

Committee on Governance: Minutes

Meeting #16: January 17, 2019

Faculty Governance Conference Room (SL 225)

Present: Len Albano (CEE); Tanja Dominko (Secretary of the Faculty, BBT); Mike Elmes (FBS); Mark Richman (ME); Susan Roberts (Acting Secretary, CHE); David Spanagel (Chair, HUA)

1. Prof. Spanagel called the meeting to order at 10:09 am; the agenda was approved as distributed.
2. The minutes from meeting #15 were approved as distributed.
3. Update on Bylaws and Governance Working Group: COG discussed impressions of the initial meeting that was roughly equivalent to the summary sent by President Leshin via email. There was discussion regarding shared responsibility and there was a serious attempt to be open regarding past mistakes. The working group will complete its efforts by April with plans to present a summary at the April faculty meeting.
4. Faculty Evaluation of Administrators (2018-2019): The following administrators will be evaluated in the current year: Kristin Tichenor, Senior Vice President; Kent Rissmiller, Dean *ad interim*, Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division; Jean King, Dean, Arts and Sciences; and Stephen Flavin, Vice President of Academic and Corporate Engagement. COG adopted a new template for evaluation of administrators two years ago (2016-2017). Prof. Spanagel sent an example of the new format to all members of COG along with past evaluation forms for the positions listed above. Prof. Spanagel reminded COG members that questions should focus on those related to the academic enterprise. Both Senior VP Tichenor and Dean King have agreed to come to the February general faculty meeting (on 2/7) to give short presentations on their roles, responsibilities and accomplishments. COG discussed the timing of the evaluations and decided that evaluations for all four administrators and the institution as a whole would be sent to the faculty at the same time.
5. Global School: At the last meeting, COG gave additional input to Provost Soboyejo regarding the revised Global School proposal. The Provost continues to better define the Global School and obtain faculty input. Prof. Spanagel will contact Provost Soboyejo to get additional information regarding the timeline.
6. Faculty Conduct Policy: COG discussed outstanding points in the policy that need to be addressed. Prof. Richman will communicate feedback to David Bunis and move towards finalizing the policy. COG discussed the need for a similar conduct policy for staff.
7. Faculty Handbook Status: COG questioned whether the Faculty Handbook has status as a legal standard of behavior in light of Article XI in the newly proposed bylaws entitled "Authority" that states: "In the case of any conflict between these Bylaws and other University policies, manuals or handbooks (e.g. Employee Benefits and Policies Manual; WPI Faculty Handbook) these Bylaws shall prevail. In the event of any ambiguities in these Bylaws, the interpretations of the Board shall be controlling." COG suggests that the Bylaws and Governance Working Group address this question.
8. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Roberts
Acting Secretary, COG