

AY1516 Committee on Administrative and Financial Policy (FAP) Minutes

FAP Meeting #7 11a.m. Thursday October 8, 2015 in Finance Conference Room

Attendees: Professor Tanja Dominko (Faculty appointee to Trustee Budget & Finance Committee, and invited guest), Professor Hossein Hakim (FAP member; FBC Chair), Executive Vice President/CFO Jeffrey Solomon (FAP Member), Professor David Spanagel (FAP Chair), Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs Kristopher Sullivan (FAP Member), Assistant Vice President Budget and Planning Judi Trainor (invited guest).

FAP Chair Spanagel began the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

1. In Professor El-Korchi's absence, FAP did not conduct any official business (such as approving meeting minutes), but instead discussed ongoing items of interest and continued to plan the implementation of several of its objectives for the current year.
2. As a follow-up to the Provost's recent visit to FAP, Professor Hakim registered his desire that FAP members be provided a more detailed debriefing of all the information that informed the tenure-track faculty hiring decision process, both in order to be better equipped to vouch for the transparency of the process, and to have the FAP chair be better prepared to participate constructively deliberations looking ahead to the next hiring cycle. Chair Spanagel supported Professor Hakim's request, and brainstormed some possible aspects to be covered in this confidential FAP debriefing report to be requested of the Provost:
 - a. What did each Dean's list of prioritized faculty line requests initially look like?
 - b. What cases (whether in terms of current program needs or alignment with strategic goals) were made on behalf of each line request?
 - c. What was the anticipated budget impact (in terms of benchmark information on both compensation ranges and startup packages) for each new line requested?
 - d. When the vetting committee determined which lines ought to be approved for searches, how were those decisions specifically influenced by the impact of items (b) and (c) above; and how do these influences explain cases wherein the vetting process resulted in decisions that deviated from the prioritization of requests as outlined in (a) above?

The conversation shifted at that point, since no action could yet be taken to turn this request into a motion. The subject will return as an official agenda item in a future meeting.

3. Chair Spanagel asked for a preliminary report from the subcommittee working on summer compensation. Assistant VP Sullivan and Professor Hakim reported that they had had a productive meeting together, in which the bulk of the materials and information gathered last year was fully assembled and placed at the disposal of the Provost's office. Assistant VP

Sullivan shared a summary of the summer compensation benchmarking data that had been gathered last year.

At Assistant VP Trainor's request, FAP reviewed how summer faculty compensation is currently organized. Professor Dominko expressed some concern about the competition and commodification potential of a structure that compensates faculty differentially for their out-of-load teaching assignments. Chair Spanagel registered his hopes that the proposal(s) going forward can at least render the system of compensation fairer to WPI faculty who participate in summer instruction, and provide a more rational means of incentivizing and allocating our top quality faculty talents for teaching and project advising, especially if it is the case that summer terms may play an increasingly important role in the delivery of the undergraduate educational experience.

4. Professor Hakim reported that he had had a very good meeting with CFO Solomon to go over and understand the contents of WPI's most recent (2013) Federal Form 990 report.
5. Looking forward towards the endowment management agenda item and presentation that FAP will take up (probably during C term), Chair Spanagel shared a clipping from that morning's *Boston Globe* newspaper: "Years of lackluster returns distress Harvard's president."
6. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,
David Spanagel, FAP Chair (and Acting FAP Secretary on this day)