

Departmental Meeting Agenda: 5/2/14

Attendees: Chris Justice, Vivre Bell, Katie Holland, Bob Crossgrove, Alexandra Mouldin, Tatiana Loboda, George Hurtt, Alice Altstatt, Keith Yearwood, Ralph Dubuyah, Matt Hansen, Janet Nackoney, Giovanni Baiocchi, Julie Silva, In-Young Yeo, Jean-Claude Roger, Louis Giglio, Mike Strong, Elle Lim, Jon Resop, Casper Chung, Martha Geores, Jack Ma, Laixiang Sun, Chengquang Huang, Paul Torrens, Naijun Zhou, Rachel Berndtson, Ron Luna, Joe Sexton, Shunlin Liang (via skype).

1. Introductions of new faculty and staff:

- Suzanne Bach will return June 1, and one additional Research Coordinator, Meei-Ching Ma, has been hired.

2. Recent Developments and Chair's Updates

- Accept previous meeting minutes and approval of agenda.
- Budget – room for improvement, but we're doing ok at the moment – University cuts this year and next.
- GIS center candidates – interviews are proceeding, and candidates will start arriving next Spring hopefully.
- Merit – issues have been resolved, although we need to ensure Department policies fall in line with University policies, so that we can manage expectations. We must also be careful how we interpret the policies to avoid inconsistencies between years (e.g. satisfactory vs. unsatisfactory).
- New Titles for Research Faculty – at the University level, there is a proposal in review for which we are asking for feedback.
- IT data breach – University OIT is conducting thorough check of all websites to confirm that sensitive information has been contained (e.g. SSN, DOB, medical).
- Dean's Research Initiative – 4 proposals were submitted from GEOG; 45 total, and are currently in review.
- BSOS – the new hire for Dean is underway.
- Development – ERT donated \$10k for study abroad and is considering an on-going graduate scholarship ; the Director, Jingli Yang (Dr. Prince's former student) will join the next BSOS Board of Visitors.
- Mentoring – the campus is committed to ensuring all faculty receive mentoring, including research faculty – the Research Faculty Committee should address this topic next semester.
- AAG/WIG Reception – the event was a success – perhaps we should repeat it next year? Other Departments from other Universities are interested in partnering, and it would provide good visibility for the Department.
- Townshend retiring as Dean – possible open house reception his last day. John has volunteered to host the grad student annual orientation party at his house in the Fall. John will be moving to Hartwick as part of the Faculty and will then transition to Research Faculty in a year.
- *Geograffiti* – articles due May 9th (distribution by digital copy only, except for a few alumni who don't have internet access – they will receive hard copies).
- S. Prince's retirement party – Wed. May 7th – Steve has moved to the Research Faculty.
- Bill Emmanuel (JGCRI) has an interest in establishing a relationship with the Department and working with GLCF after he retires.
- Richard Moss (JGCRI) will be joining the Dept as a 25% Research Faculty Appointment.

3. Associate Chair – Dubayah

- 5th Year Masters Program Status
- Teaching Program: Goals for the Spring Retreat
 - a. Spring 2015 is still undecided – trying to move to “2 years in advance” schedule as there is currently too much slack (“last minute scrambling”). This is part of larger issue: teaching program goals.
 - b. Problem 1 – If classes haven’t filled up, your class will be dropped – Please advertise your courses!
 - i. Refer to UMEG
 - ii. Graduate courses are always late to fill, and this is no longer an option for Grad students – they must submit an “intent to enroll” form for the Fall semester by end of the Spring semester. Encourage/remind your current students to enroll, especially for required courses.
 - c. Problem 2 – classes may not be appealing, so if your course doesn’t fill up, you owe the Department a course; thus, you will teach 2 courses the following semester (we are trying to get down to 3 courses).
 - i. To avoid teaching courses you might not want to teach, advertise the courses you do want to teach, encourage students to enroll, etc. Push professional teaching experience with Graduate students, which is necessary for well-rounded candidates post-graduation.
 - ii. **ACTION:** pass message on to Graduate students (M. Strong, A. Moulden)
 - d. 10 credit rule – is this something we need to continue?
 - e. Review of Grad students – moved from May to January
 - i. Comments are required specifically when marking “unsatisfactory”
 - ii. **ACTION:** Revisit ratings at retreat for the incomplete year (S. Liang)
 - f. Moving to a course load of 3 to allow more time for Advising – requires revamping of Undergrad and Grad programs
 - i. Currently offer 58 courses w/ 11 active faculty – nominal 13-14 faculty.

4. Undergraduate Committee Tasks and Status Report – Hurtt

- Updated report sent out May 1st
- Charges
 - i. Review and make recommendations for honors program (5 yr Master’s program)
 - ii. Courses were recommended to go online last fall, but none happened for various reasons
 1. Continued to expand teaching during winter and summer courses
 - How to move forward w/ online courses, when we are unprepared (not only from an IT stand point)?
 - Identified courses, analyzed pedagogy (split), selected professors
 - IT person should be hired to assist faculty w/ online lectures
 - Online = blended learning/flipped
 - Without faculty support, it doesn’t make sense to move forward
 - Implement or not? Do these courses make more work overall?

ACTION – discussion at retreat regarding implementation of online teaching – any course can be flipped, and Undergrad committee recommended several courses that would fit online teaching.

ACTION: Prior to retreat, talk to OIT – inquire if they offer 24/7 support for online courses (to avoid hiring new tech person). Look at University policy on online courses, too. (R. Berndtson)

 - If you develop an online class, who owns it (Professor, University, joint?).
 - i. **ACTION** – Look into this (R. Berndtson)
 - Honors Program – robust new plan, multiple ways to achieve honors - discuss at retreat.

- Undergrad TA program – started as a pilot, but is going very well
 - i. Tripled numbers in the Spring
 - 1. Overall = positive feedback
- **ACTION** – read Undergrad report to prepare for discussion at the retreat (ALL)
- Committee meets, makes recommendations, goes to dept. committee (meeting), further discussion leading to implementation.

5. Undergraduate Director Academic Issues – Luna

- Early summer implementation of 5 yr masters (pilot study to start in Fall 2014)
 - Candidates selected for Fall 2016, too
 - Trying to increase students, participation from pool of individuals selected
- Summer Research Initiative (SRI) – Matt finishing interviews this week
 - Chance for under-represented minorities to take a paid summer internship
 - Used to send us non-geography candidates, and traditionally non-UMD students, but that is changing as they weren't a good fit for the Dept.
- Graduating one of largest classes ever (70 ENSP/in-house students)
 - Some will stick around for MPS program
 - Half have applied, and half of those have been accepted
- Summer enrollment has increased
 - 189 students (117 currently enrolled)
 - 199 students enrolled in Winter of 2014
 - Options for students (high interest in tech courses)
 - Money for Dept.
 - New MINOR – Remote Sensing of Global Change (from E3)
 - Remote sensing is favored/growing even without major advertising (mostly internal word-of-mouth)
- BS/MS program – many students “grand-fathered” into 5 year master's.
 - New cohort of juniors who are interested in taking master's courses in their senior year to complete the 5 year master's program (Fall of 2014).
 - 5 current seniors are interested in master's courses, too, but didn't have the opportunity; thus, are applying for 1 ½ year master's program.

6. Graduate Committee Tasks and Status Report – Hubacek

- Charged with recruiting GAs/RAs (Yearwood assisting)
 - If teaching for the first time, need to see teaching plan in order to maintain quality of courses.
 - Falls on grad students to provide faculty w/ teaching plan – oversight is necessary.
 - Grad student passing materials to Grad students during Summer as faculty are not around.
 - It's labor intensive, but necessary for those who want teaching experience.
 - What about students who are not adequate teachers/shouldn't be teaching? How do we help them to be better at teaching w/o practice?
 - Get 2 U's for teaching and then done
 - Faculty need to complete TA evaluations
- Part-time students – decision needs to be made
 - In the past, we had a policy of no part-time students, but now the discussion is being revisited.
 - How do we integrate them into the Dept. and push them through the program as fast as possible? Obviously they require more time than full-time students.
 - Can consider “special cases” – we need to give them the Grad student handbook and inform them that they are bound by policy, although this should be judged on case-by-case basis.

- Need to keep a close watch over part-time students to ensure they are staying on track.
- Suggestion: Offer annual Open House, which includes a poster symposium for first-year students.
 - Time/Date: at August orientation, or career day, GIS day, BRIDGES/BSOS.
 - Get Grad students to organize to present their research via poster session before courses start in the Fall to show incoming students what they are doing/what is possible, and offer Professors an update.
- **ACTION:** Initiate a mandatory research conference in the fall - ask Grad students to organize (M. Strong, A. Moulden)

7. Graduate Director Academic Issues – Liang

- Status of PhD application pool for Fall 2015
 - 7 turned us down, but 14 students accepted our offers
 - One flag-ship accepted
 - 2 TA offers this year (no more TA spots)
 - If you have partial money left, we can match it with the Dean's Fellowship

ACTION: Communication is important; thus send out rejection, or update (if undecided), letters to let people know approval is still in the works (S. Liang).

ACTION: Graduate Handbook to be discussed at retreat – S. Liang will look at handbook and send it around before retreat for proposed revisions; then send to Grad Committee for voting at retreat. Please send comments/suggestions to Liang before retreat (ALL).

8. Research Director Issues – Hurtt

- BIO/GEOG Meeting – end of March –lead by Biology to develop synergies with other departments
 - Several researchers attended in an attempt to develop collaborations with like-minded researchers.
 - Collaborations are mostly Grad student led at the moment.
 - No specific plan for follow-up.
- IPCC –contributions from GEOG included in WG 1-3 (Hurtt, Chini, Baiocchi).
- JGC3 – many students already aligned.
- Research coordination events –
 - AboVE – Eric Kasischke – panel followed his presentation.
- JGCRI – initiative pushed via Research Director's Office.
- Carbon monitoring system – one of NASA's new programs.
 - Congress gave new direction (released early) as part of NASA's long-term strategy.
- Administration – several recent promotions to Research Faculty.
- Merit – process repeated this year, and new scores were calculated.
 - Policy will be re-written to streamline and make the process smoother next year.
 - FRA titles (dependent on degree and/or equal experience), 3 different tiers/titles.
 - Provost must sign off on this
 - Mechanism for FRAs to get promotions

9. Diversity Task Force – Hansen

- Student Research Initiative (SRI) – good program to utilize.
 - Contacted instructors to identify candidates for the program.
 - Luna passed candidates to Hansen for interviewing, and found several candidates for this Summer.
 - Resources for academic study or internship from other faculty are welcome.
 - Logistics are unclear – 40 hours per week? Tailored to GEOG?
- Refer Kim Nickerson about McNair Program as a recruiting tool.

- Students coming from under-privileged backgrounds have low retention, so they are given additional attention to encourage them to go to attend grad school (an ensure they “fit in”).
- GIS Center Update – Torrens
 - Interviews for T/TT (current) – looking to hire 2 new lecturers and work with them on minors, hopefully before 2015.
 - NRT – New version of START database.
 - Considering USGIF – Professional certification program for all people who practice GIS intelligence (accredited) .
 - Visited Asian Development Bank in the Philippines to pitch a proposal – they want open source help, not ESRI.

10. Merit Committee Criteria Discussion – Justice

- Discuss at the retreat
 - i. Define expectations, implementation, etc.
 - ii. Define satisfactory/unsatisfactory.
- Develop Merit Task Force for Spring and streamline the merit process.
 - i. Highlights for research faculty were a big help.

11. Other Business – **ACTION**: Select new hires from recent candidate interviews – Faculty will vote, but Chair has final say (V. Bell)

12. Upcoming Dates:

- May 7th – Steve Prince’s Retirement Event (1124 LeFrak, 5-7 pm)
- May 12-14 – Departmental Committee Retreat
- May 23rd – Departmental Graduation Celebration (Lefrak patio, 1:30-2:30 pm)
- May 23rd – Commencement (Chapel, 4:00 pm)