

Minutes of Departmental Committee Meeting

1:30 Tuesday, September 8, 2015, Room 9341

(Professors Berry, Bertram, Blackwell, Brunold, Burstyn, Cavagnero, Ediger, Fredrickson, Garand, Gellman, Jin, McMahon, Moore, Nathanson, Schmidt, Shakhashiri, Skinner, Stahl, Weisshaar, Wright, Yoon, Zanni attending.)

Open Session

Minutes of the last meeting (05/12/15) were approved on a voice vote with no negatives.

Announcements and Reports

New Staff Introductions

Staff who have started with us since last September were introduced. These included Pat Egan (Department Manager), Assistant Professor Tim Bertram, Luke Maroney (Undergraduate Chemistry Office), and Karen Stephens (Organic Path Coordinator). Brett Amberger and Aaron McCoy will be Organic Chemistry Lecturers this semester. Kelly Mallon from the College of Letters & Science grants office was introduced.

Awards

Bob McMahon announced that Nick Abbott (CBE), Ron Raines (Biochem) and Shannon Stahl (Chemistry) have all won ACS awards. Nick received the ACS Award in Colloid and Surface Chemistry, Ron received the Ralph F. Hirschmann Award in Peptide Chemistry, and Shannon received the ACS Award for Affordable Green Chemistry. Tehshik Yoon has received one of this year's Teva Pharmaceuticals Scholars Awards. Juliet Alderson from Professor Schomaker's group has received an ACS Organic Chemistry Fellowship.

Safety Update

This will become a regular part of the Department Meeting. Thanks to Mahesh Mahanthappa (outgoing) and Ive Hermans (incoming) for chairing the Safety Committee and helping us move forward. Jeff Nielsen will start to focus on different parts of the building in which we can improve our safety. Bob McMahon talked about our effort to reduce the volume of flammable solvents in the buildings, which is tied closely to our ability to get approval for the new building. There is a decreasing allowance of flammables on the higher floors of any building. We have made some progress, but challenges remain.

Administrative Update

Pat Egan announced that starting October 5 there will be some changes to the travel reimbursement allowances. We will have a *per diem* allowance for meals. We will not be allowed to use commercial management systems (hotels.com, Expedia, etc) for booking hotels – they must be done through CONCUR or through a conference website. Also, there will be strict 90-day limit on filing for reimbursements. [ed. note: It has since been clarified that reimbursements for travel before October 5, 2015, will be accepted until January 1, 2016.]

Performance Management is now required. This entails at least four meetings with each employee during the year, one during each quarter.

Chemistry Department rules are being updated to reflect changes. The "Harriman document" (available on our Intranet) has not been revised for some years.

Department Chair Search Report

Jim Weisshaar explained the current situation. Because of ongoing deliberations concerning the budget and the design of the new building, it was considered to be in the Department's best interest to have continuity in the Chair's office. Bob McMahon has agreed to serve one more year, and the search committee will take up its task again in Spring 2016.

Fall Enrollments

Judith Burstyn reported that currently, General Chemistry courses are enrolled at 100% (or a little higher) of their capacity. There is a group of students who did not get into their desired course. Please send students who come to talk to you about needing to get into a course to the Undergrad Chem Office so they can be dealt with consistently and fairly.

Campus Leadership Meetings

Bob McMahon reported on some recent budget decisions. We had about \$230K cut from Chemistry's budget this year; we have largely met that obligation through the loss of Frank Keutsch, and the failure to hire Allison Narayan. There will be no faculty search this year. But the College has treated us very well with a fairly small budget cut.

Building Project

Bob McMahon reported. The building project was not approved in the Spring committee meetings. Bob went downtown to visit a number of legislators or their staff. Legislators were largely supportive, and when the budget came up for a final vote, the building was included, but at only 80% of the requested funding. The extra \$21M or so will become a campus responsibility. Swing space for the labs has been negotiated in the Medical Science Center. It will cost about \$500K-\$1M to make the space usable by our Analytical and Gen Chem labs. Analytical may have to move as soon as Summer 2016.

In a separate project, a new sprinkler system will be installed in the Mathews and Daniels buildings. Jeff Nielsen is an expert in these systems, and will help guide us through the process.

John Moore talked about the planning schedule for the new building. We are near the end of the 10% design report, and the 35% report will be completed by March or April, 2016. Bidding may occur in Fall 2016, and that means groundbreaking could occur in March or April 2017.

Faculty Senate Report

Judith Burstyn reported. There has been no meeting yet this year. The Campus Committee on Tenure and Termination is drawing up new rules.

Fall Competition Deadline – Friday September 18th

CHOPS – October 8-11

Board of Advisors – Friday October 9th

UW-System Chemistry Faculty Meeting (UW-Madison is the host)

John Wright is planning this. It will be held October 23rd-24th here in Madison.

With no business brought to the Department Committee, the meeting was adjourned after a motion from Mark Ediger and Sam Gellman.

October 13, 2015. MJS