

**COLLEGE OF SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT CHAIRS' MEETING
January 8, 2007**

PRESENT:	Biological Sciences	Dr. Brooks Burr
	Chemistry & Biochemistry	Dr. Lori Vermeulen
	Computer Science	Dr. Mehdi Zargham
	Geology	Dr. Steve Esling
	Mathematics	Dr. George Parker for Dr. Earnest
	Microbiology	Dr. Douglas Fix
	Physics	Dr. Aldo Migone
	Plant Biology	Dr. Stephen Ebbs
	Zoology	Dr. William Muhlach
	Dean's Office	Dr. James Tyrrell, Interim Dean Ms. Linda Martin, Assistant Dean
	University Honors	Dr. James Allen Prof. Lori Merrill-Fink

University Honors Program: Dr. Jim Allen and Lori Merrill-Fink met with the Chairs to discuss a new approach to an honors program in the University, stating that our current program has been under publicized, under utilized, and under developed, and that misconceptions/misunderstandings exist concerning the program. The 16 budgeted Honors courses accommodate 240 students (15 students/section). However, of the 950 students in the Honors Program, only 27% have taken Honors courses. Non-participation is no longer an option. Under the revised program, students may choose one of two options to participate in Honors: 1) the certificate option, or 2) degree option (12 of 24 hours in Honors courses + senior project), starting as early as next year.

Lori and Jim seek to include more Science faculty and students in Honors through recruiting faculty and developing honors courses in the majors. Possibilities discussed included: tracks within majors and an honors core in Science with 3 courses being required of all Science Honors students (3 new courses + identification of one course in the major already on the books). Chairs were advised to keep in mind students who transfer in so they are not held back.

Jim will send an email query within two weeks as a follow-up. He hopes that one of the five tracks proposed for Fall 2008 is Science.

Dean's Search: Dr. Tyrrell stated that the Search Committee is preparing to bring in four candidates to interview for Dean.

Interim Associate Dean: Dr. Tyrrell has initiated a search for an Interim Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs to focus on our ability to recruit/retain students.

Budget: No decision has been made yet on a budget reduction, although it is a certainty there will be a base budget cut for FY08.

Goals: Dr. Tyrrell would like to see departments put as much effort into recruitment and retention of undergraduate programs as departments put into their graduate programs. We must stem and turn around the enrollment decline. Future Chairs' meetings will be used for discussion and collaboration toward this goal. Dr. Tyrrell is willing to provide some additional GA funds to departments that can provide additional support to enhance undergraduate programs.