COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES  

March 19, 2010

Present: Rich Brown, Patrick Tresco, Michael Kay, Marilyn Davies, Rick Rabbitt, JoAnn Lighty, Paul Tikalsky, Gianluca Lazzi, Anil Virkar, Tim Ameel, Martin Berzins, Sandy Bruhn, Vicki Jensen  
Ray Levey, ex-officio

Excused: Milind Deo

Announcements/Updates

• Convocation May 7 - Dean Brown asked the chairs/director to remind faculty, especially new faculty, that it is tradition at the U for all faculty (junior and senior) to attend Convocation. This isn’t common at some other universities unless the faculty member is hooding a Ph.D. student. We do have good reason to attend Commencement this year; Shane Robison, a member of the College Engineering National Advisory Council, will receive an honorary doctorate. It is great for engineering to have one of ours being honored with this highest honor the U gives. Much thanks goes to Marilyn Davies for getting this nomination submitted.

• 2009 FAR Archived March 31 - FARs were due February 26 and there are still a number of faculty who have not submitted their FAR. The FAR is the only way we have to gather some information and to track everything. It provides the data needed to generate beneficial reports when meeting with legislators, industry advisors and donors. Of particular importance to Dean Brown is how many Ph.D. students we have in the pipeline. Dean Brown said that even though there will be no raises this year, when we do have raises (hopefully next year) the chairs/director are to consider the accomplishments reported on all of the FARs since 2008 in determining the raises.

• Address List Updates – Dean Brown encouraged the chairs/director to attend national meetings, which are usually held in the spring, where they interact with department heads from their respective disciplines from across the country. One important benefit to attending these meetings is access to an updated address list of the department chairs. Dean Brown asked the chairs/director to please get him the lists, and if they include email addresses that would be even better. Address stickers with these names can be bought, but they are expensive, and they still need to be scanned if we are to use them for multiple mailings. We want to be certain that our brochures, research reports, etc. are delivered to the right people

• Report on University Campaign – The University Development Campaign is going well. The Chronicle of Higher Education reported that nation-wide, campaigns are having a bad time; donations are down significantly at most institutions. As a whole, donations to the U
were up last year. The University campaign goal is $1.2 billion; $805M has been received and $890M pledged. These amounts count gifts back four years.

• Benefits Program Changes – The University Annual Open Enrollment, which is held in April, may be a little later this year because of some major changes related to streamlining programs. Blue Cross is collapsing their plans into one plan and streamlining billing. These changes will result in significant savings for the U. In this year without raises, there will not be an increase in the contributions from faculty and staff to health insurance. The U will need to dip into a reserve fund to cover some shortfall this year. The cost for health care for the University runs about $13M a month. The administrators are trying to keep increases below 6% per year.

• Review of Graduate Student Recruiting Day – This event was held on March 5. Dean Brown asked for the chairs/director input on how they felt it went.

Rick Rabbitt - BIO would make some departmental changes. Their biggest challenges are faculty participation and finding enough fellowships to recruit all of the students they want. Faculty participation in the extracurricular activities was low.

JoAnn Lighty - The event went very well for ChE. Seven students visited this year. They gave departmental offers to several of the students and one has already picked an advisor to work with. One change they would make is having more of our current graduate students attend the events and mix with the prospective students. The ChE faculty were excited about the quality of the students.

Martin Berzins – The event went well for CS but there are some things to change. SoC needs to coordinate with the other departments, particularly BIO, MSE and ME. SoC needs to take more care with supervising of skiing. Dean Brown said because many of our departments are small there is a lot to be said for getting all of the students together so we have a critical mass. Many of our research projects are interdisciplinary now and we should play that up. We need to look at how we can have more interactions between departments in this recruiting visit. It is important that students see the college more broadly.

Paul Tikalsky – CvEE had one student visitor and she accepted the offer. One change they would make is to do more recruiting of students to visit. A college-wide social with all students and faculty would be good. A common poster session was suggested that would provide an opportunity for students and faculty to interact across disciplinary boundaries.

Tim Ameel - ME had 20 student visitors. Robotics had a particularly busy schedule. The feedback Tim received from faculty was very positive. Four students signed up for robotic IGERT fellowships. The hard part is coordinating the event. It would be a positive to have one large social.

Gianluca Lazzi – Gianluca was in Canada during the event but he heard that it went very well. Five students visited and offers were made to them. ECE has about 10 offers out and 4 or 5 have accepted. Didn’t hear any complaints from faculty.
Patrick Tresco said he has held a debriefing meeting with the department administrative group who helped coordinate the event. The only significant change they had was to omit the speaker at breakfast. Remarks by the Dean should continue, but would be best at the end of breakfast rather than at the beginning. Patrick commented that in September a meeting open to all faculty will be held to solicit their input on the event. Dean Brown said that we are changing the culture of some departments to work as a group to recruit top graduate students. He thanked Patrick, Sandy and all of the people in the departments that made this event so successful.

- ENAC – The ENAC meeting will be held on Friday, May 21. The Honorable Governor Gary Herbert is scheduled to be the keynote speaker.

**Discussion Items**

**Legislative Session Post-mortem**

**FY 2011 Budget:**

At the CAD Meeting on March 18, Dave Pershing, SVP for Academic Affairs, discussed the budget. He said he can’t remember any time when the final budget looked so much like the Governor’s proposed budget. Dean Brown said in previous discussions we have talked about back-fill from rainy day money. This money is now called “add-back.” It is assumed that this is a permanent “add-back”--the legislature is counting on increased revenues coming in next year.

Dean Brown said our budget looks good. Michael Kay gave a brief review of the departments’ budgets. He will arrange a time to meet with each chair/director to discuss their budget in detail. The nonacademic parts of the U did take bigger cuts. As research has grown in the College, more returned overhead goes to the faculty, departments, and college. Differential tuition will increase by 9.5% next year, the same as general tuition. That will give departments close to 1% of budget to mitigate their budget cut this year. Dean Brown said that because we do not know what the future holds and because this “add-back” money could be pulled, we need to be a bit cautious with money. There are no raises throughout the state system.

Many classrooms have been taken off line at the U this year. There is a moratorium for at least a year on converting classrooms to any other purpose.

**WSU Engineering:**

Kevin Garn sponsored a bill to establish an electronics engineering program at Weber State University. It was slipped in as a substitute bill on the morning of the last day of the legislature with no discussion. It was voted into law. The Board of Regents is going through the motion of evaluating the proposal, but their evaluation will probably have no effect on the outcome. We hope that this program will not take funding away from the two existing engineering programs in Utah.
Freshman Year

Dean Brown said that at the last Executive Committee Meeting there seemed to be quite a bit of support to admit students directly to Engineering and then to Major Status when they meet certain qualifications. Dean Brown talked with Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski, AVP for Academic Affairs/Undergraduate, and learned that the University College does not advise engineering students. They track the advising of the students, but the advising is done by the departmental advisors and by Dianne Leonard in the College. Sharon would be happy to have her staff continue to monitor these students, even if they were admitted as Engineering Students rather than as pre-engineering students in the University College.

Milind Deo and Dianne Leonard favor developing a 1 or 2 credit hour course that would give a deeper introduction to the opportunities across engineering. E-LEAP does some of this now, but their view is very narrow. This might help us better balance enrollment in the various departments. Dean Brown said that this is a big enough change that we need to take time and do it right. He asked the chairs/director to look at their curricula and see what the impact would be of requiring such a course for freshman fall semester. He asked them to talk to their faculty to see how it would impact the courses they are teaching, and how it might complement the students’ experience. The Executive Committee agreed that something in this direction should be done.

Scholarships
The Trustees are trying to raise $100M in scholarships so that we can give more students support. Dean Brown encouraged the departments and college to use scholarship funds to attract the best freshmen.

CoE Assessment Criteria for Auxiliary Faculty
Dean Brown said he had e-mailed to the chairs/director the current draft of the COE Assessment Criteria for Auxiliary Faculty. The University accrediting body insisted that we have this, and David Pershing/Susan Olson asked that it be a college-wide policy.

This document was worked on by an ad hoc committee, was brought back to the chairs for comment, was reviewed by Susan Olson, and was checked by the general counsel’s office. Many edits were made in order to satisfy the needs as perceived by all of these groups. The current version is acceptable to Susan and the General Counsel. Dean Brown would like to get a vote on the proposed policy by the end of the semester.

This document will:

- Strive to bring more respect to Research and Lecturing Faculty in the College of Engineering.

- Regularize the appointments of auxiliary faculty. This is an opportunity to adjust titles to match the work that people are doing.
• Require reviews for Research and Lecturing Auxiliary Faculty at 3 and 5 years, that would be roughly equivalent to those of tenure-track faculty, but in just the areas of their appointment.

Patrick Tresco commented that auxiliary faculty are at a disadvantage because they typically have no startup packages, labs, etc. On the other hand, some come with a close relationship to a regular faculty member or larger project that has a good lab in which they can work. (Our space shortage will limit the number of tenure-track faculty members we can hire – there is not much space that could be given to a new auxiliary faculty member). Dean Brown asked the chairs/director to read through the document and send him their input in a couple of days. He will send it back to the ad hoc committee, then to the College Council, and finally, out to the faculty for a vote.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.