Announcements/Updates

Career Advantage Website (ASUU)
Dean Brown met with Jake Enslin, Student Services Director for ASUU, regarding Engineering’s presence on ASUU’s Career Advantage Website. Jake did find information on some departments that had been gathered last year by the previous Director. Either Jake or other representatives from ASUU will be contacting the departments to complete the information needed to get the Engineering link active. Dean Brown asked the chairs/director to please cooperate with them when they visit or call.

Research Items
Eric Eddings gave an update on research items discussed at the last Executive Committee Meeting:

There has been a problem with e-Proposal approvals related to when previous approvers leave the e-proposal open in their browser. This double-editing in some cases canceled the approval of the previous level. To alert subsequent approvers to the possibility of multiple individuals editing the same document, a warning message now pops up indicating that the document has recently been accessed by another individual.

SciVal is a system supplied by Elsevier that will alert faculty to calls for proposals in their area. Profiles for 800 of the most research-active faculty on campus based on public information of their publications and grants has been automatically generated. OSP will add faculty to this list. Any faculty member can be added so that they will get the notices.

Cayuse is the user interface for Grants.gov that the university has licensed. Some training sessions have been held and others will be scheduled in the near future. Eric will send a note to the chairs/director, once the new schedules have been set to provide suggestions on who should attend the next training session.

Teaching Workshop
Milind Deo reported that the Teaching Workshop is scheduled for February 6-7, 2012. He will send information to the chairs/director with details. Milind asked them to send him the names of faculty they recommend to attend the Workshop so he can get them set up to attend.
ASEE/US News Data

Last year engineering related research expenditures were $74.7M. Included in that number is all of metallurgy and mining but not much of geology. This represents a growth of more than $7M.

The biggest problem we have at this point in the metrics is our selectivity of graduate students. We don’t have enough really good students applying and that affects the research enterprise. Dean Brown asked the chairs/director to encourage their faculty to talk to their colleagues at other universities and let them know that “Our research is going through the roof. We need more graduate students. Encourage your students to apply.”

The University as a whole has decided to use Apply Yourself, an online application service that we have been using in the College for a number of years. When we managed applications ourselves, a number of departments did a pre-screening before students did the formal application (and had to pay the bigger fee). Now, all graduate students must pay an application fee of $65 when they first apply. This may be the reason for a decrease in the number of applications, especially foreign applications, received in some departments compared to previous years. We are trying to mitigate this through better advertising and have recently signed an agreement with Asian Correspondent to advertise on their website. On December 19, Asian Correspondent is launching an Engineering feature which will include the Top 25 Engineering Schools for Asia’s Growth Economy, the criteria of which will be based on empathy to Asian culture, education standards, value for the money, and prestige. This list is not ranked, but simply outlines the features of each school that make them attractive to incoming students from various countries in Asia. Our College will also get its own profile page on the site, which will include a review of course offerings. We will have the full services of their Social Media team to generate traffic and interest through both global and indigenous social media channels in Asia. We are hoping that many more students will see this ad and apply.

Dean Brown reported that the College graduate fly-in will be the last Friday in February. It is important that we make this event a success. Dean Brown reminded the chairs/director that at the last Executive Committee Meeting it was decided to handle the Brown Fellowship a little differently. Applications this year will be taken after the fly-in. Students can be told that they are being considered for our top fellowship but we need to meet them before recommending them for the fellowship. This will help us to make better decisions. Department nominations for the Brown Fellowship are due March 1. Dean Brown recommended that we make the Brown Fellowship a little richer which will result in fewer offers, but hopefully, higher acceptance rates.

Discussion Items

Honors
Dean Brown reported that a search is underway for the dean of the Honors College. There should be a faculty advisor in each department for honors students. Dean Brown requested that the chairs/director identify someone who believes in engineering students getting the honors experience. This would be the person who shepherds the honor students through their coursework and honors dissertation. The honors program requires honor students to sign up for an honors dissertation class; students are required to present or publish their dissertation. The
departmental honors advisor would be the instructor for that class. University-wide there are a lot of students who go into honors but not many finish. That is the case with Engineering. Dianne Leonard, College Academic Advisor, is now taking responsibility at some level to advise all of the Engineering honor students and has been able to encourage quite a few to stay with the program.

There are more Honors students in Engineering than any other college. Engineering will have an entire floor in the new Honors dorm and will continue to have a floor in Sage Point.

Emergency Planning
Dean Brown reported that there will be a regional earthquake exercise on April 17, 2012 at 10:15 am. The FEMA director in Denver has done an analysis of potential disasters in his region and feels one of the largest disasters would be an earthquake in Salt Lake City. The state of Utah has done a similar analysis. There will be a lot of information coming from FEMA, the state, and the county related to disasters. The U is going to try to follow the Stanford University model. They hold drills twice a year. One thing we are going to do in the College is try to make labs and offices safer. Faculty and staff need to be aware of what to do in case of an earthquake. For this exercise and actual disasters, when people leave the building they need to take their car keys, coat, and 72 hour kit with food. There needs to be some organization at the College level. During a major disaster the department chairs/director are responsible for the safety of their department. There should also be a deputy assigned in case the chairs/director are away from campus.

Graduation Audit
Dean Brown said the State Legislature’s recent graduation audit wasn’t particularly complimentary to the University. It reported that the U is only graduating 53% of the people who attend; there is now a focus on improving that number. The University’s challenge is that most students are working, are married and have children.

Math
Dean Brown gave a quick update on math. We have an agreement with math to teach a 4 sequence math course. A new text book has been identified. Dean Brown encouraged the chairs/director to help get this course together. Applied math faculty will be the instructors. This is an opportunity of a generation to get it right for ours students in math. Milind Deo commented that Geoff Silcox, Chair of the College Math Committee, has been meeting with Dave Dobson, from Math, and they have created a syllabus. Dean Brown said we need input from the departments to finalize this syllabus.

The College IAB members feel that our students are not adequately exposed to statistics. Dean Brown needs to be able to report to them that each department does offer a statistics class. He asked the chairs/director about their department statistics requirements. If the requirement is already met, statistics won’t be included in this 4 course math sequence.
E-LEAP and ENG 1020
The purpose of ENG 1020 was to introduce students to a breadth of engineering. Jeff Bates, College Academic Coordinator, did a survey of students which indicated that we need to adjust the course a bit if we want to really engage the students. Comments from chairs/director who taught the lectures were similar to the results of Jeff's survey. One possible approach going forward would be to take the lectures out of E-Leap and put them in a more open environment. E-leap would require students to go to the lectures. Instead of sections of 35 students, the lectures would be available to groups of 150 plus students and others that would like to attend. This would mean fewer presentations by our engineering faculty and those lecturing could talk about what they wanted to rather than what E-Leap mandates. All agreed that was a better plan. Dean Brown said with this format the class would probably be held in the late afternoon or early evening.

Open Access Proposal
At the November meeting there was a discussion on an Open Access Proposal, which was met with not much enthusiasm. In follow-up to the request Dean Brown made of the chairs/director to discuss this Proposal with their faculty, he asked, “Is there anybody who is in favor of open access? Dean Brown will let the Task Force know that as far as Engineering is concerned, they prefer that the Open Access Proposal as written not be adopted.

Engineering Initiative (EI)
Dean Brown asked Marilyn Davies to give an update on the Engineering Initiative. We are working to get it going again this year. A presentation was made to the Public Policy Committee of the Utah Technology Council, and they have ranked the Engineering Initiative as UTC’s top legislative priority this year. Marilyn and Dean Brown met with Dave Buehler and he will present to the council of presidents in an attempt to get the EI included in the budget request. The EI did not make it into the Governor’s budget request. We have been encouraged by government leadership that if our board members and constituents talk with legislators about the importance of investing in engineering education, it may get some funding this year. A proposal has been written that includes money for every part of technical education. Governor Herbert is concerned about the longer term picture for a quality work force for the state. He has charged us to come back with a 10 year plan for the Engineering Initiative. Dean Brown asked the chairs/director for their input on their greatest need for EI funds, and whether they feel we’d still be safe to promise a growth of 100% in graduates for an increase of 50% in budget.

Space
Dean Brown said that there is a lot going on with regard to space right now. The builder turned the USTAR Building over to the University on December 12. One thing Vivian Lee, SVP for Health Sciences, brought with her when she came to the U is a view of space utilization which will probably affect us. At NYU there was an expectation of a certain research expenditure per square foot of lab space. There is getting to be more sensitivity about space utilization. Engineering is using its space very well for the most part. Dean Brown asked the chairs/director to be aware of their space utilization; do not let people just camp on space. As research grows for individual faculty they will be given additional space that isn’t activity utilized. Our research has grown from $25M to $75M in the last 10 years.
Outreach
Dean Brown reported that Engineering Day this year was very successful. There have been discussions with the College outreach group about changing the model so more students can be accommodated. The students love the event and it is a terrific recruiting activity. Next year the departments may be asked to have more lab sessions. Dean Brown expressed his appreciation to the departments for all their help with this event.

The University has adopted the Science Olympiad which will take place in March. Weber State University has hosted the Science Olympiad for years and now the U will host the event. It is another excellent opportunity for engineering to recruit and a great opportunity to highlight our departments. We will need some volunteers, labs, etc. There will be more discussions on this event later.

University President Search
Dean Brown said that the short list of presidential candidates is getting shorter. Airport interviews are currently taking place. A list will soon be made available to the public.

Dean Brown thanked everyone for a great year. Happy holidays!

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 pm