10-29-2008

8th meeting of the 2008-09 Academic Year

Committee on Governance, Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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The Committee on Governance (COG) held its eighth meeting of the 2008-09 Academic Year in the Morgan Room of the Campus Center at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, October 29, 2008.

Present: Provost J. Orr. Professors J. Blandino, J. Hanlan (Chair), J. O’Connor (Secretary), J. Rulfs, and H. Vassallo.

Summary: 1. The Committee acted upon the Agenda previously submitted by Prof. Hanlan.
2. The Committee acted upon the Minutes of its previous meeting (October 16, 2008) as submitted by Prof. O’Connor.
3. The Committee heard reports from Prof. Hanlan and Prof. Vassallo concerning the recent Trustees meeting.
4. The Committee addressed aspects of the search process for the positions of three new WPI Deanships.

Detail: 1. The Committee accepted the Agenda previously submitted by Prof. Hanlan.
2. The Committee accepted the Minutes submitted by Prof. O’Connor with one additional modification.
3. Prof. Hanlan attended the following sub-Committees of the Trustees: Advancement, Gateway Park Oversight, Technology, and Investments. Prof. Vassallo attended the following sub-Committees: Budget & Finance, Facilities, Academic Planning, and Student Affairs.
   a. Although the full board of Trustees showed support for the creation of three new WPI Deanships (Dean of Engineering, Dean of Arts and Sciences, Dean of Management), some individual Trustees have expressed the desire for further time to deliberate on this proposal. Provost Orr will be in contact with the Chair of the Academic Planning Committee to determine whether that Committee would like to address any possible remaining concerns before the next meeting of the full Board of Trustees (February, 2009).
   b. COG members expressed their concern that some recent communications have mistakenly identified the creation of these new Deanships as having the endorsement of COG. 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.
c. Discussion on this topic will continue at the next meeting.

4. Prof. Hanlan will request Ms. Rock, Executive Assistant for Faculty Governance, to prepare three lists of Faculty for voting on Faculty representatives to the three different Deanship Search Committees. (For the purposes of voting for these Faculty representative positions, the two tenure-track members of IGSD will be considered members of the "Arts and Sciences" Deanship.)

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. T. O'Connor, Secretary