

Committee on Governance: Minutes

Meeting #4: Sept. 8, 2020

Faculty Governance Branch Offices

Present: Len Albano (CEE); Kris Boudreau (Chair, HUA – calling in from a Chili’s just off the Mass Pike somewhere); Tanja Dominko (Secretary of the Faculty, BBT); Tahar El-Korchi (CEE); Glenn Gaudette (BME); Arne Gericke (CBC); Mark Richman (Secretary, AE); and Wole Soboyejo (Provost)

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:20pm. The agenda was approved as distributed.
2. The minutes of meeting #3 were approved.
3. Committee Elections and Appointments:
 - a. Prof. Boudreau provided the committee with a list of the committee membership vacancies to be filled in the fall 2020 elections including the names of several faculty members who so far have expressed an interest on serving. Members of COG will continue to contact faculty members to identify those interested in having their names placed on the upcoming ballot. The goal is to send out ballots in early October provided the proposal to use electronic voting is approved at the October 1 faculty meeting.
 - b. COG will also have to make its appointments to CITP and FAP, as well as to the Educational Development Council (EDC) and the Conflict Management Committee (CMC).
 - c. Elections will also be held for the elected members of the search committees for the Dean of Engineering and the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies.
4. Faculty Appointments to Board of Trustees Committees: In fall 2018, the Board of Trustees changed the process by which faculty members would be nominated to serve on five of the Board’s committees. The process had been established in March 2012 in a collaboration between the faculty, President Berkey, and the Board of Trustees - and is described in detail in the Faculty Handbook (see attached). In that process, COG forwarded the names of two faculty members for each Board committee vacancy - from which the Board would choose one. The changes made by the Board in 2018 were imposed without consulting the faculty and removed faculty governance from the nomination process. The responsibility for forwarding nominations to the Board was given to the Deans instead.

COG’s overarching concern is the need for all members of the WPI community to respect the policies in the Faculty Handbook.

Provost Soboyejo reported that the Board is now interested in having the Deans collaborate with COG in putting forward nominations. Members of COG have met with Dean King, Dean McNeill, Dean Taylor, Dean Rissmiller, and Provost Soboyejo to discuss how this might work. If COG were to participate, outstanding issues that need to be resolved are the criteria and the deadline for nominations.

The criteria defined in the Faculty Handbook give preference to faculty members with current or past experience serving on faculty governance committees. This is meant to ensure that the nominees would be knowledgeable about faculty processes and issues related to those that overlap with the Board's committee deliberations. The deadline for nominations should first allow COG to assemble the ballots for its faculty governance elections.

5. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Richman
Secretary, COG

BYLAW SIX
MEMBERSHIP OF FACULTY ON COMMITTEES OF
THE WPI BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND FACULTY PARTICIPATION AT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MEETINGS
(Approved by the Faculty March 22, 2012)

In order to strengthen shared governance and foster good communication among the WPI Faculty, administration, and Board of Trustees, the Trustees will appoint two tenured or tenure-track members of the Faculty to each of five Board committees: Academic Planning, Student Affairs, Budget and Finance, Facilities and Campus Infrastructure, and Marketing. The Board of Trustees' Committee on Nominations and Governance will make the appointments from slates of nominees prepared by the Faculty Committee on Governance (COG). COG will prepare slates containing at least two names for each open position. In preparing the slates, COG will give preference to members of the Faculty with prior or current experience serving on Faculty Governance Committees.

Terms of service for faculty members of Board committees will be for three years, except that to ensure staggered terms, replacement appointments for unexpired terms, would be for fewer than three years. No member of the Faculty shall serve on more than one Board committee concurrently, but those completing a term on one Board committee can be considered for future service on another. Faculty members of Board committees will have voting privileges, and are considered full, participating members of the committee, not simply observers. It is expected that members of the Faculty serving on Board committees will report regularly to, and seek input from, the corresponding Faculty Governance Committees, including the COG.

Faculty members wishing to be considered for service on a Board committee should submit a brief statement of interest to COG, giving basic information about their appointment at WPI, relevant experience, and reasons for interest in serving on a Board committee.

The Secretary of the Faculty will be seated with the members of the Board at meetings of the Corporation and may participate fully in discussions and deliberations, with the exception of not having a formal vote, as this is a responsibility unique to Trustees and cannot be delegated. In addition, the Secretary of the Faculty is invited to attend meetings of the five "open" Board committees as an observer, but not as a voting member of any committee unless also appointed as one of the two faculty committee