

Department of Biology, Faculty Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2007

Attending: Keiber, Stafford, Harris, Pukkila, Burch, K. Pfennig, Feduccia, Matson, Sekelsky, Sockman, Wiley, Peet, Lieb, Yeh, Bloom, Gensel, Matthysse, Servedio, Kingsolver, Reice, Willet, C. Jones, Goldstein, S. Rogers, Mitchell, Vision, Peifer, Searles, Lohmann, Kier, DeSaix, A. Jones, Grant, Burmeister.

Also attending: Luke Berchowitz (graduate student representative); Andreas Teske (Marine Sciences)

I. Announcements

The new Dean of Arts and Sciences is Holden Thorp; Bruce Carney has been asked to stay on as Senior Associate Dean for Sciences and Mathematics. His decision is pending.

Building renovations in Coker Hall: mail room will move down the hall in order to enlarge the student services office; following commencement the bathrooms on the ground floor of Coker will be renovated to become compatible with ADA.

Susan Whitfield has received UNC's Cornwell Unsung Hero Award; there will be an awards ceremony this Spring.

Mike Sears (greenhouse manager) is retiring at end of March; there will be a reception for Mike sometime in March; if interested, make contribution for a gift to Terry Law in Dangel lab; job description will be revamped to bring it up to date before searching for a replacement.

II. Gender equity in Biology – Bill Kier

Given that impressions of progress toward gender equity are diverse, goal was to see how we are actually doing by looking at data; data collected by Kier and analyzed with help from Burch.

Data are percentage of women in department since 1985; assumptions in data analysis: only tenure-track faculty included, retirement age of 68, hiring rate to hold faculty at constant number (1.2 per year).

Results: department is currently ~22% women faculty; different levels of % women hired will reach equity at different times; e.g., if 50% of new hires are women, equity reached in 2042; if 20% new hires are women, which is long-term rate in department, equity is never reached. Resources are available on improving hiring practices.

General discussion: UNC-Biology has higher % women than other science departments at UNC; UNC-Biology is currently at the 2002-average of top 50 biology departments nationwide.

III. Search process – Steve Matson

Changes intended to increase faculty involvement in searches. Search committees to advise faculty on candidates who are acceptable/unacceptable (instead of ranking). Faculty-wide vote taken as secret ballot.

General discussion: if there is large difference between ranking of candidates by faculty and ranking of candidates by search committee, faculty meeting will be called for further discussion. In any case, once decision is made, faculty meeting will be called to discuss a motion to offer the position to the top candidate.

Candidate seminars will be videotaped in the future to enable all faculty to view all seminars.

IV. Personnel matters (Bruno joint appointment) – Bob Peet

John Bruno is currently being reviewed for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure in the Marine Sciences Department; Marine Sciences has enthusiastically endorsed their recommendation to promote Bruno; since Bruno has joint appointment in Biology, Biology should review Bruno's appointment.

Andreas Teske summarized the Marine Sciences recommendation for Bruno's promotion. Peet and others highlighted Bruno's contributions to Biology. A motion was made and seconded to appoint Bruno to Associate Professor in Biology. Matson will collect confidential votes on the motion by email.

V. Library plans – Bob Peet

Issue is whether the Botany Library, which is currently in Coker, should be moved across the street to join the Zoology and Chemistry Libraries. This would free-up space within the department for a reading room or other activities. Also received reminder that many books will be moved to off-site storage facility. It was suggested that a drop-off spot in the department for books requested from the off-site storage facility would be useful. Most discussion focused on the issue of delivery/return of books. Matson recommended library committee formulate concrete options and circulate those to faculty for comment.

VI. Other business