

AY 2015-16 Committee on Administrative and Financial Policy (FAP)

FAP Meeting # 12 - 11:00 a.m., Thursday, December 3, 2015, Conference Room-Financial Services; Boynton Hall 2nd FL

In Attendance:

Professor David Spanagel (Chair)

Professor Hossein Hakim (FBC Chair and FAP Faculty Representative on RPC)

Professor Tahar El-Korchi (Secretary)

Jeffrey Solomon Executive Vice President/CFO

Kristopher Sullivan; Assistant Vice President Academic Affairs

Judi Trainor; Assistant Vice President Budget and Planning (invited guest)

1. Chair Spanagel began the meeting at 11:03 a.m.
2. Chair Spanagel shared with the committee his one-on-one discussions with the Provost about the process that was used to decide on the final selection of TT faculty for FY17. This process yielded a total of 17 TT hires from approximately 40 initial requests from the academic departments.

VP Solomon indicated that in the future, as the annual planning and budget process reaches a steady state cycle, FAP should be involved at the beginning of the cycle and be present at all the discussions pertaining to budget request and will not require one-on-one special meetings with the provost.

Professor Hakim stated that if we are truly changing the culture to be a culture of more transparency and better communication, then FAP should know the processes under which it can operate and have clear guidance from the Administration.

Professor Spanagel stated that FAP is trying to articulate these pieces in its new charge. The objective is that the conversations that are initiated or held in FAP can enable the administration to make better decisions. FAP can only make important recommendations if they are better informed and have access to relevant information.

AVP Sullivan stated that FAP can also serve as a conduit to redirect the faculty questions and concerns to the appropriate and proper channels that already exist.

3. Chair Spanagel reported to the committee about his one-on-one meeting with President Leshin. He informed President Leshin about FAP's discussions to modify the current 'charge' and composition. She wanted FAP to have a charge beyond just policy as currently articulated in the title. President Leshin was aware and sympathetic to the small number of people on the Committee but was

also concerned about committing more staff time to the committee. But she will respond in time as the new charge becomes more defined and COG is also involved.

4. A discussion on the performance of the endowment was initiated. Professor Hakim was sharing initial research data comparing WPI's endowment performance to other institutions as reported from the Boston Globe. Fiscal Year 2015 results for a few colleges were reported and include WPI (0.9%), Harvard (5.8%), Yale (11.5%), and MIT (13.25%). VP Solomon stated that the data is end-point sensitive and should be looked at as a rolling average and should also incorporate volatility. Professor El-Korchi suggested we should compare standard reporting data that can be tracked easily and is relevant. Professor Hakim and Spanagel stated that based on news that the MIT and Yale funds were outperforming major institutions like Harvard, we need to learn how they accomplish their impressive results.

Chair Spanagel requested that VP Solomon can educate the Committee by sharing any information that can help the Committee understand the decisions that are made to decide on fund allocations, risk management and performance tracking. Professors Hakim and El-Korchi agreed that this would be beneficial for additional future endowment discussions.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:00 Noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Tahar El-Korchi, FAP Secretary