

Committee on Governance: Meeting Minutes

Meeting #29: 12 April 2022

Faculty Governance Branch Offices

Present: Len Albano (Secretary, CEAE); Nancy Burnham (PH); Tanja Dominko (BBT); Tahar El-Korchi (Chair, CEAE); George Heineman (CS); Mark Richman (Secretary of the Faculty, AE); Wole Soboyejo (Provost)

Absent: Susan Roberts (CHE)

1. Prof. El-Korchi called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm.
2. The agenda was approved as distributed.
3. The minutes of COG meeting #28 on April 5, 2022 were approved with modifications.
4. Preparations for the April Faculty Meeting:

An invitation to the April 14th Faculty Meeting with meeting materials was distributed to the faculty on April 7th. There will be three motions presented to the faculty for voting and three draft motions presented for discussion only (COG meeting #28). Prof. Richman is preparing the First Annual Report on Faculty Populations at WPI (with clarifications about faculty categories). For AY 2021/22, there are 270 dual-mission tenured and tenure-track faculty and 135 teaching faculty, with our 15 Professors of Teaching in both groups. The remaining 120 teaching faculty are in a second category of Secured Teaching Faculty (STF), and they are on 1-3-3-5-year contracts with expectations for continued teaching responsibilities. Prof. Richman will discuss the faculty numbers in these two categories in the context of WPI's goals to maintain an appropriate balance of dual mission and teaching faculty, and to maintain an appropriate balance within the teaching faculty between tenured/tenure-track and non-tenure-track.
5. Update on Faculty Governance Elections:

With completion of the elections for the Committee on Appointments and Promotions (COAP), Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom (CTAF), and COG, the Committee must prepare election ballots for vacancies on the remaining standing committees of the faculty. There are about twenty vacancies to be filled, and the goal is to have at least two candidates for each vacancy. Prof. Richman has already distributed an email to the faculty to solicit interest from those who may be willing to serve. COG members were each assigned a few academic departments, so that individual faculty members would be contacted directly.
6. Update on President Search:

Prof. Golding (DIGS), Prof. Heineman (CS), Prof. Johnson (BUS), and Prof. Troy (BME) were chosen by the trustees to serve on the presidential search committee from a list of eight faculty members provided by the Deans (of Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, and Global School) and by the faculty governance Chairs. Prof. Roberts was selected by the Deans as the department head to serve on the committee, and Dean Camesano was selected to serve by the Provost and by the Deans. Prof. Heineman reported that the Search Committee has met on the past two Mondays.

7. Update on Interim Provost:

Provost Soboyejo and President Leshin have interviewed the five top candidates identified by the nomination process. Provost Soboyejo expects that an announcement will be made at the end of Thursday's Faculty Meeting. He also shared that the community input to the process helped sensitize President Leshin and him to the faculty's concerns for this position.

8. Faculty Convocation Plans:

Faculty Convocation is planned for Friday, April 29th. The plan is to conduct the awards ceremony from 11:00am to noon, followed by a reception with light lunch from noon to 1:00pm. This annual celebration has not been held since 2019, and COG members expressed their support for an in-person event. The Committee discussed ideas for use of the Odeum and the surrounding spaces in order to accommodate social distancing and encourage faculty participation.

9. New Business:

(a) Prof. El-Korchi commented that he has been reviewing the *Faculty Handbook*, and with an eye toward clarifying and standardizing terminology, especially due to the changes that have been introduced in recent years. He suggested that an effort be undertaken to address these updates.

(b) Prof. Richman raised the issue of implementing in a timely fashion the released time arrangement for continuing and newly elected members of COAP and CTAF approved by the Provost. Because tentative course schedules and faculty assignments for A and B terms have already been posted, he asked Provost Soboyejo to communicate with these faculty members and their department heads for the purposes of planning course releases in the fall semester. Prof. Richman also noted that some of these faculty members have expressed an interest in receiving the equivalent stipend rather than receiving a course release. This would compensate those faculty members for their extra time without creating the burden of identifying substitute instructors. Provost Soboyejo was open to this idea because it placed no additional burden on the budget. Provost Soboyejo will meet and discuss course planning with the department heads who have faculty members serving on COAP and CTAF in AY 2022/23.

10. The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Leonard Albano
Secretary, COG