School of Science Steering Committee Minutes
November 4, 2011

Voting Members present: John Watson (President), Simon Rhodes (Dean of the School of Science), Teri Belecky-Adams (Biology), Barry Muhoberac (Chemistry and Chemical Biology), Yao Liang (Computer and Information Science), Gabriel Filippelli (Earth Sciences), Vitaly Tarasov (Mathematical Sciences), Stephen Wassall (Physics), John McGrew (Psychology)

Non-Voting Members present: David Skalnik (Associate Dean), N. Douglas Lees (Associate Dean), Mihran Tuceryan (Past President), Snehasis Mukhopadhyay (Secretary)

1. President John Watson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. The agenda was adopted unanimously (see page 4).

2. The minutes of the last meeting on 10/07/2011 were approved unanimously.

3. President Watson turned the floor over to Dean Rhodes. Dean Rhodes distributed pictures and the site plan of the future Science and Engineering Laboratory Building (SELB). The bidding for the building is open. Construction is scheduled to start in March, 2012 and is expected to take about two years. Dean Rhodes informed the committee that he received an enthusiastic response to his request to the faculty to participate in the School of Science Diversity Committee. He said that there were some changes in the Dean’s office regarding research administration and Mary Harden has joined the staff to help with grants. He distributed copies of an e-mail from IUPUI Executive Vice Chancellor Uday Sukhatme regarding plans for classes in February, 2012 during the super-bowl, which is scheduled to be held in downtown Indianapolis. McGrew asked if there will be a problem with campus parking during the time of the new building construction. No one was very clear about that. Dean Rhodes also stated that the discussion about the relationship between the IUPUI School of Science and Purdue University is still ongoing and has reached a critical stage, involving the presidents of IU and Purdue.

4. President Watson discussed scheduling of the Steering Committee meetings in spring, 2012 semester. He set up a doodle poll and heard from 10 members. Two possible windows are Monday 11am-12:00pm and Wednesday 11am-1:00pm. He asked everyone to reserve the Wednesday 11am-1:00pm window.

5. There were discussions about the health insurance premium increase. There had been a special IUPUI Faculty Council meeting with IU official Neil Theobold. However, this meeting was not very helpful in resolving the concerns. IUPUI Faculty Council president Jack Windsor was also scheduled to have further discussions with Theobold. President Watson asked if it would be helpful for the Steering Committee to express an opinion to Neil Theobold. Dean Rhodes stated that such an opinion will not influence this year’s decision, but may influence future ones. Past President Tuceryan and President Watson noted that this year’s modest salary raise received by most faculty members has been more than wiped out by this hike in the premium and effectively, for most faculty members, results in a pay-cut. Dean Rhodes noted that the IU premiums are low compared to other big ten universities, but our salaries are also low. President Watson will try to get more information from Jack Windsor.
President Watson asked about items to be included in the agenda of the School Fall Faculty Assembly scheduled on November 11, 2011. Some of the usual items are call to order, approval of agenda and minutes of the previous faculty assembly, reports from the Dean’s office and faculty officers, School Committee reports, and then business of the day. The Dean’s report can provide update on the budget. Muhoberac asked if the Purdue and IU discussion about the relationship of the School of Science and Purdue should be discussed. President Watson observed that it is a sensitive issue. Filipelli suggested including an update on the SELB building. One business item will be the school promotion and tenure guidelines. Although the ad-hoc committee appointed to finalize the revisions has not met yet, the faculty can still discuss it during the assembly. Secretary Mukhopadhyay will contact the various school committees for written reports instead of discussions during the assembly, to conserve time. McGrew asked if there would be any interest in discussing the New Academic Directions task forces during the assembly. President Watson thought that Kathy Marrs or Simon Atkinson, members of the Science/Liberal Arts merger task force, could give an update during the assembly.

P & T document revisions – see previous paragraph.

The topic of departmental constitution and by-laws was brought up for discussion. Mathematics and Computer and Information Science departments already have them. Psychology department has some relevant documents, but not by-laws. Biology department has a committee to draft these. President Watson observed that there is merit in having such by-laws, particularly for growing departments with many new faculty members. He encourages all departments to have them, but it is optional on the part of the departments. Filipelli commented that it would be nice for the departments to have examples. President Watson will send the Mathematics and Computer and Information Science departments’ documents as examples.

President Watson raised the topic of administrator reviews. He provided a potential schedule for review of all current administrators. He observed that the school by-laws are fairly complicated in this regard. Historically, such reviews were conducted every year, alternating between the quantitative and full (both quantitative and qualitative) reviews. The Steering Committee spends a lot of time in formulating questions, doing reviews, and analyzing faculty feedback. Muhoberac suggested that there should be consistency and tracking with the reviews. This is helped by having the same review questions every year. President Watson observed that the review questions were the same every year, with only difference being the presence or absence of an open-ended faculty comment section. Dean Rhodes suggested that individuals being reviewed should be able to include one or two questions of their choice. Generally, there was agreement on this suggestion. Past President Tuceryan observed that making it uniform also helps in maintaining the institutional memory. President Watson was having difficulty accessing pervious review questions to help design the next review. Wassall observed that probably the last full Dean’s review was for former Dean David Stocum. McGrew commented that most of the Steering Committee’s work is for the open-ended comments and suggested communicating them verbatim. President Watson will contact all the administrators to see if they would be willing to do a short review, even if they are not due this year. However, there will be full chair reviews for the Computer and Information Science and Physics departments. The Math and Chemistry chairs will be excused from review if they so choose.
10. The issue of the role of the non-tenure track faculty (NTTF) in faculty governance was discussed at length. President Watson had many conversations with school NTTF faculty members about their lack of voting rights. Also some part-time faculty members feel that they do not play any role in decision-making. IU handbook defines voting faculty as tenure-track faculty (TTF), but allows conferring voting rights to others. President Watson created a document comparing different schools’ policies in this regard. Dean Rhodes informed that School of Science currently has 129 TTF and 53 NTTF (mostly lecturers). The fractional break-down may be different in other schools. President Watson also raised the issue of employee classification and another document concerning classification of IU appointees. For example, even though Academic Specialists are appointed through the Academic Affairs office and the Dean of Faculties, they are described as Staff in the Academic Handbook. In practice, some departments treat them as faculty, which may not be correct. McGrew asked if the Academic Specialists are required to have a Ph.D. degree. Dean Rhodes answered that they are required to hold only a Master’s degree. President Watson observed that the school also has Research Scientists, sometimes paid by the department and sometimes through an external grant. The School of Business also has a Professor in Practice appointment. Dean Rhodes observed that these appointments are mostly for community members who have achieved excellence. President Watson thinks a conversation is needed as to whether the by-laws should be more inclusive in terms of voting rights. Many Senior Lecturers have Ph.D. degrees and their input in many issues will be valuable. Dean Rhodes asked if, in such a case, NTTF members will vote on promotion and tenure (P & T) matters as well. McGrew noted that the Psychology department has a document describing how Lecturers can participate in P & T process. He will share this document with the Steering Committee. President Watson reiterated that P & T is a sensitive matter. Muhoberac asked if P & T is the only issue possibly requiring exclusion with respect to NTTF voting rights. President Watson reminded everyone that our by-laws do not exclude specific issues from the voting rights. Dean Rhodes commented that people may have strong views about who can affect the curriculum. President Watson thinks that transient employees should have a smaller role in curricular matters than full-time and permanent faculty. Past President Tuceryan observed that historically the issue of NTTF participation in administrator reviews came up. President Watson answered that their responses in such reviews are usually separated from TTF responses. Filipelli thinks excluding Lecturers from even commenting on P & T document is problematic, because their promotion is governed by that very document. The Math department has a P & T subcommittee for NTTF faculty. Tarasov observed that P & T in Primary and Unit committees are decided by members holding higher ranks. Filipelli noted that, however, the NTTF faculty do not participate in the election of members of these committees. President Watson concluded these discussions by observing that there seem to be a diversity of approaches to this important issue which needs to be revisited again soon.

11. Old Business: None.

12. New Business: McGrew observed that IRB has a new system that is causing problems for faculty. He thinks that we should request to go back to the old system. Watson noted that the IFC unanimously passed a resolution on this issue on November 1, 2011.

13. Motion to adjourn at 10:25 am was unanimously approved.
1. Approval of the agenda

2. Approval of the minutes from October 7, 2011
   http://sos.science.iupui.edu/facultycouncil/SCmin.htm

3. Comments by Dean Rhodes

4. Scheduling Steering Committee meetings for spring 2012

5. Health care premiums for faculty and staff

6. Agenda for Fall Faculty Assembly (November 11, 2011, 9-10:30 a.m., LD 010)

7. Revision of the SOS P&T document

8. Departmental constitutions and bylaws

9. Administrative reviews of Deans and Chairs

10. Role of non-tenure track faculty in SOS faculty governance
    
    See Section I, subsection 1 and Section VI of the SOS Constitution and Bylaws:
    http://sos.science.iupui.edu/facultycouncil/bylaws.htm

    See the following sections of the IU Academic Handbook:
    https://www.indiana.edu/~vpfaa/academichandbook/index.php/1._Organization_and_Governance#ORGANIZATION_OF_THE_FACULTY
    https://www.indiana.edu/~vpfaa/academichandbook/index.php/2._The_Academic_Appointee_and_the_University#ACADEMIC_APPOINTMENTS

    See the IUPUI Faculty Affairs website:
    http://academicaffairs.iupui.edu/policies/recruiting-faculty/classifyingFaculty.asp

11. Old business

12. New business