

Chairs' & Center Directors' Meeting Minutes

Date May 2, 2011
Location EBU II Room 443
Attending Abbaschian, Reza
Balandin, Alex
Barth, Matt
Bhanu, Bir
Bhuyan, Laxmi
Boretz, Mitch
Davidson, Don
Lake, Roger
Matsumoto, Mark
Najjar, Walid
Parker, Linda
Payne, Tom
Ravishankar, C.
Schultz, Jerry
Stahovich, Tom

Absent Haddon, Robert
Hartney, Pat
Lake, Roger
Myung, Nosang
Xu, Daniel

1. Welcome and call for agenda items – Reza

Matt Barth asked to add an agenda item on e-mail system problems.

2. Approval of minutes – Mitch

The minutes of the April 15, 2011, meeting were approved unanimously without revision.

3. Faculty hires – reports from Chairs

Bioengineering has two offers outstanding. One has a deadline of this Friday (May 6) and one next Friday (May 13).

Mechanical Engineering is negotiating with one candidate now and is optimistic of bringing this person aboard. Negotiations with a second candidate are beginning today (May 2).

Computer Science and Engineering has hired Tamar Shinar for the new Poonian Chair as an Assistant Professor. A second professor has been hired into a tenured position.

Electrical Engineering has hired one person at the Associate Professor level and is negotiating with a candidate for an assistant professor position.

Chemical and Environmental Engineering has hired two assistant professors. A third appointment is in progress for a position affiliated with Materials Science and Engineering.

Reza comments that we are identifying the best applicants, the same ones that everyone is after. Because of this, we get some, we lose some, but that strategy is a good one. We don't want to go after the second-tier candidates.

4. Undergraduate education -- Ravi

The deadline for statements of intent to register (SIRs) has passed. We have 455 SIRs college-wide; a breakdown by department will take another day or two. Since we still have space, we made 254 offers to people on the wait-list (applicants with AIS scores between 1000 and 950). Of them, 48 have SIR'd already, and the rest have until May 6 to do so. Those 48 are included in the 455 mentioned above. Ravi predicts that we might see 500 incoming freshmen committed by the end of the week. Additionally, we have 33 transfer students. The transfer deadline is June 3. We still have in reserve 160 or so freshman applicants on the waiting list with AIS scores between 950 and 900.

We have not made any pre-engineering admits. The plan is that we will admit those below 950 to the pre-engineering program.

Reza commented that he expects us to reach our target of 600 new admissions, with higher quality.

Laxmi commented that 2011 is the first year that the UC system will get more money from tuition than from the State of California.

5. Graduate education -- Mark

Mark distributed graduate enrollment figures. We are at 44% of our target of 178: 55% for Ph.D. and 35% for M.S. Overall applications are up quite a bit, but all in master's programs. Ph.D. applications are down a little. Last year we made 191 Ph.D. offers, this year 144. We made more M.S. offers but have not seen more M.S. acceptances.

Last year, we made 103 domestic offers, and this year 71 for Ph.D.

There are 27 applications still in the queue, down from May 1 last year.

The main source of the decline is a reduction in Ph.D. enrollments from last year. Mark is encouraging departments to follow up with those who have received offers but not yet responded.

CHASS is level with last year. CNAS is down somewhat this year, too. Business is up.

Matt and Laxmi said last year's change in campus non-resident tuition policy might be affecting our graduate enrollment. It is hard to advance a student to candidacy by the third quarter, so less campus support means more of a financial burden on the faculty advisor. Matt and Laxmi asked whether we can ask Graduate Division for more money per student to cover more of the NRT. Mark says some of the money is diverted to dissertation year fellowships (\$22,000), so the risk is that we could lose that if we ask for more per student.

To use ME as an example, offers were made to all qualified domestic Ph.D. students, but no offers were made to international students.

Reza said he is concerned that there will not be enough grad students to support the new faculty members and current faculty members. Tom said that in ME, only two continuing faculty plus the new faculty are searching for new grad students this year. Similarly, EE faculty are not looking for lots of new people because it over-enrolled graduate students last year. The EE faculty is still working to accommodate the students who were enrolled last year.

6. Council of Advisors (Linda)

The BCOE Council of Advisors meeting was Friday, April 29. Eamonn Keough Akua Asa-Awuku, Hyle Park, and Kawai Tam (with design students) made presentations about BCOE research. Vice Chancellor Charles Louis and Craig Sheward spoke about intellectual property and technology transfer. EVCP Dallas Rabenstein made a presentation on strategic planning and budget.

Council members agreed to make a strong recommendation to the Chancellor in the area of hiring and pre-emptive retention. They want to invest in the faculty. The investment in BCOE faculty is one of the best investments the campus can make. They will advise the chancellor to be proactive rather than reactive. We should not wait for a professor to get offers somewhere else. Right now, we can't do anything until a faculty member comes to us with an offer from another institution.

Board members said across-the-board budget cuts don't make sense and are not acceptable. They also pointed out that taking resources away from BCOE also would have a negative impact on the new School of Medicine.

The board members agreed to write a strong letter to the Chancellor within a month. Then they want all board members who are local to meet with the Chancellor. They also want another meeting six months from now.

Reza said BCOE's rising visibility means that poaching will continue. The board wants to avoid this by enabling us to pre-emptively engage in competition to keep our people. Linda said the board also wants BCOE to grow, not just maintain its current faculty size.

Linda said the board felt that the campus is not really following its own strategic plan.

Walid commented that if a faculty member is approached by another institution but would rather stay, it can cause professional problems. If another institution makes an offer, the current institution counter-offers, and the person stays put, the person is perceived to have used the second institution as a lever. This can cause ill will in the professor's professional circles, and it creates pressure to take the new institution's offer.

Linda said the council suggested that the campus look at the strategic plans and tell the units what their cuts should be based on that. They do not endorse a "peanut butter" approach of spreading across the board.

7. Commencement (Don)

Don met with the departments regarding the reception after the commencement ceremony. We will go back to putting the food in the central reception area. To get people to go to the individual department receptions, at 8:15 we will stop the music and the slide show and put up a slide inviting people to go to their department receptions. They will go to the departments for dessert and gifts.

It was proposed that we give USB flash drives as gifts, but they are much more expensive than the identity tags.

Line-up for students will be in Hub 302 this year.

8. Distinguished Seminars (Linda)

Two seminars are coming up. Both are open to the public, and we encourage BCOE faculty, staff, and students to attend.

May 17: 4 p.m. to 5 with reception to follow. Garner Holt of Holt Productions, "Engineering Animatronics: The Science of Theme Park Entertainment."

May 25: 4 p.m. Lynn Greff, a member of the UCR Foundation Board of Trustees and retired chief engineer for information systems at JPL: "What Was the Greatest Invention of the 20th Century."

Laxmi suggests using EBU II Room 138 if we can get it.

9. Other matters: E-mail problems

Matt: Some people are having trouble sending e-mails to us, and we are getting complaints. Reza said he understands that we have Barracuda to filter out spam. Matt thinks it's a server setting. Ravi said e-mail from within the campus is also having problems because it comes through a campus C&C server on Barracuda's bad list.

Tom P. says all system administrators at UCR meet once a month, and they should talk there. He also suggested contacting Victor Hill to see if we can apply CSE's approach to the Engineering mail server.

Meeting adjourned 1:35 p.m.