Steering Committee Minutes — April 30, 2010

Voting Members: Jyoti Sarkar (President), Xianzhong Wang (Bio), Barry Muhoberac (Chem), Snehasis Mukhopadhyay (CIS), Ruihua Cheng for Ricardo Decca (Phys), John McGrew (Psych), William Geller (Math)

Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members: Jane Williams (Past President), Mihran Tuceryan (Secretary), James Murphy (Associate Dean for Research).

Visitor: Shiaofen Fang (CIS)

1. President Sarkar called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM.
2. The agenda was adopted unanimously.
3. The minutes of the March 12, 2010 SC Meeting was approved unanimously.
4. Dean Ng briefed the committee about the following topics:
   - Update on chair searches: Kevin Mandernack, Colorado School of Mines will be the next chair of ES. He said that applied ES PhD program will be applied for in the June meeting of ICHE. Kevin is a Geochemist. Biology had three candidates for chair. One candidate, a Vascular Biologist from Medical College of Georgia, had a two-body problem challenge—Dean is talking to School of Medicine to find a solution. Space is another challenge. He is not very optimistic due to timing issues, but has not given up yet. The other two candidates are internal candidates—Simon Atkinson and David Skalnik. They are both very good. He has finished second interviewes with them. Both are possibilities. He said there should be a decision by the 2nd week of May.
   - Budget status: The budget is extremely healthy. The $6M in startup committed in the last 2 years will be paid for by June 30, 2010. Successor dean will have no obligations. Also, all of the $3M down payment for the new building is paid.
   - The new SERC building status: The building is proceeding more or less on schedule. We will get new space in 2 yrs according to plan.
   - Very unlikely to hire new faculty next year due to space constraints. We will recover all Fulltime faculty (125 or so) positions by next year. Next year all new hiring will be replacements for retired faculty. In fact, if we count lecturers, we now have more faculty members in SOS than at any other time in history. Last time (1998) we had 5 lecturers, now we have 39 lecturers. We don’t want to expand the lecturer ranks anymore. Dean Ng has asked chairs to give a plan to hire visiting faculty. We will deploy the visiting faculty heavily during summer sessions, since we do not have capacity to add new courses during Fall and Spring and since the faculty does not like to teach during summer. We may also offer faculty option to teach in summer in exchange for course reduction in Fall or Spring. Uday wants to increase throughput of our students graduating. Current best students are coming with AP credit. More advanced courses do not fit the jigsaw puzzle that makes up the current curriculum, which was originally designed for different student demographics. These visiting positions will be primarily teaching positions—comparable to lecturers, but at a higher level. They will be term appointments of fixed duration (2 yrs) and will not be renewable.
They will be equivalent to teaching post-docs. How many? Dean is asking the chairs for input on this. These positions will be paid for by the tuition money. Dean Ng has set aside $1.6M, but will not hire regular faculty.

- Salary raises update: Dean Ng says salary raises is a question of policy (i.e., freeze by IU) and not of resources.

- Question: What’s latest for forensic biologist hiring? Short answer—nothing. FIS is a program in the SOS. It was approved as a program. A program does not have faculties. Faculties belong to departments. So far, they have three candidates: 1. Senior, expensive, deemed not a good investment for SOS, 2. Good candidate, but withdrew. 3. Not a good candidate.

- Dean Murphy: Space is still an issue. Jim will stay on until Jan 31, 2011. But the school needs to start looking for a replacement for Dean Murphy’s position sometime in the Fall. SC will be involved in writing the job description.

- Two new positions in the dean’s office—Public Relations and Student Services and Development. It took 8 months to have the positions classified. Last Tuesday 3 positions in development were approved. They still held back the position on student services.

- UCOL used to be an academic unit, now it has become a support unit. They will continue to shrink. This year we have more money from the state due to RCM. But the administration took away the same amount in assessment.

5. Discussion about the status of Technology Committee

- Kathy Marrs & Shiaofen Fang (guest)

- Last year Dean Ng asked IT task force to look into restructuring of the IT staff. We are trying to be efficient, but have not yet finalized the overall structure. The new structure will entail centralizing most of the services, and thus delivering more uniform IT services. It will involve:
  i. Personnel assignments (a person to a few specific departments)
  ii. Functional assignments and management.

- Dean Ng: Expertise should be distributed. IT is an area that can fall behind very quickly. IT is a tool to advance science.

- SM: Shouldn’t UITS provide these services? Dean says we are in transition to this for routine services. UITS should take care of resources that serve the entire campus. For SOS specific and research specific issues, SOS should coordinate services.

- Dean Ng also said that faculty should have an oversight of IT policies even if not involved in day-to-day management of it. UITS should work with the technology committee of the University Faculty Council before changing policies.

6. Secretary elected for next year.

- Election results from some departments—not all. Overwhelming yes, a few no. John Watson is elected.

7. Administrative reviews for this year have been completed. The results will be given to Dean Ng and also distributed to the relevant faculties in a week or two.

8. Announcements

- Biol+CS+Math will replace their SC reps for next year. Jyoti will send a message to the chairs in question.

- Other departments should keep their current reps.
9. Psychology: Lecturers want representation in P&T committee on decisions involving lectureres. If the SOS doesn’t want to make the change, psych should be allowed to make the change. This implies that a bylaws change is needed. SC will look into it next year.

10. The meeting adjourned at 10:55am.