9-27-2012

COG 6th meeting

Committee on Governance, Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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The Committee on Governance (COG) held its 6th meeting of the 2012-2013 academic year on September 27, 2012 in the Chairman’s Room, Campus Center.

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

1. Prof. Gennert called the meeting to order at 11:04 am.
2. The minutes from the September 20, 2012 COG meeting were discussed and approved.
3. The slate of candidates for Faculty Representatives to Trustees’ Committees has been provided to President Berkey to present to the Trustees Committee on Nominations and Governance.
4. Prof. Gennert has requested of CAP, CASL, and CGSR nominees for the COG appointee to the Board of Trustees’ Award for Outstanding Teaching Committee.
5. The nominations for the Vice Provost for Research Search Committee have been compiled; Prof. Gennert will contact each of the highest numbers of votes.
6. COG ad hoc Subcommittee on Stopping the Tenure Clock has met and is working on the topic.
7. COG ad hoc Subcommittee on Inclusion of the Deans’ roles in Faculty Governance has met and is going through the Handbook for responsibilities of the Provost and President that may be appropriate for Deans and is identifying where the chain of command should be altered. With reference to the question of whether the dean positions are temporary, the COG minutes from October 29, 2008 state "While COG has participated in discussing this topic, and made efforts to elicit--and report--Faculty viewpoints on it, COG has recognized from the beginning that the creation of new Deanships is solely the prerogative of the Administration. To interpret the COG's role as endorsing the creation of Deanships is a misperception." There is no evidence from Faculty Meeting minutes that the Faculty have voted on institution of Deans.
8. Mayer Humi has been invited to a COG meeting in B-term as representative for COAP to discuss proposing a restructuring of COAP in model of CTAF.
9. The committee discussed charging FAP to report on WPI’s performance relative to other schools against the Bain consultancy information contained in http://www.bain.com/publications/articles/financially-sustainable-university.aspx and to perform a “stress test”
10. COG discussed the Provost reporting of the “Roles played by tenured, tenure track, and non-tenure track faculty in carrying out WPI’s mission.” As stated in the Faculty Handbook, Appendix D:

   “Early each fall, the Provost will provide a report to the Committee on Governance detailing the numbers (and full-time equivalents) in each category of faculty, and the percentages of academic credit delivered by each category of faculty across the institution, and within each department, division, and school (including Corporate and Professional Education). In collaboration with the Provost, the Committee on Governance will disseminate a final report to the Faculty and present the results for open discussion at a Faculty meeting during the same year.”

Provost Overstrom reported that the “snapshot” of numbers of faculty and teaching is October 1st. COG will send to the Provost the report with academic year 2010-2011 data that was presented to the faculty in November 2011, and the Provost’s office will update the charts and provide them to COG in mid-October.
11. COG noted that the recent NEASC report identified that although reviews of tenured faculty on their teaching are required by the bylaws every six years (Faculty Handbook p. 2-19), there is no formal procedure consistently being followed. Prof. Vernescu pointed out that Dean Oates has already charged the Arts & Sciences Department Heads to propose a procedure for consideration by the Provost, Deans, and COG.

12. The meeting adjourned at 11:58 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Billiar, Ph.D.
Secretary of COG