

**Minutes FAP Meeting #13 AY2016-17**  
**December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016; 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.**  
**Faculty Governance Conference Room-SL225**

Members: Tanja Dominko (Secretary), Tahar El-Korchi (Chair), Fabienne Miller, George Pins, Jeffrey Solomon - Executive Vice President/CFO, Kristopher Sullivan - Assistant Vice President Academic Affairs

Invited Guest: Judi Trainor-Associate VP for Finance

1. Agenda was approved as distributed.
2. Minutes from Meeting #12, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 were approved as amended.
3. Discussion of Faculty concerns regarding P-card and eProcurement policies

Several concerns have recently been raised by faculty about procurement policies. Ms. Trainor provided an overview of current procurement policies and stated that the University has transitioned to eProcurement system. All departments have participated in the presentation of the new system and while implementation is still evolving, eProcurement will replace P-card system for all charges except travel and low dollar purchases from other than preferred vendors available through eProcurement (STARS). She stressed that the intent for the change from P-card to eProcurement was made to assure administratively sound safeguarding of WPI resources and minimize opportunities for improper or fraudulent charges. eProcurement allows additional benefits, such as negotiation of vendor discount rates and real-time encumbrances in the Banner. Ms. Trainor and Mr. Solomon assured FAP that the implementation process will continue to be modified to reflect faculty concerns and to eliminate unnecessary administrative burden.

The University has about 400 P-card users, half of them in Academic Affairs, and administrative management is very time-demanding. Addressing faculty concerns about short timeliness allowed for P-card approval, Ms. Trainor explained that the need for P-card users to sign off on their charges ranges between 14 and 45 days, depending on the date of a P-card charge. Charges need to be signed off by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for charges made in the previous month. For example, if a charge is made on the last day of a month then the user has 14 days; if a charge is made on the first day of the month, then the user has 45 day for a sign-off. The limit on P-card charges is \$999 per transaction. A temporary increase in this limit can be requested from Finance and Operations ahead of anticipated charge higher than \$999.

Prof. Pins observed that there is little appreciation for different worlds in which research and accounting operate. Better understanding and appreciation of dynamics of research groups, their needs and operations will lead to further simplification of eProcurement implementation. The system should be responsive and should not cause delays in one's ability to pursue time-sensitive experimentation. Mr. Solomon acknowledged the concerns raised and agreed that reasonable eProcurement workflow accommodations can and will continue to be made such that research is not affected.

4. Adjourned at 11:05 am.

Tanja Dominko, Secretary