must come from the Administration. Prof. Gaudette noted that Aerospace Engineering also has a proposal for forming a Department and plans to bring it to the Administration. COG discussed the process that should be followed once the committee receives either of these proposals; the committee concluded that it should wait to see the details of each proposal before identifying any governance committees that should be involved in proposal review. Prof. Dominko will follow up with the Provost on the status of these proposals.
5. Potential violations of the *Faculty Handbook*: COG considered whether the summertime appointments of an Assistant and an Associate Dean of Graduate Studies were consistent with *Faculty Handbook* policies (see pages 2-29-30 of *Faculty Handbook*) requiring that new Academic Administrative appointments be made through a formal search process. What should COG's involvement have been in these cases? Are the titles appropriate, particularly for staff members in academic units? The provost reported that Dean Camesano had explained to him why the two Graduate Studies positions did not require COG approval; he will ask Dean Camesano to convey this explanation to COG for review.

COG also asked what the plans are for making the interim Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies position permanent? What are the responsibilities of this redesigned position? What, if any, responsibilities of the former Associate Dean of

Undergraduate Studies are no longer covered? What are the costs associated with all three positions?

The Provost indicated his belief that as a matter of principle, there is value in communicating with COG about such administrative appointments ahead of time. After some discussion about when the title “Dean” is appropriate, COG decided to use this episode as an opportunity to clarify whether an “Assistant Dean” is strictly a nonacademic title. The topic will be taken up at a future COG meeting.

6. Potential agenda items for this AY: COG members spent some time identifying a list of discussion items for the academic year. These include:
 - a. Administrative plans announced last September for the expansion of the tenure-track faculty to 300 within five (5) years. How will this expansion be implemented? Provost Soboyejo indicated that the current academic year is Year 1 of 5, and that a 5-year plan exists, which he will share with COG for consideration at an upcoming meeting.
 - b. Potential changes to the status of NTT faculty. COG will consider a broad range of issues relevant to the status of NTT faculty, including a pending proposal from a task force looking into the status of NTT faculty, proposed changes to the *Faculty Handbook* regarding a mentoring program for NTT faculty, and ongoing tracking of the ratio of TTT to NTT faculty.
 - c. Faculty professional development and leadership opportunities. These might include short-term sabbaticals to interact with some administrative area (both learning from and bringing an academic perspective to this area) and short-term, part-time administrative positions to accomplish some particular goal and gain leadership experience.
 - d. Concerns about enrollment management and the growth of the student population.
 - e. Frustrations over limitations on faculty access to institutional data.
 - f. Continued concerns about IT turnover and morale.
 - g. Concerns about processes and practices within Human Resources/Talent and Inclusion.
 - h. Update on and faculty involvement in plans for expansions of online learning and graduate education.
 - i. Participation in the self-assessment for New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE, formerly NEASC) accreditation, including the Shared Governance

component of the accreditation report. The NECHE accreditation visit will take place in fall 2021, with a self-assessment due before that visit.

- j. Involvement in the search for a Dean of the Global School. See item 7. b below. Representatives of Isaacson, Miller will meet with COG at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 17.

7. Academic Leadership searches:

- a. Department Head, Department of Management: The process for selecting a permanent Department Head is described in the *Faculty Handbook* and will be followed.
- b. Dean of the Global School: Provost Soboyejo provided a brief update about the search for a Dean of the Global School. Representatives of the search firm Isaacson, Miller plan to visit the campus in September. Provost Soboyejo indicated his wish for COG to interact with the search firm and provide feedback about the position, the ideal candidate, and the search process. The Provost wants to complete the search and appoint a Dean by March or April of 2020, with a starting date in September 2020. COG will conduct an election for three (3) faculty representatives on the search committee. Prof. Dominko reminded COG members that last spring, the committee was willing to ask the tenured and tenure-track (TTT) faculty to make a one-time exception to the procedures described in the *Faculty Handbook* to allow non-tenure track (NTT) faculty to serve on this search committee, given the many NTT faculty who would report to the new Dean. The spirit of that decision was to find a balanced representation of TTT and NTT faculty on the search committee. Discussion followed about how to achieve that balance. COG and the Provost declared their willingness to use their two appointments (one from COG and one from the Provost) to reach this balance once the three faculty members have been elected from the TTT and NTT ranks. COG approved a motion to be considered at the first (September 5) faculty meeting allowing a one-time suspension of the written guidelines for searches. The motion will read as follows:

COG recommends and I move that the Guidelines for Searches to fill Academic Administrative Positions (*Faculty Handbook* – Part Two, section 1.H) be suspended **for the search for the first Dean of the Global School**, such that, when the search committee is formed, it be constituted with balanced representation of TTT and NTT faculty members. All full-time TTT and NTT faculty would be eligible to be on the ballot, vote, and serve on the search committee.

If the motion is approved by the faculty, the process for forming the search committee would begin with an election of the top three vote-getters from a ballot of TTT and NTT nominees elected by full-time faculty (TTT and NTT). From there, COG and the Provost would use their nominations to balance out the faculty committee members, appointing TTT and NTT faculty members as needed for near

balance. The President would be encouraged to use one of her two appointments to contribute to representational balance. Professor Dominko will speak to President Leshin about this proposed process.

8. The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Boudreau
Secretary, COG