Working Group Charter
Final: 12/7/18

Scope and Deliverables:
Scope of the working group will include the WPI pending bylaws (approved by the board on November 2, 2018) and more effective collaboration/trust between faculty, administration and trustees going forward.

Deliverables will be written recommendations to the board. The intent is for a consensus document of the working group, including recommendations for amending the pending bylaws, to be presented to the faculty for their endorsement ahead of board action that will take place at the May board meeting.

Specific working group recommendations will include:
1. Recommendations that, at a minimum, address subsets of the pending bylaws in article IV and article XI as they relate to the faculty/academic enterprise:
   - Specific faculty concerns include but are not limited to:
     - *Authority to override the Faculty Handbook*
     - *Academic freedom placed in the Bylaws and within the framework of "society's norms"*
     - *Board's interpretation "controls" any ambiguities in the Bylaws*
     - *President and Provost written in as ex officio members of all Faculty committees*
     - *Provost "creates, reviews, and approves academic policies."*
     - *Global School established without faculty approval*
     - *Inclusion in the bylaws of academic matters: Provost; Deans; Faculty; Academic Freedom.*
   - Specific board concerns that led to the pending bylaws include but are not limited to:
     - *Current bylaws and actual practice are limiting in terms of inclusion, collaboration, and agility.*
   - The working group will discuss these and other issues that may be raised with the pending bylaws as they relate to the faculty/academic enterprise
2. A recommended framework for improved collaborative engagement focused on processes, structures and behaviors. Details will be developed by the working group, and could include:
   - A lessons-learned exercise concerning the current situation
   - A document that describes what collaborative behaviors look like
   - The process for appointment of faculty members to board committees
   - The establishment of a standing committee to drive continuous improvement in collaborative processes
   - A collaborative engagement case study.

Composition:
The working group will include faculty, administration and trustees as all have a critical stake in the bylaws amendments and in improving collaboration at WPI. The working group members will be:

- WPI President (Chair)
- WPI Provost
- 3 TTT Faculty Members
- 1 NTT Faculty Member
- 2 Trustees

TTT and NTT faculty and trustees will select their members and notify the working group chair of the members no later than January 3, 2019.

Individuals with additional expertise may be invited to share best practices regarding topics under deliberation. Ms. Kyle Siegel of the President's Office will provide administrative support to the working group in arranging the meetings, taking minutes, and integrating inputs.

Timeline:
The Working Group will undertake three related efforts concurrently:
1. Develop recommendations, at a minimum, for amending subsets of the pending bylaws in Articles IV and XI as they relate to faculty/academic enterprise.
2. Develop recommendations on a framework for improved collaborative engagement. This will look to establish a sustainable effort that lives beyond the January to May timeframe.
3. Make an active effort to communicate and engage stakeholders across the campus, operating with transparency to board, faculty and administration.

The working group will meet at least monthly. A meeting calendar will be developed as soon as possible to enable all working group members to plan their schedules.

Progress on working group activities will be shared with the Board of Trustees and the faculty at their regularly scheduled meetings. Other communications and engagements with the campus will be done in consultation with the working group.

Working group recommendations, including recommendations for amendments to the pending bylaws, will be discussed at the faculty meeting on April 11 and forwarded for faculty endorsement on May 2, 2019.

The working group will deliver its final recommendations, including any faculty endorsement, to the Board of Trustees for their consideration at the May 2019 board meeting.
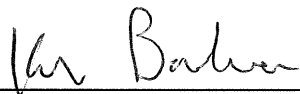
Ways of Working:
The working group will use these "rules of the road" as a mechanism to build trust and shared accountability for stewardship of this important process.
1. Meeting norms
    - We always assume positive intent, ask if in doubt.
    - Everyone's voice is heard and respected, we build on each other.
    - We come to the discussions representing what's best for WPI, rather than our particular constituency.

- All meetings have an agenda, preferably published at least 2 days in advance.
- All meetings have summary-level minutes circulated within the Working Group.
- Working group attendance in person is ideal, but Zoom meetings are also acceptable.
2. Decision making
   - We strive for consensus. When this is not possible with a reasonable time investment, strong points of view that differ are documented in writing with attribution in order to allow for informed decision making.
   - Decisions or agreements made at meetings are documented in writing, preferably in real time during meetings, or shortly thereafter.
3. Communications
   - We commit to communicating on progress and issues, providing the WPI community with regular updates which are distinct from the summary-level minutes.
   - At faculty and board meetings, we communicate with intent to support the activities of the working group to our colleagues.
4. Best Practices
   - We commit to using best practices in our work. For example, in bylaws amendment discussions, consider AGB, AAUP and peer institutions as examples and a guide for our work.

Respectfully submitted by the task force, 12/7/18

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Professor Kris Boudreau

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Professor Jim Cocola
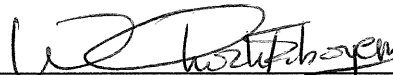
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Professor Tanja Dominko

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Professor Tahar El-Korchi

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Trustee Marni Hall

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Trustee David LaPre

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President Laurie Leshin

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Provost Winston Soboyejo