

Committee on Governance
Meeting #19, AY 2015/16
February 29th, 2016
Salisbury Labs 225

In Attendance:

Provost Bruce Bursten, Chrysanthe Demetry, Tanja Dominko, Daniel Dougherty, Glenn Gaudette (Chair), Mark Richman, Diane Strong, Suzanne Weekes (Secretary).

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 1:03 pm and the agenda was approved.
- 2) The minutes of meeting #18 were approved as amended.
- 3) Progress on recruitment of Faculty willing to fill the upcoming vacancies on standing Faculty committees was reviewed.
- 4) The committee discussed COAP's proposal for the creation of "Professional Development Advisory Committees". The intent is that this elected committee would play a mentoring and advisory role for mid-career Faculty, non-tenure track Faculty, and senior Faculty similar to the role played by department tenure committees for probationary Faculty. The description of the composition and function of this committee would be included in the WPI Faculty Handbook's Review of Tenured Faculty, Part 2, 1.F. p. 2-19.

After an extensive discussion, COG suggested that the issue might be more easily and more effectively be addressed by 1) establishing a program in which Associate Professors would have a formal mentor (not necessarily in their department), and 2) by improving the feedback provided by Department Heads in their annual reviews that would focus on each faculty member's professional development, in general, and their progress toward their next promotion, when appropriate. COG felt that these recommendations could be put into the Faculty Handbook in general descriptive terms.

With respect to 1), Prof. Demetry pointed out that if we were to follow best practices in mentoring, then each person is best positioned to choose the most suitable mentors for him/herself. With respect to 2), Provost Bursten is planning to take a more comprehensive look at how the annual review of faculty members is done. Prof. Dougherty pointed out that "department culture (that) encourages promotion to Full Professor" was a major weakness identified in the COACHE survey, and asked whether COG's preliminary proposal sufficiently address this weakness. Discussion will continue with COAP.

The meeting adjourned at 2:33 pm.

Prof. Suzanne L. Weekes
Secretary of the Committee on Governance