COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC POLICY,
Minutes of Meeting #2 on September 8, 2017

Present: M. Humi (Chair); M. Brooks; B. Eddy, M. Elmes; A. Heinricher; M. Liberacki; D. Olinger;
G. Salazar
Guest: B. Bursten

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 am by Chair Humi.

The committee discussed lecture capture at WPI. Currently, about 50% of WPI classrooms have lecture capture technology, mostly in classrooms with 40 or more seats. The committee discussed the academic policy issues associated with lecture capture including what kinds of courses it is appropriate for, how often students access lecture capture videos, for what kinds of students it is appropriate, and the advantages and disadvantages of lecture capture as a pedagogical tool. The committee raised the following questions for future discussion: what are student expectations around lecture capture, how important is lecture capture to the faculty, should CAP push for more lecture capture in more classrooms, how does it benefit students? One suggestion was to use one of the optional questions on the student course reports to invite student feedback on lecture capture. Chair Humi will invite ATC Head and Assistant CIO, Mary Beth Harrity, to visit a future CAP meeting and provide CAP with insight into how resources are allocated currently for lecture capture technology at WPI and how often students access lecture capture videos.

Provost Bursten arrived to discuss a move toward adopting fully online student course reports in B'17. The committee was provided with data that compared online and paper course report data from AB2016 and CD2017. Consistent with data from the previous year, averages for Q1, Q2 and Q9 on the online student course reports were slightly lower (by .2 to .4 pts.) than the averages on paper student course reports. Online student course report response rates (47-48%) were also lower than paper student course report response rates (76-78%).

Before the committee discussed the matter, the Provost made his case for moving to a fully online student course report system: an online system is much more environmentally sustainable and will eliminate thousands of pages of paper waste each year; WPI is one of only 2 AITU institutions that still uses paper evaluations; and the current paper system is very expensive and labor intensive (requiring at least 7 touches of each piece of paper).

Members raised a number of questions. Faculty in less STEM-based disciplines may feel threatened by an approach to student course reporting that systematically lowers course report numbers. Faculty seeking tenure and promotion may be concerned with how assessments from an online system will affect their case. The committee discussed that CAP would need to work with COAP and CTAF in the transition to this new system, much as occurred when the IDEA form was implemented several years ago. The committee also discussed a

number of ways that the student course response rate might be raised in a new online approach. The two student representatives conveyed that WPI students are strongly in favor of an online course report system and conveyed ideas for how they could frame the program to students to encourage greater participation and improve the quality of course feedback.

The committee agreed to support the Provost's decision to move to a fully online student course report system starting in B'17 using the standard student course report form.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 am by Chair Humi.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Elmes. Secretary Pro tem