

**COLLEGE OF SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT CHAIRS' MEETING
February 26, 2007**

PRESENT:	Biological Sciences	Dr. Brooks Burr
	Chemistry & Biochemistry	Dr. Gary Kinsel
	Computer Science	Dr. Bidyut Gupta for Dr. Zargham
	Geology	Dr. Steve Esling
	Mathematics	Dr. Andrew 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
		Dr. Lori Vermeulen, Interim Associate Dean
		Ms. Linda Martin, Assistant Dean

Safe Zone Training: Dr. Tyrrell and Dr. Vermeulen reported on Safe Zone Training. It is estimated that 7-10% on campus are GLBT. More hate crimes are associated with sexuality issues than race, and the terminology that GLBT's find acceptable have changed over the years. Chairs previously received copies of the training materials from Dr. Tyrrell.

MVC Tournament Saluki Expo & Brunch: Faculty (Scott Ishman and Namdar Mogharreban), staff (Harvey Henson), students (Abigail Young and C. Durran Kelly, Computer Science), and alumni (Katie Boehle, BS Zoology '06; Michelle Muhlach, BS Mathematics '01) volunteers will represent the College of Science at the Saluki Expo. The College display will highlight undergraduate student research.

Academic Program Review: The College of Science has no programs scheduled for program review this year.

Summer Budget: Dr. Tyrrell indicated that departments may submit summer contracts any time.

Leadership Meeting: Dr. Tyrrell reported that some attention was focused on the new undergraduate program brochures. He encouraged Chairs to move toward completion of their departmental brochures. He will discuss some concerns concerning minimum orders with the Provost.

Undergraduate Student Researchers: Dr. Tyrrell has forwarded the names of undergraduate student researchers to Laurie Bell for major scholarship possibilities.

Service Contributions: Dr. Tyrrell reminded Chairs who have not yet submitted departmental service reports to do so. Faculty should report both service as a citizen of the University and as a citizen of the community.

Budget:

- Dr. Tyrrell reported that our GA funding provided by VCR Koropchak was maintained at ~ 90 percent of last year.
- He also reminded the Chairs that there is no such thing as a term line position.
- Departments are encouraged to hire Federal Work Study qualified students whenever possible as it allows departments to spread student work funds at least threefold.
- Departments may have to consider increasing lab fees.
- Budget plans (2%, 4%, and 6%) are to be submitted to Dr. Tyrrell by Monday, March 5.

Chemistry & Biochemistry Presentation: Dr. Vermeulen was second to report on departmental accomplishments/challenges. Her presentation focused on the role of planning in the department, issues related to culture in the department, and current departmental status and concerns.

Faculty positions had declined from 20-24 faculty to 11 faculty (9 if excluding partial appointments) when the younger faculty began proactive strategic planning, ahead of strategic planning at SIUC. The goals included 1) increasing faculty numbers, 2) addressing infrastructure concerns, and 3) increasing GA's. They set a goal of 20 faculty, 40 TA's, and 80 graduate students. The department had their plans ready for the Dean whenever new money became available, and Dr. Vermeulen believes that is why their department got four new faculty immediately in the Faculty Hiring Initiative. The department recently made revisions to their strategic plan and revised the goals to 1) increasing GA's, 2) infrastructure, and 3) number of faculty lines. The department is currently wrestling with space issues and staff to support the increase in faculty.

When the department began planning, Lori asked each faculty member during their annual evaluation what they considered to be the biggest problem in the department; she found that most were embarrassed about the upper level lab courses and the teaching infrastructure. She had them draw up a prioritized wish list by division and she had the list on the Dean's desk before money became available.

A TA plan focusing on retention hoped to address the fact that the department was understaffed (e.g., no recitation sections) when compared to peer institutions.

The department developed an extensive graduate recruitment plan. Dan Dyer attended a conference on graduate recruitment, received funding from VCR Koropchak, and learned how to develop a plan for the institution.

The culture of departmental staff had to change to become more student friendly. They were told that their most important job function was students; second, to help faculty; and third, order supplies or whatever normal job duties they were assigned. Lori said it might sound corny, but she began to send motivational messages to the faculty and staff.

The teaching-research balance had to be addressed. Lori promised resources to new faculty, doubled GA support for upper level chemistry laboratory courses, and efforts were made to secure financial support such as Graduate Teaching Excellence Awards. She overcommitted resources on the hopes of turning around the problem. Those new faculty have all been tenured and all had a meaningful teaching assignment. She wanted them to take their teaching assignment seriously, believe they could make a difference, and not feel like the teaching commitment was swallowing them up.

So the department now has a new Chair and a critical mass of associate professors who are working in collaborative projects and can begin to work toward establishing research centers. The department wants to retain all of those faculty and assure they feel connected. It required financial risk taking ventures, and the department is currently over extended financially, both in start up commitments and in promises from Lori to give them TAs to support both their teaching and their research. Part of the start up commitment is in OTS, so a cut in the state OTS would be problematic; the department can't cut GAs; it can't cut lecturers. The department would like to continue hiring, but they are up against a wall with no more space. Lori is concerned that she doesn't hear any plans being proposed for an expansion of space for Science.

Goals in the next several years include solidifying relationships of these faculty with large, multi-PI grants; make them feel this is their home; and make them feel like they are giving up too much to move on to another institution if other institutions try to lure them away

Other goals include undergraduate recruitment and retention. The department has similar problems to Zoology with the success rate of students in CHEM 200/210 course sequences. It is not a unique problem, and the department has to address it.

Gary Kinsel expressed optimism that the College has hired a new development officer to help expand Foundation funds.

Dr. Brooks Burr volunteered to discuss the Biological Sciences program at the next scheduled Department Chairs' meeting.