

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES FACULTY MEETING

Wednesday December 3, 2008

1:00 – 3:00 PM, 252 Food Science Bldg.

Minutes

The meeting was called to order a few minutes past 1:00 pm.

1. Spring 2008 Meeting Minutes were approved.

2. Introduction of new faculty/personnel by Unit Leaders

Steve Smith introduced four new faculty members from the Ag Ec and Rural Sociology Dept.:

Alessandro Bonanno, Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics

Karen Fisher-Vanden, Associate Professor of Environmental and Resource Economics

Mark A. Leach, Assistant Professor of Rural Sociology and Demography

Anouk Patel-Campillo, Assistant Professor of Rural Sociology

Roy Young introduced a new faculty member, Jeff Catchmark, Associate Professor Ag & Biological Engineering

Ed Rojotte introduced a new Plant Path faculty member, Beth Gugino, Assistant Professor Plant Pathology.

3. Update on University Senate Activities – No report

4. College Standing Committee Reports/Comments

Instruction and Curricular Affairs – Rob Shannon reported this committee has reviewed 25-30 proposals and with this College's high level of scrutiny, they usually breeze through the senate. This is testament to the level of work that our faculty and staff put into them. There is a website now for the ICAC under Faculty & Staff – Teaching and Learning. Our meetings are paperless now with course proposals going through the University's CSCS system.

Nominating and Elections – Jeff Stokes encourage everyone to nominate willing and capable faculty

Graduate Council – Marvin Hall announced the Spring Grad Research Exhibit – March 29 – encourage grads to participate

Library – Amy Paster made the following report: This standing committee met in Oct. 2008 and decided to send a letter to current graduate students highlighting various services available to them at the libraries. Graduate students now have unlimited book renewals. Gearing up for the GOOGLE digitization project, a note will appear in the CAT when items are off the shelf being scanned. ILLiad article delivery service has been extended to staff. The service provides electronic copies of articles for the print journal collections at local campus libraries at no charge. Using the information provided through our Get It service, we can determine the most heavily used databases and the most frequently sought full-text journal titles. Outreach – would the COAS be willing to participate in a survey about their research needs? This helps subject selectors choose appropriate resources for the libraries.

5. Remarks from Dean Steele and Associate Deans

Dean Steele gave a budget report – the December monthly Dept. of Revenue report is out, 6.8% below projected revenue, leading to 1-2 billion dollar deficit. Can be viewed on their website. Will be more definitive at the end of December. We have paid back to Old Main the 4.25% rescission, but with the 6.8% shortfall – there may be another rescission (base cut or both?). We are not out of the woods just yet. By June 2009, the books must be balanced.

Comments from Associate Dean Marcos Fernandez

- Undergraduate enrollment in the College of Agricultural Sciences is up approx. 8% for the 2008-09 academic year – the largest one-time jump. Overall, there has been an approx. 22% growth in undergraduate enrollments in the last 3 years. This is a reflection of everyone doing their part.
- There was approx. 550 students attend and 62 companies participate in the College Career Fair this fall. This reflects well on the College that even when the economy is down, they still come here for our students.
- Student Technology Grant Proposals (UG and GR) have been reviewed and five proposals were selected by an all-student review panel (from the Ag Student Council and the Ag Sc Graduate Student Advisory Council).
- The NACTA annual conference will be June 17-20, 2009 this year. Penn State will be the host for the 2010 NACTA conference.
- Check out the new office space for the ERM Dept. Office – Room 119 Ag Adm Bldg.

Question to the Dean was asked: What is the implication of the budget cuts on growing enrollment.

In a 12-year timeframe, the College lost 1/3 of it's students but we did not loose any dollars – just instructional dollars. The increased enrollment gains instructional dollars. For the first rescission of 4.25% - the enrollment growth offset the rescission mostly. For the upcoming enrollment year of SU/FA 2009, we are currently ahead of last year's admission data, so the increase in enrollment trend appears to be continuing.

Comments from Assistant Dean Ann Dodd

- The College's Strategic Plan – July 1 – is on the website. There are 4 goals, 5 initiatives and 5 teams.
- Graduate Programs are up 1% - interdepartmental – 472
College level is down – 95 intercollege advisees
Biggest increase is in Ecology
- January 22 is the deadline for Bunton Waller
- Will be re-administering this spring the Program Assessment Survey from a few years ago

Questions to the Dean was asked: what efforts are underway for the underrepresented students?:

Randi Congleton (from Student Affairs office) was hired about 6 months ago (she was one of our undergraduate students). She is currently very active, and not just with recruitment, but also retention, so expect to see quite a bit of change. She could be invited to the Spring Faculty Meeting.

The Strategic Plan 5-year plan – lots of activity here. Faculty have asked if any recommendations from the College Sustainability report have been implemented? And, how will the new focus effect department funding? The Dean said they are dealing with the sustainability report one item at a time. One item in the report was the Faculty Advisory Committee to the Dean and their function. This committee may not be hitting on all cylinders. This is being discussed with that committee. The Unit Leaders have the department funding reports – nothing new here. We have put money where our priorities are.

The E R M major has a new home with ENRI. This was done because they didn't really have a home. This major has gone from approx. 700 students to down to 70. It is starting to climb back up.

Sr. Associate Dean Paul Wangness retired in June 2008, but we got permission to rehire Paul back while we transition to a new Sr. Associate Dean. An offer will be made soon to one of the four individuals who were interviewed for this position.

There will be press release soon on the new Unit Leader hired for the School of Forest Resources, Mike Messina, who will start in January 2009.

Another Unit Leader search will get underway in the month ahead for Ag Ec and Rural Sociology.

On the new Dean search, they are conducting airport interviews now. From that, they will bring some back for an interview process. The goal is for the President to present a candidate at the March Trustee meeting.

On classroom space and university control – Dean Steele has been on this university committee for 10 years. You can make a case to have complete control of a room under university control. This committee looks at every seat and how it is used.

On international programming – we are performing very well. The percent of our students who have an international experience has risen for around 1% to 12-13%. This remains a prominent and should be a priority. The companies that hire our students say they need 1) better communication skills 2) real world experience (internships) and 3) international knowledge so they can appreciate the global economy

6. Results of the CAS Faculty Meeting Survey

Distributed separately

7. Items from the floor

Paul Heinemann, chair of the FACD, said this committee is functioning as intended in the bylaws. The committee provides an opportunity to discuss very important issues with the Dean. Faculty in each unit can communicate to their rep any issue to be brought at these meetings (every other meeting is with the Dean). There is some concern that the reps are not carrying the message back to their faculty, and that faculty may not be getting the issues to FACD members. The FACD could recommend that certain items be brought to the whole college faculty meeting for a broader discussion.

The Sustainability report recommends eliminating the FACD committee, and replacing it with an Executive Committee. But the FACD feels the role of this Executive Committee would be substantially different as described the Sustainability report.