

Biology Faculty Minutes, 2 Sep 2009

In attendance:

Ahmed, Shawn	Johnson, Corey	Servedio, Maria
Bautch, Victoria	Jones, Alan	Shemer, Gidi
Buckley, Lauren	Jones, Corbin	Slep, Kevin
Burch, Christina	Kieber, Joe	Sockman, Keith
Coble, Jennifer	Kier, Bill	Stegenga, Barbara
Copenhaver, Greg	Kingsolver, Joel	Umbanhowar, James
Dangl, Jeff	Lieb, Jason	Vision, Todd
DeSaix, Jean	Lohmann, Ken	White, Peter
Duncan, Mara	Matera, Greg	Wiley, Haven
Duronio, Bob	Matson, Steve	Yeh, Elaine
Gensel, Pat	Matthysse, Ann	Hinar Polczar
Goldstein, Bob	Peifer, Mark	Sumit Dhole (grad student)
Grant, Sarah	Reed, Jason	Chia-Yi Cheng (grad student)
Harris, Al	Rogers, Steve	Stephanie Nowotarski (grad student)
Hedrick, Ty	Salmon, Ted	
Hogan, Kelly	Searles, Lillie	
Hurlbert, Allen	Sekelsky, Jeff	

I. Announcements (Bill Kier)

- a. Welcome to Gidi Shemer, our Lecturer/Advisor and the newest member of the department
- b. Marie Fholer is off to an impressive start managing Biology's administrative side.
- c. Reminder: Betsy and Marie would like notification two weeks in advance about any student or temp hires; foreign postdoc visas may require up to 6 months lead time.

II. Graduate Studies (Greg Copenhaver)

- a. Faculty are reminded to nominate students for graduate student awards.
 - i. Off-campus dissertation fellowship for \$7,300/semester, due before Oct. 5th.
 - ii. Distinguished dissertation award for students who have finished in the past year, due before Oct. 13th.
- b. Tuition remissions: Faculty are reminded to urge students to apply for residency as early as possible, and to keep applying if their applications are rejected.
- c. The graduate application deadline for being considered for university fellowships has been moved up to Dec. 15th.
- d. The graduate application deadline for the BBSP program has been moved up to Dec. 7th. No BBSP applications will be considered after this date.
- e. A new course in Research Ethics (GRAD 721) is being offered as an 8-week module.
- f. NRC rankings of graduate programs will be out by the end of the year and may generate publicity and media interest. Faculty should refer any inquiring journalists to the Graduate School.

III. Departmental Email (Ty Hedrick)

- a. Email
 - i. Biology department email mailboxes will be hosted by ITS

- ii. This will save ~\$12K in upgrade costs this year, provide better spam filtering, and resolve some out of date email server problems
 - iii. Email attachments will be limited to 50 MB
 - iv. Mailbox size will be unlimited, although ITS may charge for mailboxes > 2 GB.
- b. ONYEN logins
- i. Biology department logins will be replaced with ONYENs
 - ii. This means Biology will not bear the costs of maintaining separate servers.
 - iii. All lab/group logins will be replaced by user-specific profiles and privileges.
 - iv. Some computers may need to be renamed in order to be unique within the university.
 - v. Over the course of the semester, IT personnel will migrate computers to the new system on a lab-by-lab basis. This will take 1-3 days depending on the size of the lab and any special requirements.

IV. Budget (Bill Kier)

- a. History
- i. Last year the state imposed a one-time 4% cut of state funds.
 - ii. A significant portion of our carryover in the instructional budget was cut.
 - iii. For the current year, we received a 5% cut, and then another 2% cut, and were instructed to take these cuts from permanent staff. This resulted in the layoffs of Ernie Patterson and Shirley Hart.
- b. Today
- i. Marie is working hard to provide me with a tentative picture of the departmental budget, in spite of inadequate departmental records.
 - 1. The state budget is ~\$5.2M (excluding the instructional budget), of which approximately \$5M is accounted for by faculty salaries, staff salaries and benefits. Thus, there is very little flexibility.
 - 2. The department has ~\$400K in commitments to overhead but has available ~\$200K (after deducting encumbrances), leaving a deficit of \$200K.
 - ii. The department has undertaken, or is examining, the following ways for dealing with this shortfall.
 - 1. Laying off two temps in Facilities and Maintenance and one from the office.
 - 2. Not providing food for departmental events.
 - 3. Currently we rent 7 copy machines, and will get rid of at least some of them.
 - 4. We are currently renting two departmental vehicles (not used for instruction) which may be unnecessary.
 - 5. We may selectively cancel service contracts for some shared equipment (e.g. the autoclave on the 3rd floor of Wilson).
 - 6. Shifting the burden of server maintenance to the university.
 - 7. Re-evaluating MOUs of joint appointment faculty.
 - 8. No longer provide scantrons for class exams.
 - a. Concern was expressed that students bringing their own scantrons might be able to cheat more easily.
 - 9. We may not be able to fully support seminar speakers as we have in the past.
 - a. Housing speakers with faculty members is one option to reduce costs.
 - b. Jeff Dangl suggested that Distinguished Professors or those with special trust funds could pitch in to help cover these costs.

10. The Biology Retreat is on Oct. 9th in the Great Hall.
 - a. Support was voiced for having the retreat include lunch, despite budget constraints.
 - b. One option is to charge PIs from their grants based on attendance per lab.
 - c. Jeff Dangel suggested that Distinguished Professors or those with special trust funds could pitch in to help cover these costs.

VIII. No further business