Opportunity for Faculty Development:
Pathway for Academic Administrative Leadership

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The Premise

As a leading institution of higher education, WPI provides a distinct, technology-centered education that is widely recognized for its pedagogical effectiveness, student value and relevance to the needs of society. To assure our enviable position among our peer institutions going forward, it is essential that WPI sustain a strong faculty and an academic administration that provides strong educational leadership. With respect to the latter, recruiting academic administrative leaders at the dean level typically occurs via a thorough national search process, with the successful recruit having full time administrative commitments. With this leadership structure in place at WPI, there remains a need for additional academic leadership to bolster the efforts and effectiveness of the academic deans. This need can be affectively addressed by providing a mechanism for members of the faculty to serve in supportive roles to the deans as assistant or associate deans on a part time basis. This approach will provide three beneficial outcomes:

1. Faculty who are so inclined and appointed are afforded an opportunity to gain professional experience in roles of academic administrative leadership
2. Provide WPI with expanded academic leadership capacity to support delivery of existing and/or new academic programs or initiatives
3. In practice, the initiative will enhance the collaborative responsibilities for shared academic leadership among the faculty, administration and Board of Trustees

Guidelines.

Academic deans will propose the specific unmet administrative leadership need and/or opportunity by submitting a proposal to the provost for review and authorization. The proposal will provide rationale and define the needed support; defining parameters including a prospective appointee(s), expected responsibilities, outcomes and anticipated timeframe of the appointment. These part-time positions will generally require up to 25% effort during the academic year and will be part of the faculty members in load, academic year commitments. The appointment will be supported at the home department by arrangement among the Department Head, Dean and Provost. The term of appointment will be defined, generally for 1-2 years, reviewed annually and could be renewed based on continuing need and performance, and with mutual support by all impacted parties. The dean will be responsible to support all aspects of the position. The title will be appropriate with respect to faculty rank and experience, both academic and administrative.