

Department of Biology, Faculty Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2008

Present:

Shawn Ahmed, Kerry Bloom, John Bruno, Christina Burch, Sabrina Burmeister, Mara Duncan, Patricia Gensel, Tyson Hedrick, Corbin Jones, Joseph Kieber, William Kier, Joel Kingsolver, Jason Lieb, Steve Matson, Ann Matthysse, Charles Mitchell, Robert Peet, David Pfennig, Karin Pfennig, Patricia Pukkila, Jason Reed, Seth Reice, Steve Rogers, Jeff Sekelsky, Kevin Slep, Keith Sockman, Todd Vision, Elaine Yeh

Not Present:

Albert Baldwin, Victoria Bautch, Frank Conlon, Greg Copenhaver, Stephen Crews, Jeff Dangel, Jean DeSaix, Robert Duronio, Bob Goldstein, Sarah Grant, Albert Harris, Alan Jones, Sarah Liljegren, Cathy Lohmann, Ken Lohmann, William Marzluff, Greg Matera, Mark Peifer, Charles Peterson, Ted Salmon, Lillie Searles, Maria Servedio, Darrel Stafford, Haven Wiley, Peter White, Christopher Willett

I – Report from Faculty Search Committee (Kingsolver, Bruno, Sockman, White, Pfennig, Gensel, Mitchell)

Steve Matson: Introduction:

- Search committee will present the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate in the context of the position.
- Committee will make a recommendation.
- The process must be expedited and resolved by next week.
- Concern from Matson and Kingsolver regarding participation in the search.
- Voting will be by ballot: vote your conscience.
- Reconvene early next week.

Joel Kingsolver: Presentation:

- Two withdrew from the search, accepted outstanding offers
- Future searches: consider moving the process earlier in the academic year
- Search criteria: Research & Scholarship, Fit, Teaching

Allen Hulbert

Amherst (A.B.), U. New Mexico (Ph.D.) NCEAS (postdoc)
11 pubs (PNAS, etc.)
Topic: Biogeography of diversity
PRO: broad thinking, small-to-large scale, organismal, energetic
CON: seminar was good but not inspiring

Lauren Buckley

Williams (A.B.), Stanford (Ph.D.), NCEAS (postdoc)
9 pubs (Nature, etc.)
Topic: Bioenergetics
PRO: integration of models, field studies, strong seminar, engaging, energetic
CON: models

Derek Johnson

Florida State (B.A.), U. South Florida (Ph.D.), Penn State (postdoc), Wisconsin (postdoc), Louisiana (Assist. Prof.)
17 pubs (Nature, etc)
Topic: Temporal and spatial dynamics of populations
PRO: integrate theoretical & statistical, models with field data
Engaging
CONS: narrow focus, too applied? Undergraduate teaching?

Letters positive for all three

Ranking received from 15 faculty, 4 grad students

Every candidate ranked 1st by someone and last by someone

Discussion:

- Hulbert - Panama field experiment – good for future development
- Jones: Down to 60% of original candidates – does the committee feel comfortable proceeding?
- Kingsolver: committee is happy with all candidates – all have qualitative approaches and empirical work with geographical field work.
- Peet: favors Hulbert. Jim Brown letters best for Hulbert, second for Buckley, does not like Johnson
- Matson: what are their funding potentials?
- Kingsolver: all well positioned for NSF funding – they will be competitive, Johnson has existing USDA funding
- Peet: Johnson – more funding, less prestigious
- Kier: issue of Johnson's undergraduate teaching
- Burmeister: Johnson's teaching not an issue, his teaching ideas have stimulated interest in the department

The Committee's Recommendation/Ranking (Kingsolver)

- 1) Buckley
 - 2) Hurlbert
 - 3) Johnson
- parallels average ranking from the faculty

Discussion:

- Existing offers: Buckley (U. South Carolina), Hurlbert (Louisiana State)
- Assess the job market this year: 157 applicants to UNC, other searches at Stanford & CT.
- Best postdocs come from NCEAS – usually synthetic, not field research

Conclusion (Matson):

Ballot will be sent out tomorrow, rank them 1,2,3 by noon on Monday

Candidate info available online, seminars are archived

Announcement:

- Pukkila: summer undergrad research fellowships due tomorrow at 4:00 pm.