

Department of Biology
Faculty meeting minutes
February 16, 2005

In attendance:

Ahmed, Bautch, Burch, Burmeister, Copenhaver, Duronio, Gensel, Goldstein, Harris, Hogan, A. Jones, C. Jones, Kieber, Kier, Lieb, Liljegren, K. Lohmann, Matson, Mitchell, Peifer, D. Pfennig, K. Pfennig, Pukkila, Reice, Rogers, Salmon, Searles, Sekelsky, Servedio, Sockman, Stafford, Vision, Willett, Yeh

Student representative: Rice

Announcements (Matson):

1. Alan Jones has been appointed to a five year term Distinguished Professorship to begin July 1, 2005.
2. Renovation of Coker 201 has been postponed through next Fall.
 - a. Scheduled to begin August 2005.
 - b. All teaching will be assigned elsewhere.
3. Gerd Jürgens will be the Nannerl Keohane Distinguished Visiting Professor.
 - a. Highly competitive post.
 - b. Appointment will begin Feb 2006 and run through September.
4. Commencement recognition ceremony May 14 in Carmichael Gym.
 - a. Invitations to faculty going out soon.
 - b. Participation strongly encouraged.
5. Budget update.
 - a. Board of governors (BOG) has placed moratorium on tuition increase, which is largest source of funds for faculty and TA salary increases.
 - b. BOG expecting to increase out-of-state tuition.
 - i. This could be a source for faculty salary increase.
 - ii. However, applies to graduate students, so pool of funds for tuition remissions could be reduced. Discussion emphasized need to distinguish between undergraduate and graduate tuition hikes.
6. In future, faculty meeting minutes will be archived online. Past minutes will also be available.
7. Equipment funds are available. Shared items will get priority for funding. Give Steve suggestions for items to be purchased plus cost with sales tax included.
8. Pfizer undergraduate awards are available. Steve can nominate 2 people in each of the categories of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. Obtain application materials from Denise. Due to Steve by March 4.

Report from Strategic Planning Committee (D. Pfennig):

1. The committee's charge from Steve Matson was to address the External Review committee's critique that hiring plan was too much of a laundry list with little synthesis between the MCDB and EEOB groups.

2. The committee, chaired by Jeff Dangel, asked each faculty member in the fall to provide a description of the level of organization at which he/she works, with whom he/she collaborates, and the key areas in which we should hire.
3. The committee used this information to develop 6 “bins” representing different levels of organization and synthesis:
 - a. Development of new model systems.
 - b. Quantitative and systems approaches to biology.
 - c. Sub-cellular, cellular, and organismal imaging.
 - d. Integrative biology of whole organisms.
 - e. Ecological dynamics of populations and communities.
 - f. Evolution and diversity of form and function.
4. For each bin, 2-3 mock job ads were developed and “type specimens” identified.
5. A more detailed description and report will be provided at the March faculty meeting. In the meantime, contact Jeff Dangel with comments.

Graduate Recruitment Weekend (K. Lohmann):

1. First year of online submissions. Next year should be completely paperless.
2. 95 MCDB applicants and 43 EEOB applicants. Numbers down from last year (which was a record year). Last year: 117 MCDB and 47 EEOB applicants.
3. 4 top applicants nominated for fellowships, 2 MCDB and 2 EEOB. Final decision on those not yet made.
4. February 24-27 is recruitment weekend for entire department.
 - a. Thursday, students will connect with host.
 - b. Friday, interviews.
 - c. Saturday, more informal and social with group activities and dinner parties.
5. Faculty involvement needed for interviews and social events.

Graduate Recruitment for Genetics (Duronio):

Genetics will hold two recruitment weekends that run Sunday-Tuesday. Next event is March 6-7. Their applicant numbers also down this year.

Policy for Voting on Promotion and Tenure (Matson):

1. External review critiqued the departmental policy of having only full professors vote on promotion and tenure decisions. The committee suggested exploring a change to allow associate professors to participate in decision making.
2. Steve Matson read e-mail by Bob Peet emphasizing that allowing associate professors to vote would encourage a greater sense of community and participation. General discussion echoed this point.
3. No one present put forward objections to allowing associate professors to vote. Discussion was favorably inclined to change in policy.
4. Steve will develop new policy and present it to faculty for formal acceptance in future. Anticipates that changed policy could be in place by July 1, 2005.

Other Business:

The issue that the annual report is no longer accessible was discussed. Steve is working on remedying the situation and hopes to have it available (possibly in CD form) this spring.