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COG 17th meeting

Committee on Governance, Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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The Committee on Governance (COG) held its 17th meeting of the 2012-2013 academic year on January 31, 2013 in the Faculty Governance Conference Room (SL 225).

Present: Michael Gennert (Chair), Kristen Billiar (Secretary), Suzanne Weekes, Bogdan Vernescu, Elke Rundensteiner, Terri Camesano, John Sullivan, Eric Overström

1. Prof. Gennert called the meeting to order at 9:03 am.
2. The minutes from the January 24, 2013 COG meeting were discussed and approved.
3. Provost Overström updated the committee on the status of the Policy on Faculty Misconduct. The law firm aiding in the process has been contacted and will provide an updated policy in line with the draft Policy on Research Misconduct before the Trustees Meeting in February.
4. The Task Force for Recruiting & Retaining Women at WPI was discussed. COG endorses the efforts of the task force and will aid in the process of surveying the Faculty on the topic.
5. Provost Overström distributed draft guidelines for a new initiative entitled “Opportunity for Faculty Development: Academic Administrative Leadership.” This pathway would codify leadership development opportunities such as assistant and associate deans. These positions would be part time for existing Faculty (target of 25% effort during the academic year and will be part of the faculty members’ in-load, academic-year commitments offset by arrangement with the department head e.g., course buy-out(s) and likely be 2-year appointments). These opportunities are expected to aid Faculty in gaining professional experience, provide expanded academic leadership capacity, and enhance collaborative/shared leadership. These positions are expected to be identified by the Deans and approval will be under the purview of the Provost. Prof. Gennert noted that the wording in the Faculty Handbook states that the appointment of Assistant and Associate Deans requires a formal search process, although COG understands that this policy implicitly refers to full-time administrative positions. There was also concern about the increasing number of academic administrative positions relative to TTT Faculty numbers i.e., if 4 Faculty participate it is equivalent to losing the efforts of one full Faculty member for other endeavors e.g., teaching; although these opportunities were perceived as beneficial for Faculty. COG will discuss the matter further in a future meeting.
6. Prof. Vernescu distributed draft Guidelines for a Post-Tenure Teaching Review developed and endorsed by the department heads in Arts and Sciences. We are currently not in compliance with the Faculty Handbook on this matter. This process is not to be a reevaluation of tenure but rather a professional development opportunity. COG will discuss the matter further in a future meeting.
7. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Billiar, Ph.D.
Secretary of COG