COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES

September 28, 2006

Present: Richard Brown, Milind Deo, Patrick Tresco, Marilyn Davies, Rick Rabbitt, Geoff Silcox (ChE), Paul Tikalsky, Behrouz Farhang-Boroujeny (ECE), Anil Virkar, Kent Udell, Martin Berzins, Terry Ring, Sandy Bruhn, Vicki Jensen

Excused: Phil Smith, Marc Bodson, Michael Kay

Terry Ring, Professor of Chemical Engineering, is the new chair of the College Council and as such will be attending the College Executive Committee Meetings.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OSP is preparing to implement the electronic submission of federal grants through grants.gov. For information on this general storehouse go to www.grants.gov. Starting November 1, OSP will require five working days for submission prior to the due date. This is necessary because the computer will reject the application if any of the required information is incomplete, leading to delays.

Dean Brown reported on the following items discussed at CAD:

Disaster Response Program
The University is working on a grant from FEMA to develop a major disaster response program. This is as a result of an initiative propelled by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, signed by President Bush in October, 2000. It requires local jurisdictions to develop extensive plans that will allow them to implement mitigation projects that will in turn reduce the risks and costs associated with natural and/or human-caused disaster. Faculty, students, staff and consultants from the private sector are working to create a plan.

University Gun Policy
State law prohibits weapons on school property, including college campuses, except for firearms that are in the possession of a concealed weapons permit holder. The only difference in the U’s policy from the state’s policy was that it did not allow weapons on campus even if the individual had a concealed weapons permit. President Young is meeting with state legislators to help make campus safer with regard to guns. Marilyn Davies commented that dormitories are considered domiciles, which puts them in a different category from schools and, therefore, weapons are not illegal. In the past five years there have not been any serious incidents on campus involving guns.
University Awards
It is time to nominate people for honorary doctorates. It is important that we follow the process of vetting candidates for these awards. Because there are strategic and PR issues to consider related to these University awards (many potential recipients are major donors or potential donors), it is important to keep things coordinated through the College and the University. Dean Brown sent an e-mail to faculty asking them to be involved in development activities, and to please coordinate their activities through the College Development staff. If they do not, they can inadvertently do things that work against the University’s interests in the long run. It was suggested that a short “white paper” be submitted to Marilyn.

Sabbaticals
Progress is being made regarding University sabbatical policy. Significant changes are:

- Dollars or semesters, whether credit or deficit, will no longer roll forward. (This is wonderful for the CoE, because we would have had a large deficit this year.)

- The guideline for amount of faculty salary university-wide that can be used for sabbatical has increased from 3.8% to 4.5%.

As before, faculty are encouraged to seek external moneys to help support them while on sabbatical; this helps the department budget. Salary while on sabbatical cannot exceed 110%. A written report submitted to the Dean’s Office is required within three months after the completion of a sabbatical. Martin Berzins commented that faculty from School of Computing are also required to give a formal report to the department faculty.

Sabbaticals provide an opportunity to help rejuvenate a person’s research and to improve research connections. With these major changes to the implementation of sabbatical policy, Dean Brown is now confident that all deserving Engineering faculty who have plans for professional activities that will enhance their future effectiveness as faculty members, will be allowed to take sabbaticals.

Articulation
There will be an articulation meeting on September 29. It is important that representatives from each department who are attending the meeting know their curriculum and understand the issues.

There are some problems with our current transfer process because of classes not articulated, grade differentials between feeder schools and the U, and a difference in rigor in some courses. Roland Kempter, TA in ECE, and the recipient of the 2006 College Outstanding TA Award, did a research paper on issues with transfer student admission in ECE that was presented at the 2006 ASEE conference. Dean Brown stated that one-third of our graduates transferred here after studying at some other school.
DISCUSSION

Budget
University-wide the enrollment has dropped by 400 students which equals about $2M in tuition loss this term. Freshman enrollment is down very little but the sophomore, junior and senior enrollment is down more. The number of transfer students has also decreased.

There will be a 1% budget cut across campus; however, it will be applied to the academic units as part of the productivity program based on student credit hours. This cut will probably affect the College this year because of the change to the tuition waver policy that resulted in graduate students enrolling for fewer hours in the summer. This program is applied at the department level. Dean Brown will forward a copy of a graph plotting our number of CS and Engineering graduates from 2000 through 2006.

There will also be a 10% cut of the 15% of overhead that is returned to the College (and to all other colleges). The cut will not affect the other overhead return to the College. Dean Brown commented that recently there was an article in The Daily Utah Chronicle stating that the College of Engineering had a $7M drop in research dollars. This incorrect information is based on data collected by OSP and sent to the University Administration. This type of reporting is discouraging to our faculty. Our research expenditures last year were up, not down.

NSF Audit
The federal government is becoming aggressive on checking effort reporting. NSF will be conducting an audit at the University to make sure government money is being spent and tracked correctly. The NSF visit to our College is anticipated to be sometime in October. PARs are the mechanism the University uses to comply with government regulations. Dean Brown asked the chairs to make sure all PARs have been signed and submitted and in the future to make sure all PARS are signed and submitted on time, usually within a month’s time of receipt.

In February the University authorized an independent evaluation by an outside consulting firm of the University’s effort reporting policies and procedures. Over the past several months they have been working with a committee comprised of members from the University community. There will be some changes made but the government has approved our use of the PAR.

NWCCU Accreditation

The NWCCU Accreditation visit will take place October 9-11, 2006. The College evaluation is scheduled for Monday, October 9. Dean Brown thanked Patrick Tresco for writing the College self-study and coordinating the visit. The tentative schedule for the College visit was reviewed.

Patrick suggested that the chairs become familiar with the first 25 pages of the University’s Self-Study which can be found at
www.obia.utah.edu/2006Accred/index.php and the College Self-Study (a copy was included with the agenda).

**RPT**

The College mission statement challenges us to look and act like the top engineering schools in the country. The RPT process is a critical part of this.

Dean Brown asked that all committees or administrators involved in RPT (chairs, department and college RPT committees, SACs) use the standardized rating system: poor, fair, good, very good, and excellent in their evaluations of candidates. This will help assure that all candidates are treated fairly. According to University policy, recommendations for improvement from previous casebooks must be considered in the evaluation process. Administrators and members of the RPT committees must see themselves as evaluators, not advocates, and must read the casebooks of each candidates, rather than relying on personal knowledge of the candidate, so they can make a sound judgment.

As has been done in past years, the deans will be meeting on October 27th with junior faculty in a mentoring meeting.

**Engineering Initiative**

The College proposal for the Engineering Initiative is being prepared. Dean Brown thanked everyone for the detailed work and attention they paid to this Initiative last year. It has been critical to the growth of the College. Last year we received $350K in one-time money and $227K in ongoing.

Dean Brown asked the chairs to send him two proposals, one for faculty and one for equipment, by Friday, October 6. The faculty proposal should include a four line description of the faculty position they would like created along with the justification and funding needed. Included in the ongoing equipment proposal should be a request for equipment needed, along with a justification. Information from both proposals will be prioritized and organized into one proposal to submit to the TIAB.

**Insider Tours**

The University has started a new program for insider tours. People from government and industry will be brought to campus to introduce them to the U. A form was created for faculty and staff to complete if they have a program or project they would like to promote. There will be several people selected to conduct the tours on a rotating basis.

**NanoUtah 2006 Conference**

There will be a nanotech conference held on October 5 in EMCB.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30