

**CAS Faculty Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday April 20, 2009**  
**3:00 pm - 5:00 pm**  
**124 Ag Engineering Building**

Meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

Fall 2008 Minutes were approved as written.

**Questions submitted by faculty**

**Dean Steele:**

1. Are there any initiatives being considered to take advantage of the development of a regional medical school "branch" on campus?
  - Yes. CAS has been part of the process from the beginning as a member of the Health Sciences Council which has been developing a health sciences strategic plan.
  - Funding is currently a constraint, but at some point a medical school "branch" will be on campus, and it is up to us what type of input we will have as a college.
  - Note that this is not related to plans to expand the Mt. Nittany Medical Center.
2. How will the federal stimulus package budget affect the college?
  - Too soon to tell. With the Governor's proposed budget, we currently face a 6% decrease overall. However, with federal stimulus money we could be brought back to level funding, with one time stimulus funds.
  - Lobbying is currently occurring, asking for the level funding plus \$3 million for research and extension. Ideally the budget will be passed in late June. But in relation to other land grant universities, we are doing well.
  - Stimulus money is flowing to the state through other agencies as well, and we are looking into how we might partner with them. This is coordinated out of Old Main.
  - Governor's School was zeroed out with no money coming back to it at this point. A bill is being introduced to require us to hold a Governor's School. We are fighting this because we do not have the money, and if it were to pass, it would be the first earmark of many more to come.
3. Update for the Metro Center?
  - A budget is in place, and Deno DeCiantis is the Director of the Penn State's Pittsburgh Metro Research and Outreach Center, reporting jointly to Daney Jackson and Melinda Sterns.
  - Deno is interacting with faculty directly to address opportunities and determine priorities. Projects include green projects like landscaping, bioenergy, etc in the Pittsburgh area.
  - He would like to eventually begin projects focused on the interests of students and faculty, as well as collaborate with Carnegie Mellon and Pitt.
  - The budget will hopefully be available to seed some projects for students in Pittsburgh.
4. Will (and if so, how) the relationship with USDA change as National Institute for Food and Agriculture is adopted?
  - It is up to us whether the relationship will change substantially. Dean Steele is pleased overall with the NIFA as the language and people come into alignment.
  - The nominee for Under Secretary of REE was also mentioned as Rajiv Shah, who served on Governor's Rendell's transition committee on health.
5. Any plans to expand the college's grants office?
  - No plans currently, believe it is meeting the needs of the college. But if not, speak with Bruce McPheron, Tom Shaffer, or directly with Sue Morgan.
  - The grants.gov site is crashing on a regular basis with the stimulus money and awards available, so do plan ahead to allow more time to submit over this site, at least for the next 6 months.
6. Are there any changes in strategy for disbursing grad student support planned? Do departments with successful grad student recruitment efforts receive (more) tuition waivers?
  - Yes, and these changes have already been implemented.
  - Two good ways to increase your graduate student support per Ann Dodd are:
    1. Recruiting early and often.
      - a. 13 award types given out.
      - b. 56 graduate students are accepted to CAS programs for fall 2009.
      - c. 5 Departments currently have 5 or more accepts.

2. Write graduate students into grants
  - a. Assistantship matching funds are available through the college.

7. Can we convert the computer labs on the first floor of ASI to a college-controlled, electronic distance education classroom and webinar facility?

- Plans are in motion to do this. However, once the use has changed, the college may not have control over the space.
- Per Marcos Fernandez, by December 2009, room 109 will no longer be used as a computer lab, the computers are too old. Secondly, the equipment is aging in room 110, the streaming video distance education classroom, and, the room is rarely in use.
- Some ideas for use are:
  - Digital Commons, the University would put in multimedia production equipment and expertise for student use.
  - Group Learning Spaces, have plug ins for student's computers so they can communicate on-line in groups or for courses.
- It is unknown yet, once we release these rooms if the University will reclaim them.
- A comment was made that it would be useful to create a CAS controlled webinar classroom to broadcast departmental seminars internationally.

8. Now that you (Dean Steele) will be returning to the faculty, what do you think is needed to increase the CAS faculty's engagement in the "faculty organization"?

- My humble opinion is that we could and should do a whole lot more at the University level. Curriculum and tenure matters are primary responsibilities and we do a fair job with that. But our President is in his 14<sup>th</sup> year. We better be at the table when a change in leadership occurs, so we can make our opinions known there.
- It is the same with college faculty meetings – we need a bigger turnout. The role of faculty committees is a very important one. We need a good variety of participants, younger and older faculty together.

This is Dean Steele's final College wide Faculty Meeting as Dean, and he stated that they are working hard to make this a seamless transition to Dean McPheron's leadership.

#### **Associate Dean McPheron:**

1. Do you foresee any changes to the departmental structure of CAS, e.g., consolidation?

- Changes would not necessarily improve short term financial issues. We should be asking this question all the time and thinking about the best way to facilitate where we need to be in 50 years.
- The Institutes have done a great job of removing administrative barriers: they encourage collaboration and have changed bookkeeping processes across the University. Look at structures that work. There are opportunities for more of this.
- Unit Leaders are currently looking at this topic and asking: are we structured correctly?
- Barb Christ remarked that we need more communication across Departments. A need to know what each other is doing and where normal linkages can take place.

2. What do you foresee your relationship with the CAS Faculty Advisory Committee to the Dean and the CAS Faculty Organization to be?

- Anticipate a strong dialogue, using various communication strategies to find ways for information to flow freely.
- Need input - raw data, financial and otherwise, to make informed decisions.
- Would like to see some component of these groups take on an annual task of helping to delve into areas including – faculty teaching loads, facility use and needs, etc. – to have an opportunity to focus on real issues that affect the college.

3. Do you foresee that CAS will be adopting appointments/ teaching level responsibilities more similar to those in other colleges (2+2)?

- No standard for how different colleges handle teaching loads – even within colleges.
- CAS is the only college with split appointments.
- The Provost was clear that CAS must pay attention to its educational mission. The new University Strategic Plan will have a major section in it on teaching loads. We have to figure out the best way to handle any changes this causes – can we harmonize our extension and resident education loads? We will have to think of a variety of alternatives. We are not hiring other than on 25, 50, and 75 % splits.

A question was asked about reorganization – Can we continue doing everything with less? Is the reorganization decision based on a year to year budget?

- No – any type of reorganization would be based on a macro scale.

- There is no goal or plan yet, but Unit Leaders have begun to discuss options, including dealing with a budget decrease on July 1 if it comes, with attrition and selective investments as possible options.

#### **Associate Dean Christ:**

##### **1. How might a worsening budget affect departmental structure of CAS? Operations of CAS?**

- Need better communication between Departments– we have to think about where we are going and what we will look like 10 year from now. Develop a matrix to guide us regarding what positions are necessities and should be refilled.
- The leadership team has to decide what our highest priorities are regarding our facilities – bringing older facilities up to OSHA standards and repairing problems like flooding in labs. The current financial situation just means that these improvements will occur at a slower pace.
- University Capital Plans are stalled. Building and remodeling is moving forward but with a two year delay at this point.
- The Needs Assessment Committee will be putting together a plan for the Henning remodel this summer.

A question was asked about - OPP – how to make them fairer about their charges?

- Have a CAS person within the building monitor what projects are worked on, to figure out when we are overbilled.
- Communicate with Ray Pruss or Barb Christ when issues arise and they will address them.

### **3. Introduction of new faculty/personnel by Unit Leaders**

- Subhashinie Kariyawasam, B.V.Sc., Ph.D., DACVM
  - Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences
  - Assistant Professor/Veterinary Microbiologist
  - Ph.D. - Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph, Canada
  - B.V.Sc. - Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
  - Current Diagnostic Activities: Head of Microbiology Section of the Animal Diagnostic Laboratory
  - American College of Veterinary Microbiologists (ACVM), 2006
- John Kaminski, Ph.D.
  - Department of Crop and Soil Sciences
  - Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Science
  - Ph.D., Natural Resource Sciences, The University of Maryland, 2004
  - M.S., Agronomy, The University of Maryland, 2001
  - B.S., Turfgrass Science, The Pennsylvania State University, 1998
  - B.S., Landscape Contracting, The Pennsylvania State University, 1998
- Kevin Harvatine, Ph.D.
  - Department of Dairy and Animal Science
  - Assistant Professor of Nutritional Physiology
  - Post-doctorate, Cornell University, 2008
  - Ph.D., Cornell University, 2008
  - M.S., Michigan State University, 2003
  - B.S., The Pennsylvania State University, 2001
- Michael Messina, Ph.D.
  - School of Forest Resources
  - Director
  - Professor and Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management at Texas A&M University
  - Post-doctorate, New Zealand Forest Service-Forest Research Institute, 1983-1986
  - Ph.D., Forestry, North Carolina University, 1983
  - B.S., Forest Science, The Pennsylvania State University, 1979

### **4. Update on University Senate Activities**

- Jay Holcomb stated that University Senate business has largely been procedural. No notable issues are currently being addressed.

## 5. College Standing Committee Reports/Comments

### Faculty Advisory Committee to the Dean

- Thanks to Dean Steele for his open and frank discussions with the Faculty Advisory Committee over the years.
- The committee's next and final meeting of the semester will be with Dr. McPheron, currently working on scheduling this.
- FACD meeting minutes are posted on the College of Ag Sciences website.

### Academic Standards

- No report

### Distinguished Professorship Review

- No report

### Faculty Awards

- The committee has completed its review of nominations for various awards for this academic year.

### Faculty Development

- Nicole Webster made a brief report.

### Graduate Faculty Review

- No report

### Instruction and Curricular Affairs

- Make sure your Unit Representatives attend the meetings.
- Curriculum proposals are reviewed by the committee before going to the Faculty Senate which usually results in a quick turnaround and approval from the Senate.
- If you know of faculty and staff originating proposals, the committee can provide assistance with any questions in writing these proposals.

### Nominating and Elections

- No report

### Promotion and Tenure Review

- No report

### Student Activities

- No report

### Student Scholarships and Awards

- 735 students received \$1,929,000 for the 08/09 academic year

### Graduate Council

- No report

### Library

- Library summer hours 18 May 14 August
  - **Pattee/Paterno**  
8:00 A.M. 9:00 P.M. Monday through Thursday  
8:00 A.M. 9:00 P.M. Friday  
1:00 P.M. 5:00 P.M. Saturday  
1:00 P.M. 9:00 P.M. Sunday  
Closed May 25th for Memorial Day and July 3
- The Libraries will be open these hours but most of the subject library reference desks will probably be closing at 7:00.
  - **MacKinnons coffee shop**  
May 11 through August 12  
Monday through Friday 7:30 A.M. 2:00 P.M.  
Closed Saturday and Sunday  
Closed May 25 and July 3  
August 13 open 7:30 A.M. 8:00 P.M.  
August 14 open 7:30 A.M. 3:00 P.M.
- University Libraries Open House is scheduled for September 15 and 16 10:00 A.M. 6:00 P.M.
- Currently working on a digitization project: Preserving the History of U.S. Agriculture and Rural Life
  - Funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) helped to identify and preserve state and local historical literature about agriculture and rural life in the period from 1820 to 1945. Cornell's Mann Library is directing the project, in which land-grant university libraries in over 20 states are microfilming and or digitizing these publications. In 1998 Penn State participated in this project resulting in a microfilm collection of over 400 volumes. The importance of these collections for the study of the history and rural life of Pennsylvania is evident in the complex topics which can be researched through these materials, such as societal shift and cultural change from family farming to agribusiness; historical changes in the domestic consumption of food and agricultural products; and the modernization of farm life. Whether academic scholar, researcher, historian or practical farmer, there is a wealth of information to be tapped from this collection.

**6. Introduction of CAS Faculty Chair-Elect, John Becker**

- John stated that there are a variety of initiatives to embark on in the next year.
  - One challenge is to continue to ask what will make this organization relevant to faculty in our college.
  - The teaching appointment issue will be a big change, and here is a chance to be part of the solution.
  - How would faculty like to embark on a discussion of new opportunities?
  - How can we be creative with our ideas?

**7. Items from the floor**

- Motion to adjourn at 4:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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