

Committee on Governance: Minutes
Meeting #25: April 21, 2020
Faculty Governance: Massachusetts Branch Offices

Present: Kris Boudreau (Secretary, HUA), Tanja Dominko (Secretary of the Faculty, BBT), Tahar El-Korchi (CEE), Glenn Gaudette (BME), Arne Gericke (CBC), Mark Richman (ME), Sue Roberts (ChE), and Wole Soboyejo (Provost).

1. Professor Gaudette called the meeting to order at 2:08. The agenda was approved.
2. The minutes of meeting #24 were approved.
3. Motion to include Deans in review of DH: Based on last week's COG revisions to the proposed change to the Faculty Handbook regarding reviews of Department Heads, Prof. Gaudette will send COG's revisions to the Deans for their input before bringing the motion to the faculty.
4. COG considered and voted to approve two motions related to the COVID19 response:
 - a) that faculty governance committee elections, with the exception of the already completed COG, COAP and CTAF, be temporarily suspended until A term of 2020; that elected governance committee membership from AY2020 remain through the end of A term 2020. The motion was approved.
 - b) that the faculty agree to complete D term 2020 after their 9-month appointment for AY2020 by extending the end of year from May 14, 2020 to May 23, 2020. AY 2021 will start on August 24, 2020, and end on May 15, 2021. The motion was approved.

COG reminded the Provost to notify the Deans and Department Heads of the changed start and end dates, which have repercussions for summer pay dates from research grants.
5. Faculty Loading Model. COG asked Provost Soboyejo for an update on the faculty loading model. The Provost explained that the first phase of developing a load model is underway and being directed by the Deans, aimed at understanding faculty loading within each discipline. Within the next month or two, the institution will know the size of the incoming class and instructional budget and can establish which courses need to be taught next year and who will teach them. For the longer term, department heads are working with the Deans and the Provost to develop an institutional loading model.

Several members of COG were concerned that the faculty through its faculty governance structure had been so far left out the process of developing a load model. Any faculty loading model will bear directly on the conditions facilitating instruction, study, research, publication, and other scholarly activities of faculty members at WPI.

These members expressed a view that the Faculty Handbook gives a central role to the faculty in developing such a model. As a result, these COG members felt strongly that the faculty must be put front and center in the determination of any faculty load model. Additional members of COG felt that historically faculty governance was not involved in the development of teaching load models because it was considered operational. Another member noted that the 8 block model was not accepted by the faculty. This member suggested that the reason it fell flat was because the faculty had not been properly involved, and urged us not to make the same mistake again.

It was also noted that faculty members in some departments already provided input at the departmental level and this input was considered as the Department Heads in those departments worked jointly within their respective schools on the development of recommendations for teaching load models that provide a WPI wide framework but also affords the necessary flexibility to account for disciplinary specific teaching load considerations. These members of COG saw the benefits of a bottom-up approach that originates at the departmental level. Other COG members pointed out that much of our faculty governance business begins this way but only receives faculty-wide acceptance through our faculty governance process.

In response to the suggestion by some members of COG that the Deans at least provide COG with a progress report on their efforts so far to develop a faculty loading model, the Provost indicated that the Deans' work is not yet ready to share. The Provost noted that any institutional loading model will go to COG and the faculty for input. Although the model developed by the Deans is still at an early stage of development, the Provost offered to organize a meeting in which COG members can talk with the Deans to discuss their proposed frameworks and platforms.

When asked about the role of Huron Consulting and WPI Forward in designing a loading model, the Provost explained that the role of Huron Consulting is to develop analytic tools to evaluate teaching loads.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Boudreau
COG Secretary