COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES

July 16, 2010

Present: Richard B. Brown, Milind Deo, Patrick Tresco, Marilyn Davies, Rob MacLeod (BIO), Paul Tikalsky, Gianluca Lazzi, Dinesh Shetty (MSE), Tim Ameel, John Hollerbach (SofC), Sandy Meek, Vicki Jensen

Ray Levey, ex-officio

Guest: Deidre Schoenfeld, Outreach Diversity Coordinator

Excused: Michael Kay, Rick Rabbitt, JoAnn Lighty, Anil Virkar, Martin Berzins

Dean Brown welcomed to the meeting Rob MacLeod (BIO), Dinesh Shetty (MSE) and John Hollerbach (SofC) representing their respective departments and Deidre Schoenfeld, College Outreach and Diversity Coordinator.

Announcements/Updates

Artwork – Bret Webster
Beautiful artwork of southern Utah is now hanging on the walls in the Dean’s suite of offices. The photographer, Bret Webster, is an alumni of Mechanical Engineering and sits on the College Industrial Advisory Board. He was very generous to sell the pictures to us at his cost. Bret plans to take pictures of the Wasatch range in northern Utah this summer. Some of those pictures will be sprinkled among the ones already hanging on the walls.

Fall Faculty & Staff Meeting
The annual College Fall Faculty & Staff Meeting will be held on Friday, August 20, 2010 at 2:00 pm in 104 LWEB.

Completion of the Meldrum Civil Engineering Building
Paul Tikalsky gave a brief overview of the new Meldrum Civil Engineering Building (MCE) formerly known as EMRL. Approval for the renaming has already been received. The cost of the 14,500 square feet addition is $4.8 million. The ribbon cutting is being planned. A lunch for major donors will be held prior to the ribbon cutting. Speakers at the ribbon cutting will be: President Young, Dean Brown, Dave Layton, Shannon Hansen (member of CvEE Grad SAC and an ARC’s fellow), and Floyd Meldrum. Funding for this project is almost 100% private donations. Marilyn Davies gave Paul credit for the efforts he has made in fund raising. He has been a one man fund raising machine and has done an amazing job. Please plan to come to the ribbon cutting.

ENAC
The fall ENAC Meeting will be held on Monday, November 8, 2010, in Las Vegas, Nevada. More information will be given as the date draws closer.
New Faculty Orientation
A New Faculty Orientation will be held at the College level on Thursday, August 19, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm in the Eccles Boardroom. Every faculty member starting this fall should attend and faculty who were hired during the past few years are also welcome to attend. Dean Brown asked the chairs/director to let him know who they feel should be invited along with new faculty hired this year. Because a binder of information will be given to those attending, we will need an RSVP. Milind Deo reviewed the orientation schedule. If the chairs/director have any input or suggestions for the orientation, please send that to Dean Brown, Milind Deo or Patrick Tresco.

Graduate Student Recruiting
Deidre Schoenfeld, College Outreach and Diversity Coordinator, attended the meeting to talk about Hobsons, which is a recruiting management and retention system. We are ready to take Hobsons full scale in our College. ECE has already set up a system like this, with a website where students can register and access information about the department.

Hobsons provides a level of categorization such as US or international, GPA, GPA and GRE, degree, specialty areas of interest. We will be able to do queries for certain regions, particular universities, and zip codes. Deidre said they would like to see “faculty area of research interest” on each department website. This program will provide data from some quick links for prospective students. It is the hope of the College that this service will be useful to the departments in identifying, locating, and getting information out in a timely manner to prospective students, and in reducing the workload of the advisors in managing the prospective students. Dean Brown said Hobsons is a great tool and the College will pay for it. He requested that the chairs/director see that Hobsons becomes part of their department website and that they start using it. Prospective students use the internet as their main access to information, and Hobsons will help them get quick and easy access to information on the College.

Dean Brown said the University, as a whole, is going to adopt Apply Yourself on the graduate level, which is a program connected to Hobsons. This means that after the first of the year the College will not have to pay for this service—the University will. Dean Brown said there isn’t anything we can do that is more important to improving our stature than recruiting more of the top graduate students. That is what we need to focus on. According to the U.S. News, our ranking for selectivity is not helping our ranking. We need more students to apply.

Freshman Convocation
Deidre Schoenfeld announced that Freshman Convocation will be held on August 26, 2010, 3:30-6:00 pm. The agenda will be the same as last year, starting with a welcome by Dean Brown followed by departmental meetings for all new students. Support for this event is needed from the departments.

Past Due Research Monies
Dean Brown reported that across the University there are research projects which have been sponsored by companies that have not paid what they agreed to pay, in the amount of $2M.
A number of groups that are in debt to the U are small companies, spin offs, or companies very close to faculty. The U has no mechanism for dealing with bad debt but they are taking steps to collect the money. Dean Brown spoke with Barbara Nielsen, Associate Director for Compliance Accounting and Reporting, about this problem and she said in the next few weeks chairs/directors will receive a letter listing delinquent accounts and companies. The chairs/directors will have the first opportunity to contact them to see if the debt can be resolved. If not, the account will be turned over for collection which can add about 30% to the outstanding debt. Whatever money is not collected will become the department’s responsibility to cover. There are some bad debts in the College. Care needs to be given when setting up new projects; it is not a good idea to set up hardship accounts on projects funded by smaller companies. OSP will work with us in setting up new accounts so monies have to be paid up front or on a regular pay schedule or in the case of trusted organizations, billing after the account is set up. We have to be reasonable and certainly don’t want to drive away research dollars.

12 Month Faculty Appointments
Dean Brown said it is important that faculty understand effort reporting. He reviewed the history of how appointments have been set up at universities. Sixty years ago, faculty members mostly taught during the academic year (three quarters) and had summers off. In time, government organizations started funding a lot of research at universities. NSF would fund research up to two months during the summer. The idea was that the 12th month would be summer vacation. This is still the way it is in some areas on campus, but not in engineering, science, or other departments that have big research projects. As time has passed, most everybody is research active and has summer support.

In recent years, the federal government has become more and more involved in the financial management of the projects they support. In the 1980’s the University of Utah had trouble because a faculty member who was supported 100% on a government grant for a summer month, taught a class during that time summer. The U received a disallowance over this issue. According to the federal auditors, advising graduate students is considered to be teaching, too. Consulting time cannot be accrued and then spent during the summer in a month which is supported by federal funding. When working for the government, government rules, rather than university rules.

Many faculty members are paid 9 over 12, but this does not address the issue. It just spreads the academic pay over the summer. Faculty members earn state money for the academic year and research money during the summer. Most current College of Engineering faculty appointments are 9 month appointments. Being paid 9 over 12 does not mean that faculty have 12-month appointments, and it does not shield faculty from the federal auditors and the risk of the University receiving disallowances. There are other implications about being on a 9 month appointment. There is no vacation. On 9 month appointments the academic holidays are the only vacation allowed. Every year HR sends a list of holidays to all faculty and staff. If faculty have 3 months of summer support, the only vacation days would be July 4 and 24.
Dean Brown said he has been thinking lately that the College should allow faculty to go to 12 month appointments. Under such an appointment, the academic (state-funded) FTE would be 0.75 times what it is currently during the academic year, and the balance of the FTE (throughout the year) could be filled by research funding. This would mean that the faculty member would never be supported entirely by federal research dollars during any month, which would mean that university rules would always apply instead of federal rules. He has talked to Dave Pershing, SVP for Academic Affairs; Barbara Nielsen, Assoc Director for Compliance Accounting and Reporting; and Paul Brinkman, Assoc VP Budget/Planning, and they are all supportive. What does a 12 month appointment mean? It means that faculty are expected to be on campus through the summer. If a faculty member is not doing research during the summer and wants that time to go on a vacation, that is their prerogative – but they should stay on a 9 month appointment.

Going to 12 month appointments would solve other problems. With 9 over 12 appointments, any time an off cycle raise is received it is a nightmare to get paid correctly. On 9 over 12, most faculty start at the beginning of the academic year, but they are paid starting July 1. They are, therefore, paid ahead until January 1. From January 1 until the end of June, they are paid behind. If a faculty member leaves the university between July and December, they have to pay money back to the university. If a person on a 9 month appointment is paid 9 over 9 and does not have research for any month during the summer, they have no benefits during that month. Benefits would be paid for 12 months on 12 month appointments. Faculty on 12 month appointments would receive 25 vacation days per year. (As noted above, faculty on appointments of less than 12 months are not eligible for vacation.) Even on 12-month appointments, faculty cannot carry over vacation to the next year (Policy 5-301, rev 12, part 5.d).

On 12-month appointments, faculty would be paid as they earn their salary, so changes in pay could be implemented any time. There would be no hassle hiring a person at times other than July 1 and January 1. When a new research project comes in, it could immediately fund part of the FTE. Vacation would be charged to the projects and state funding that support the faculty member during the time they are on vacation.

Our next opportunity to make move to 12-month appointments will be the first of January. Faculty already have the obligation to report consulting days and sick days. On 12-month appointments, they would also have to report vacation days. A person’s ABA would stay the same as it is on a 9-month appointment. Most divisions of NSF are now comfortable paying academic year support.

At the College Fall Faculty and Staff Meeting held in August Dean Brown will discuss twelve month appointments. To Dean Brown it looks like something we ought to do - it will protect the faculty and the U.

Conflict of Interest
Patrick Tresco reported that a huge reform to conflict of interest is in the works at the NIH. In the past, PIs had to document possible conflicts of interest. The new policy will require a
reduction in any conflict of interest. Anything projected to have value above $10 is a potential conflict of interest.

Dean Brown thanked everyone for all they are doing.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.