

**Committee on Governance: Minutes**  
Meeting #24: April 14, 2020  
Faculty Governance: Massachusetts Branch Offices

Present: Kris Boudreau (Secretary, HUA), Tanja Dominko (Secretary of the Faculty, BBT), Tahar El-Korchi (CEE), Glenn Gaudette (BME), Arne Gericke (CBC), Mark Richman (ME), Sue Roberts (ChE), and Wole Soboyejo (Provost).

1. Professor Gaudette unmuted the meeting to order at 2:14. The agenda was approved.
2. The minutes of meeting #23 were approved.
3. Associate Dean, Undergraduate Studies. The Provost indicated his desire to initiate an internal search for a permanent Associate Dean and requested COG's approval to compose a search committee. He described this permanent position, whose responsibilities have evolved since it was last held permanently by Prof. Wobbe. The newly defined position, which will be 50% administrative, retains responsibilities for first-year programs and adds a focus on undergraduate research. The previous 100% administrative position held by Prof. Wobbe was half in Undergraduate Studies and half in the Global School (IGSD), which Provost Soboyejo explained had always been allocated that way. Prof. Wobbe will maintain the GPS responsibilities under the Global School.

COG members noted that remote nominations and voting would be required for electing faculty representatives to the search committee. COG members agreed that it will be necessary to learn more about how the two-stage nomination and election process would be carried out remotely and whether preference voting could be carried out in this manner. Profs. Dominko and Gaudette will explore the issue and report back to COG.

4. Motion to update Faculty Handbook to include Deans in review of Department Heads. Prof. Gaudette reported that the Academic Deans have provided their input about this item as requested by COG. They propose an amendment anticipating that Academic Departments "with substantial interdisciplinary character may reside in more than one school," in which cases the relevant Deans will "collaborate to perform the role described with the singular 'Dean.'" The Provost explained that the proposed Robotics Engineering (RBE) Department motivated this revision. Because the RBE program has resided between Engineering and Arts & Sciences, the Deans and Provost want a structure that enables the continuation of this interdisciplinary collaboration once the new Department is approved. The Provost has in mind a structure where the Dean of Engineering will serve as the "Administrative" Dean for the purposes of reporting, budgeting, etc., and the Dean of Arts & Sciences will serve as the "Collaborative" Dean for logistical and financial support.

An initial discussion followed in which COG touched on several issues, with some COG members expressing concern that the designation of both “administrative” and “collaborative” Deans could complicate administrative processes, and wondering why explicit designation of an “administrative” and a “collaborative” Dean was necessary in the first place. COG members disagreed about whether the additional administrative layer proposed by this structure was necessary to collaboration across schools and departments. Finally, COG members agreed to language encouraging collaboration more generally at WPI: “Whereas collaboration is essential to WPI, Deans are expected to collaborate with other Deans when evaluating department heads in departments where collaboration across schools is significant (as defined by the Provost).” COG voted to approve the motion.

5. The meeting was adjourned at 3:42.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Boudreau  
COG Secretary