

Financial and Administrative Policy
Minutes
9th Meeting, AY 2022-23
Tuesday, November 8, 2022, 2:00 pm
Meeting held remotely; Zoom meeting ID: 960 6087 3656

Members: David Spanagel (HUA, Chair), Hal Walker (CEAE), Rob Dempski (CBC), Tanja Dominko (BBT, COG Appointee), Kris Sullivan (Associate VP of Academic Affairs), Mike Horan (Executive VP and CFO, *Ex Officio*) – arrived at 2:35pm.

Absent: Joe Sarkis (BUS)

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:02 pm.
2. The agenda was approved.
3. The Minutes of the 8th meeting were approved as amended.
4. The current budget process.

AVP of Academic Affairs Kris Sullivan reviewed the upcoming Academic Affairs budget process. After not using a regular budget process for the past two years due to COVID-19, WPI is returning to the regular budgeting practice this year. Requests are currently being developed by departments and programs and include programmatic requests for new faculty lines, staff, operating expenses (student wages, supplies, travel), and for capital projects. All requests are being developed and logged into Adaptive, an extension of Workday. The tentative schedule calls for initial requests from the departments to be reviewed and prioritized by the deans in January 2023. After submission to the Provost's office near the end of January 2023, a narrowed list of priorities will be identified and discussed. Identified priorities will then be "costed out" and forwarded to the EVP and CFO Horan for determination of available funds. The final budget will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2023.

AVP Sullivan reported that Academic Affairs has changed the process for managing faculty vacancies that occur during any fiscal year. In the past, after a departure of a faculty member, the department or program would lose that position and the remaining salary funds would be returned to the Salary savings budget item. In the past, these vacancies were replaced usually with short term appointment of non-tenure track faculty. To permanently restore the lost position, a department/program would make a new request for the line in the following year's budget. This practice was changed recently, however. Now due to feedback from the Deans, and an assessment of the instructional needs of the division, departments/programs are allowed to search for a replacement immediately after an unanticipated position loss. Any salary savings (replacing a senior position with a more junior one) allows the Dean –greater flexibility in requesting salaries. Also, by collaborating with the Provost, Deans may now reallocate any savings or positions to a different department depending on the overall needs of the school.

When asked by Professor Dominko about the relative size of the Academic Affairs operating budget to the size of the overall University budget, AVP Sullivan provided an estimate, but asked for the opportunity to bring exact figures to the next meeting for discussion. AVP Sullivan did confirm that the Academic Affairs operating budget includes tuition revenue for Graduate Studies and the Summer academic programs, while undergraduate tuition revenue is included in the general institutional budget.

There was also a discussion about startup funds. AVP Sullivan informed the committee that an average startup package for a T/TT faculty member could be as high as \$400,000 to \$450,000, distributed over a number of years. This amount is made up of operating funds (summer salary, research assistants, post docs, professional development, travel, relocation) and capital funds (equipment, computers, office and lab renovations). In recent years, Sullivan reported that there has been a shift from capital to operating requests.

After merging Graduate Admissions with Academic Affairs, a new Shared Services team of 2 hiring specialists and an assistant director has been established to oversee the payment for TA and RA appointments, changes during transitions of graduate students between TA and RA appointments, and to ensure that all TAs and RAs are being compensated on time and from appropriate funds.

The committee asked EVP and CFO Horan to provide and review WPI's financial model at its next meeting. The committee would like to understand how the model is used to build a realistic financial plan that WPI can use to develop budgetary solutions that will maintain educational quality, allow implementation of strategic initiatives, and a sustainable work environment.

5. Upcoming agenda items

Chair Spanagel informed the Committee that FAP will discuss compensation and benefits policies and plans with the VP for Talent and Inclusion Lauren Turner when she visits FAP on 11/15 in order to:

- Follow up on the Faculty's May 2022 resolution requesting that WPI restore employee retirement match contributions to 11%
- Understand the efforts Talent & Inclusion has launched to study and ameliorate compensation inequities among administrative staff and develop a schedule for compensation reviews for all employee groups.

CUPA-HR collects surveys of compensation data from institution of higher education every year for tenured and tenure track faculty, staff and administration. To reflect accurate 22/23 compensation information, WPI should be submitting the information after October 1st raises have been implemented. Data will then be available to all institutions in February 2023 for the current year. The committee is interested in whether WPI is participating this year in the survey, and if so, for which employee groups. The committee could present any completed compensation reports before the end of the academic year.

At the November 22nd meeting, FAP will hold a joint meeting with CGSR to discuss financial implications of collective bargaining with the graduate student's union.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully,

Tanja Dominko
FAP Secretary