

Committee on Governance: Minutes

Meeting #7: Oct. 13, 2020

Faculty Governance Branch Offices

Present: Len Albano (CEE); Kris Boudreau (Chair, HUA); 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 #6 will be reviewed by email.
3. Update on Committee Elections: Prof. Boudreau reported that no major problems were encountered in conducting the elections by electronic balloting, although there are several improvements that can be made to process the results more efficiently. Prof. Boudreau is finalizing the results and will inform the faculty very soon.
4. Faculty Appointees to Board of Trustees' Committees: COG has been asked by the Board of Trustees to re-engage in a modified nomination process that would involve both COG and the Deans. COG was notified of this change in process in the middle of our own faculty governance elections and could not finalize its nominees for the Board until we concluded our elections. The Board committees that need to be filled are Academic Planning, Budget and Finance, Facilities and Infrastructure, Student Affairs, Information Technology Task Force, and Economic Development. There is one vacancy on each committee.

COG identified its top choices for these positions and will work with the Deans to forward a list of mutually agreed upon nominees to the Board. The list will contain two names for each vacancy with the final choice for each to be made by the Board.

5. Update on Motion to Establish a Teaching Path to Tenure for Teaching Professors: The committee spent its time on two issues related to the proposal:
 - *Titles:* The current draft identifies the tenured and tenure-track teaching faculty as Assistant, Associate, and Full Teaching-Intensive Professors. This would distinguish them from both the current TTTs (i.e. Assistant, Associate, and Full Professors) and the current teaching faculty (i.e. Assistant, Associate, and Full Teaching Professors). The committee had a lengthy discussion about the purpose of such distinctions and the degree to which they may or may not be necessary. While this remains an important unresolved issue in the proposal, the consensus was that this detail should not interfere with overall approval of the proposal.
 - *Implementation:* Prof. Richman explained that – without being overly prescriptive - the intention is to include in the proposal an implementation outline that identifies the key decisions that will need to be made, emphasizes general decision-making principles to be applied, and identifies those groups responsible for each decision. The strong consensus from department heads is that the implementation should include some broad institutional guardrails that maintain the appropriate faculty balance in carrying out the University's dual teaching and research mission. The strong consensus of the Task Force on the Status

of NTT Faculty, the TRT Council, and many TTT faculty is that the implementation should include some broad institutional goals that assure that an appropriate number of tenure lines for teaching faculty will be made available over a reasonable period of time. Provost Soboyejo agreed with this approach to implementation. The Provost is working in collaboration with Prof. Boudreau, Prof. Richman, and representatives of the TRT Council Prof. Heilman (CBC) and Prof. Pfeiffer (GS) to develop both an implementation plan and a steady-state model consistent with the spirit of the proposal.

Prof. Richman and Prof. Boudreau will incorporate these perspectives into the next draft of the proposal, which will include a redrafting of Part One, Appendix D of the Faculty Handbook (The Roles Played by Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Non-Tenure Track Faculty in Carrying Out WPI's Mission) for consistency with the evolving roles played by the faculty at WPI and to formalize WPI's institutional goals to reflect the desired steady state of the University. At the same time, it will also allow for continuing reexamination of those goals. Provost Soboyejo was confident in the current approach, particularly because of the developing alignment between the faculty, the administration, and especially the Board of Trustees.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 2:32pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Mark Richman
Secretary, COG