COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
March 17, 2006

Minutes

Present: Richard Brown, Patrick Tresco, Michael Kay, Rich Rabbitt, Phil Smith, Larry Reaveley, Marc Bodson, Anil Virkar Kent Udell, Sandy Bruhn, Vicki Jensen

Excused: Marilyn Davies, Director, External & Community Relations
Milind Deo, Chair-College Council

Announcements/Updates

FAR Status and Spring Faculty Meeting

Dean Brown reported that he has not received FARs from all of the faculty; he asked the Chairs to please forward them to him as soon as possible. He uses information from the FARs to update the faculty on our accomplishments. Dean Brown asked the Chairs whether they thought we should provide this feedback in a Spring Faculty Meeting as we did last year, or in some other form. It was decided that the meeting is not necessary; instead, a summary report of faculty activity across the College will be sent to the faculty and should be discussed in the departmental faculty meetings.

Fall Faculty and Staff Meeting Nominations

Dean Brown announced that it is time to make nominations for the College Outstanding Teacher and TA Awards which are presented at the Fall Faculty & Staff Meeting in August. Vicki Jensen announced that nominations are due April 10. The College Teaching in Excellence Committee, comprised of a member from each department, has been given the charge of encouraging nominations from their departments. The chairs were asked for their help in encouraging nominations for these important awards of recognition. There was a discussion on how often the same person can be nominated for the Outstanding Teacher Award. It was agreed that a person is eligible to receive this award every sixth year, but there must be five years between awards. There is no such limit for the TA Award.

Academic Senate Elections

Dean Brown reported that Academic Senate Elections are underway. One of the senators from the College, Bonnie Tyler, is at the end of her term and a new senator needs to be elected to replace her. Currently, senate representation from the College is two from ME (Dan Adams and Sandy Meek), two from ChE (Bonnie Tyler and Mikhail Skliar), and one from ECE (Marc Bodson). Dean Brown is also a member of the Academic Senate,
representing the Academic Deans. It would be desirable to have broader representation of the College by electing a new senator from BIO, CVEE, MSE or SoC. All tenured and tenure-track faculty of any rank are eligible for nomination. There is value to having all ranks represented. Martin Berzins will recommend someone from the School of Computing. (We have learned since the meeting that we must have at least two candidates on the ballot. Interested faculty should contact Sandy Bruhn.)

The Faculty Senate sets important University policy, and senators who represent the College of Engineering have an important role in our public relations to the rest of the University. For our senators to represent the College faculty on issues presented before the Senate, the general faculty need to know what issues will be discussed so that they can express their views to our senators. Dean Brown will contact Robert Flores, Academic Senate President, with a request to post the agenda and attachments on the Senate website prior to each meeting. The College will send a note to faculty when the agenda is posted, with a reminder of who their Senators are.

Dean Brown commented that we also need a nomination of someone to represent us on the Undergraduate Council as Steve Bartlett’s term is up this year. Steve is from CVEE. This Council is responsible to coordinate and encourage the development of undergraduate studies across the University. Along with tenured and tenure-track faculty, auxiliary faculty may also serve on this Committee. Dean Brown suggested that the Chairs nominate someone who is coming up for full professor who has not had an opportunity for University-level service.

Fraunhofer Institute

Dean Brown reported that the official signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for Academic Exchange between the University of Utah/College of Engineering and Fraunhofer IZM/Technical University Berlin took place on March 13. The purpose of this agreement is to promote the exchange of professors, research scholars and students, and scientific materials, publication and information between the two institutions. Fraunhofer is an organization centered in Germany of 50+ institutes in Europe linked to universities and to industry. Florian Solzbacher from ECE has organized this collaborative effort, which has resulted in a Fraunhofer Institute being established at the University of Utah. This Institute will focus on electronic packaging aligned to sensor research. Michael Töpper from the Technical University Berlin and representative for Fraunhofer will have an office in MEB. Patrick Tresco will send an e-mail to faculty with Mr. Töpper’s contact information and links to information about Fraunhofer and the Technical University of Berlin.

International Student Exchange Program

Dean Brown commented that developing relations with top international engineering schools could provide our students with opportunities for Study Abroad. Caitlin Whitaker will be asking our students to respond to a questionnaire about their interest in Study Abroad programs, which language or country would most interest them. Not only
could this exchange give our students a culturally enriching experience, but it could better prepare them to work in the international engineering environment of the future, and also help us attract some of the best foreign students to our Graduate programs. Dean Brown commented that this Study Abroad Program would be managed through the University International Center. Department advisors will need to pre-authorize the transfer of credit from the foreign university so that students will get the full benefit of their study abroad, and will not delay graduation. Phil Smith suggested that Dean Brown talk with Adel Sarofim, Presidential Professor of ChE, regarding Study Abroad Programs because of his involvement with the International Center and student participation in these programs.

Honors in Engineering

Patrick Tresco reported that at the end of fall semester the College received approval to provide an “Honors in Engineering Program.” Thirty students have been admitted to the Program since November. The Program is designed to provide a challenging, individualized educational experience to high achieving. He asked the Chairs to reserve time for him in their next faculty meeting so he can explain the program.

Patrick expressed the desire to meet with advising staff in each department to help them understand the Engineering Honors Program. Because of the misconception on the part of advisors that any honors program is more time consuming, our students are being advised to avoid our new program. The College Program requires students to have a research experience and to participate in leadership or service opportunities. Patrick distributed a handout describing the College Honors Program which is also on the College homepage. The College has a new Advising Coordinator, Dianne Leonard, who joined the College from Central Advising where she was recruited high achieving students. Dean Brown suggested that Dianne be given the task of interacting with the department advisors regarding the Honors Program. The department advisors play a very important role in the College, as they set tone for the students’ educational experience.

Patrick gave a report to each Chair detailing their department’s course of study to be completed in 4 years. Typically, our students do not graduate in four years; if they were advised to take a couple of courses in the summer, many could graduate in four years.

Legislative Summary

Dean Brown reviewed the Summary of the Legislative Session, which was included with the agenda. The legislature had 6% more money to work with this year. The University received 8% more money than last year if USTAR is included, but all of the money is earmarked. The state provided a 3% salary increase and 6% to help offset the increase in health care benefits. Fuel and Power received funding to cover increased projected costs and to address the current year’s costs. Tuition and fees will increase 8.5%. There will be no equity retention funding this year from the state. The Engineering Initiative received $500,000 on-going funding. $700,000 in one-time funding will be allocated to the State’s Universities by the TIAB as has been done in past years. USTAR was a huge
success, receiving $15,250,000 in on-going funds. The funds will be distributed by a new agency, the USTAR Governing Authority. As part of USTAR a new research facility will be built.

The USTAR Governing Authority will allocate money to the U and USU to provide funding for USTAR clusters. Dean Brown asked the chairs to start thinking about what clusters we should propose for engineering. We need to be ready with a well thought out, set of priorities for getting USTAR clusters. He asked the chairs to be prepared for the next Executive Committee Meeting to share some ideas on what we ought to propose, keeping in mind that USTAR is an economic development initiative to help accelerate research that is commercializable.

Research Volume

Dean Brown reported that proposals submitted are down 5% and the amount of money requested is down 20% across campus. Medicine, Engineering and Social and Behavioral Science show the largest decreases. Dave Pershing announced to the deans that because overhead is down and his costs are fixed, all Colleges will receive a smaller allocation this year, in addition to any reductions to their 15% return of overhead. The College of Engineering’s budget will be based directly on its overhead, consistent with the new financial model that it has. To see where all returned overhead is spent go to the OIA website.

College RPT Guideline Status

Dean Brown reported that he has reviewed all of the University’s RPT Guidelines and the College draft guidelines and concluded that he agrees with input received from the School of Computing that the College RPT Guidelines should be a smaller set of rules more tightly referenced to the University Guidelines. The College Guidelines will not be completed this year but a template can be provided for people coming up for promotion. This template will not affect those case books already being put together.

Discussion Items

Budget/Raises

Michael Kay distributed to each chair their department productivity report; other budget figures will be sent to the chairs by next Tuesday, March 21. Also distributed was a memo from Dean Brown regarding the 2005-06 Budgeting Guidelines. Michael still needs to complete his review of special situations in each department before the exact percentage the chairs have to work with for faculty raises can be determined. The central administration skims 0.1% in order to provide the promotion raises. The dean’s office will also skim a little as in the past, to provide for chair raises and to address some equity issues. Budget meetings between Dean Brown and the chairs will be held April 3, 4, and 5. As a reminder, all raises are based on merit. With the information provided on the FARs, the chairs will be in a good position to do a merit based salary program. Raises
shouldn’t go below 1% unless there are problems. If above 5%, a letter justifying the raise must be submitted to Dean Brown at the time of their budget meeting.

Common First Year

Dean Brown said that he is interested in having either a common first year in Engineering, or at least a common introductory course for Freshmen. We have received very strong input from members of our IAB that we need a survey of engineering course. When Dean Brown and Patrick Tresco attended a dinner with National Merit Scholars they also expressed an interest in a class that would help them explore engineering options. Larry Reaveley asked that E-Leap be considered. E-Leap is a program of common core courses for pre-engineering students. After discussion, it was decided that a committee would be organized, to include Phil Smith and Patrick Tresco, to explore the options of a Common First Year.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20