

Minutes of FAP Meeting #9 AY2020-21

October 5, 2020

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Meeting Held Electronically via ZOOM

Members in Attendance: Nancy Burnham (Chair), Joe Fehribach (FBC Chair), George Pins (RPC Representative), Kris Sullivan (Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs), Jeff Solomon (Executive Vice President/CFO)

Absent: Mike Radzicki (Secretary)

Invited Guest: Terri Comesano (Dean of Graduate Studies)

Call to Order. Chair Burnham called the 9th FAP meeting of the year to order at 3:04 PM.

- 1) **Approval of Minutes.** Approval of the minutes of FAP meeting #8 was deferred.
- 2) **FAP Appointee to FBC.** A candidate for FAP's 3-yr TRT appointee to FBC was suggested, and Prof Fehribach will follow up with him.
- 3) **Strategy for health insurance for graduate students.** Historically, the health plan for graduate students has followed the template for the undergraduate's health plan and has been handled through the Bursar's Office. Some years ago, the costs were low enough that WPI subsidized them completely for TAs and RAs. Now, with health insurance costs rising, WPI is only able to support our ~300 TAs and RAs at ~\$1000/month. (Overall, we enroll about ~2200 graduate students, some of whom are still on their parents' or other independent plans.) Members agreed that an appropriate health insurance plan should be benchmarked against peer institutions, and it will then help with graduate student recruitment and retention. Members also agreed that future changes to graduate health insurance should be decided with input from the graduate students, in that communication with graduate students needs to be improved. One suggestion was to include RA health insurance in grant proposals. The CFO, AVP, Dean of GS, and the Bursar will meet separately to discuss next steps. While this issue does not directly fall within FAP's purview, FAP members will be interested to hear of the future strategy for this issue.

4) **Faculty salary benchmarking.** A timeline of the steps in the Spring 2020 faculty salary benchmarking was reviewed in anticipation that the report might be presented at a faculty meeting this fall. The analysis began in January 2020, with data that the College and University Professional Organization for Human Resources (CUPA-HR) made available in March 2019 based on records that universities submitted on November 1, 2018; this is CUPA-HR's annual cycle. It was noted that if future analyses could wait to start in March, they could be based on a more recent data set. This year, the analysis was done internally, saving WPI ~\$100,000 on consulting fees. The analysis was conducted using the same approach as the consulting group who did the analysis in 2017.

5) **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 4:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy A. Burnham

Secretary, *pro tem*

DRAFT