

Minutes of FAP Meeting #3 AY2018-19

7 September 2018, 3 p.m. – 4 p.m.

SL225

Members in Attendance: Nancy Burnham (Chair), George Pins (RPC representative), Randy Paffenroth (Secretary), Jeffrey Solomon – Executive Vice President/CFO, Kristopher Sullivan – Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

Absent: Joseph Sarkis (FBC Chair)

- 1) **Approval of the Agenda:** The agenda was approved as distributed.
- 2) **Approval of the Minutes from Meeting #1 and #2:** The minutes were approved.
- 3) **Update:** Interim Provost Soboyejo was invited to attend a future FAP meeting to discuss his strategic vision.
- 4) **Broad discussion of priorities for this year:** Chair Burnham suggest that a wide-ranging discussion of FAP priorities would be appropriate, leading to the following points.
 - a) Based upon feedback from the Canvas discussion board it was discussed whether FAP should have an open item with CGSR for benchmarking graduate tuition. Specifically, we wish to assess whether our graduate tuition is making WPI non-competitive in grant proposals. We discussed the possible budgetary and growth implications of a policy change in this regard, and we will continue these discussions in future meetings. Points for future discussion include
 - i) any interactions between WPI cost-centers,
 - ii) communication of the current policy on the 50% tuition reduction for grants that pay full WPI indirect, and
 - iii) the importance of benchmarking WPI against peer institutions.
 - b) To allow further benchmarking and comparison with peer institutions it was pointed out that the WPI Institutional Research page (<https://www.wpi.edu/offices/institutional-research>) contains a wealth of information, including
 - i) data on peer institutions available in a standardized format, and
 - ii) custom data collection can be requested from the Institutional Research group.
 - c) Another topic discussed as a FAP priority was the benchmarking of NTT salaries, as this topic has been suggested by several faculty.
 - d) The final topic of discussion at meeting #3 was the cost of education at WPI and its ranking compared to peer institutions. It was noted that:
 - i) We are one of the higher net cost institutions in our peer group.
 - ii) However, our students tend to get higher starting salaries when they graduate.
 - iii) High net cost is an institutional risk, and we will discuss in future meetings how to mitigate that risk and balance educational costs against new buildings, faculty growth, etc.

- iv) 98% of WPI students get some type of discount, while at peer institutions a higher percentage of students pay the full rate. FAP requested a more precise breakdown on the details of this point.
- v) WPI has one of the highest retention rates of all peer institutions.
- vi) It was suggested that Senior Vice President Kristin Tichenor, or a member of her team, attend a future FAP meeting to discuss these issues. Other suggested invites to future FAP meetings include Dean of Graduate Studies Terri Camesano and Vice Provost of Research Bogdan Vernescu.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Paffenroth, FAP Secretary for 2018-19