

**Committee on Governance Meeting Minutes**  
**Meeting #10 (2017-18)**  
**Monday, October 30, 2017, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm**  
**HUA Conference Room, SL 124**

In Attendance: Leonard Albano, Bruce Bursten (Provost), Glenn Gaudette (Chair), Mark Richman (Secretary of the Faculty), Susan Roberts [via telephone], David Spanagel (Secretary), Bengisu Tulu, and Suzanne Weekes

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:35 pm.
2. The agenda was approved after a request to reorder the items.
3. The minutes for COG meeting #9 (Oct. 20) were approved as amended.
4. COG members reviewed the Research Misconduct Policy draft proposal, which had been revised by the Trustee/Faculty working group to incorporate earlier COG recommendations:
  - to spell out how issues involving students would be addressed (including an expanded list of specific possible sanctions);
  - to include a clearer discussion of how the policy would also apply to non-Federally funded research; and
  - to be more explicit about the rights afforded to the respondent.

Prof. Richman outlined the road map for how consideration of this motion would proceed: if COG approved it today, the draft policy would be included among the two-week notice items for the Nov. 16, 2017 Faculty meeting. At that Faculty meeting Prof. Gaudette would make a presentation and invite some open discussion and comments on the draft policy. Feedback consisting of concerns or suggestions for improvement would go back to the working group after that meeting, and the policy (perhaps a revised version of the policy reflecting those additional inputs) would come back to COG for approval and then to the Faculty for consideration and a vote at the December 12, 2017 Faculty meeting.

Prof. Weekes asked about respondents' rights to legal counsel. Prof. Richman noted that that was one of several specific "rights of respondents" that the existing Faculty-approved policy had laid out clearly (items 1, 3, and 5 as listed in the Faculty-approved document's section 5g), but which the working draft of the current proposal did not yet contain. Profs Richman and Gaudette agreed to review these discrepancies with Mr. Bunis (WPI's General Counsel).

Prof. Roberts mentioned how issues of LGBTQ-inclusive language have gained increasing attention. She asked whether the now-commonly used, more inclusive pronoun "their" could replace instances of "his/her" throughout the draft.

While recognizing that more issues and questions may continue to arise regarding the details of the draft language, COG voted unanimously in favor of including the draft policy among the November 16, 2017 Faculty meeting materials.

5. COG reviewed and discussed a proposed COG motion regarding the Global Impact Division proposal. Profs. Gaudette and Richman had prepared the motion in keeping with what COG had discussed at its last meeting. The motion passed.
6. Prof. Gaudette distributed a proposal for a COG motion (which had been submitted to him by an unnamed faculty member who had collected a dozen signatures in support) to ask the Faculty to consider revising the Faculty Handbook's current restriction which prevents an incumbent Secretary of the Faculty from being elected to a consecutive term of service. The proposal's language would allow at most two consecutive terms (6 years of continuous service) for a Secretary of the Faculty.

Prof. Richman recused himself from the meeting.

COG members raised a number of issues and questions during the ensuing discussion:

- Have there been problems of continuity in Faculty leadership, which this motion seeks to address?
- The restriction in consecutive terms of service on CTAF may have arisen from the previous process for reviewing tenure cases but committee members were not aware of the circumstances for preventing consecutive terms of service for the Secretary of the Faculty.
- There are situational pros and cons to consider.
  - We might want to assess whether WPI gains more by continuing to maintain a strict rotation of leadership (which generally helps an organization to cultivate its leadership capacities among more people).
  - Alternatively, we might assess whether WPI is currently negotiating its way through an extended period of unusual challenges (transitions in leadership can destabilize the ability to sustain momentum in the face of such challenges).
- Had anyone researched comparable faculty governance practices at peer institutions?

COG would like more information about these matters and so they voted on whether “to return the proposal to its originators, along with a request to provide an expanded rationale section that includes pros, cons, and information regarding the operation of faculty governance at benchmark institutions.” The motion to return the proposal to its originators with these instructions passed by a voice vote.

As the proposed motion was not moved by COG in time to go out with the two-week notice, the committee noted that any faculty member could raise this proposal as a motion from the floor under “New Business” at the Faculty meeting without involving COG, and asked Prof. Gaudette to communicate this to the proposal originators.

7. The meeting adjourned at 2:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David Spanagel, COG Secretary