

Departmental Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday 9/29/17

Chris Justice, Matt Hansen, Giovanni Baiocchi, Brian Barker, Martha Geores, Leila DeFloriani, Grant McKenzie, Ron Luna, Evan Ellicott, Jack Ma, Kathleen Stewart, Tatiana Loboda, Shunlin Liang, Naijun Zhou, Byron Marroquin, Amanda Hall, Kristen Bergery, Chengquan Huang, Meredith Brown, Jonathan Resop, Sergi Skakun, Ralph Dubayah, Laixiang Sun, Rachel Berndston, George Hurtt, Belen Franch, Christina Prell, Vivre Bell

Absent Julie Silva sabbatical, Klaus Hubacek travel, Eric Kasischke IPA

- Introductions of new faculty and staff – Justice
- Recent Developments and Chair's Update – Justice

The proposal for the Remote Sensing Center of Excellence was successful. Provost has awarded 250K hard salary dollars to Geographical Sciences. We have been asked to reach out across campus and expand Remote Sensing from Earth System Science to joint appointments collaborating with Computer Science, I School, and/or Engineering. We have one Full Professor target of opportunity in process and will know soon if he will join us or not. We are meeting Friday with the ISchool to discuss a proposed joint appointment (75% GEOG/25% ISchool). Once we have completed the hire planning strategy we will move ahead with job announcements. We are anticipating one full, one associate and one assistant and possibly 50% FTE tenured appointments as well.

Faculty Activity Reports – a replacement for the FAR is underway. Liz Smith attended a demonstration and said that the new could possibly do what was needed and was better than Lyterati. UMBC, Penn State and Michigan currently use this software. Campus is hoping to roll it out June 2018.

A new system for proposal routing is being implemented. All PIs and Co-I's will have to login using their directory ID and password to certify the proposal or it cannot be routed. This should be done early in the proposal development process.

There is a need for every faculty and supervisor to follow the directions in the recent email sent from campus and do the online accessibility training.

The second round of the Thriving Workplace survey will be sent out shortly. Please take the time to respond and answer the questions.

Our research labs are getting highly condensed as we continue to grow in numbers. Please keep your personal desk space clean and hygienic in these group work areas and be considerate of the others working in the lab.

It is important that employees on visas notify the department administration and ISSS of changes in plans. Changes in office location, etc. impact the visa and need to be handled in advance.

The annual Town Hall meeting was held this week. The meeting was productive with good attendance and discussion. The key discussion items were in response to the answers received from an anonymous poll circulated prior to the meeting.

Graduate students were interested in better career guidance. The Chair noted that career guidance for academic position placement at other Universities is different than career guidance for local federal or research positions. Career guidance should start with the advisor and advising committee. If graduate students have an interest in academic positions, the graduate student representative to the Graduate Committee should request the Committee develop the process for providing this guidance.

The Research Faculty requested more involvement concerning the potential AV Williams move. We will be discussing our potential move to AV Williams with the Provost during her visit November 3rd.

Action Item: Organize walk through of AV Williams for interested research faculty and staff - Bell

Graduate students requested more opportunities for teaching. Graduate students are reminded that the graduate class that Klaus is teaching was designed to provide such experience. PhD students wanting additional teaching experience should discuss with their advisor.

Post tenure reviews for Klaus Hubacek and Matt Hansen will be done this year. Committees will be formed shortly.

Amanda Hall, Mary Mitkish and Rachel Berndston did a great job with the new Geograffitti format and the design/organization for the departmental notice boards. Everyone should feel empowered to write news articles to both. Any new research publications should be added to the Dept Web site front page.

- Accept previous meeting minutes and approval of agenda

Minutes from the previous Departmental Committee Meeting (May 2017) were accepted.

- Post Retreat Action Items – Bell

Post retreat action items were reviewed.

It was noted that faculty will attend seminars at other locations and therefore, should be able to attend departmental seminars. If our faculty prioritize our seminar series and attend, our graduate students will attend as well. If a faculty member invites the speaker,

that faculty member should ensure that their research team attends and should persuade others to attend so that the speaker has a good audience and feels appreciated.

- Associate Chair Issues – Dubayah
 - Future of teaching teams versus Teaching Committee meetings:
 - i. Timing, goals and desired outcomes
 - Future of study abroad in Geography
 - Seminar Series update - Berndston

The timing of Teaching Committee meetings was discussed. The annual August Teaching Committee meeting should resolve any remaining scheduling issues so the Fall Teaching Committee meeting does not have to be early in the semester (before the scheduling deadline). Therefore, it makes more sense to have the second Teaching Committee meeting in the middle of the semester. In the Fall meeting, teaching teams should be looking at new strategies and the entire Teaching Team can review and discuss the proposed strategies.

Due to the timing confusion, the Fall 2017 Teaching Committee was canceled. The Spring 2018 Teaching Committee will be held mid-semester.

The faculty workload calculations are working and we do not foresee any workload reporting issues this year. We are working on a spreadsheet to map the buyouts compared to the courses offered for our different teaching foci. This will help us determine the right-sizing of our teaching program. Imbalances need to be thought about, realigned and sent back to the teaching teams. We have permanent lecturers funded by the buyouts and this needs to be considered. We are still teaching more courses than our needed TT faculty workload totals. We are an outlier for our size in BSOS and we are teaching more courses per TT faculty member than other BSOS departments.

We are currently offering 11 extra non-tenure track faculty courses. This raises the questions: Why are we teaching these extra courses? How many courses are needed for a viable teaching program? Are TT faculty still teaching the needed courses or just courses they want to teach that are not part of the Core Curriculum?

Faculty are reminded that University has strict policies on self-authored materials used in class. Permission must be requested and royalties cannot be kept for class use. In some cases, there are no good text books available on the material taught. We should avoid packaging class notes and requiring students to purchase them. The Associate Chair has oversight of the Academic Program and should be asked for permission in the first instance.

We need to decide if we want to continue to have a study abroad program in the department. It is currently on hold and needs active TT faculty involvement to be a success. Shunlin Liang and Rachel Berndston are evaluating offering the China Study abroad program.

Action Item next Departmental Retreat: What is a viable study abroad program in GEOG? How many faculty and at what level of involvement? How will this impact

load? How do we attract GEOG majors and keep it affordable – Dubayah and Berndston

- Undergraduate Committee – Loboda
 - Motion to approve the circulated Undergraduate Learning Outcome Assessment Report for academic year 2016-2017

Passed unanimously

ENSP program descriptions are still ongoing and will be brought to the next departmental committee

- Undergraduate Director Academic Issues – Luna

Enrollment across the undergraduate program is down this year and we are not sure why:

- Significant decrease in summer 2017 enrollment by 100 seats
- 400 level course enrollments are down
- Undergraduate majors are currently at 232. We are graduating ~ 113 in Spring and Summer which causes a large shortfall in the Fall that needs to be made up by active recruiting.
- MPS GIS also experienced a drop in the number of students

Katherine Russell, BSOS now wants us to focus on the quantity of undergraduate students as our numbers have dropped. Do we put the quality questions on hold? The question of quality will not go away.

We are researching to see if other BSOS departments' enrollment has also decreased. ENSP is being consumed by ENST. Our concern is that ENST and Ischool are in direct competition with us and attracting our potential students.

BSOS this year did not advertise GIS for incoming freshmen or high school – Katherine Russell said this was because we said we need more money to offer more seats but the decision to not advertise was made without consulting us.

Action Item: Discuss the decision not to advertise and strategies to increase our undergraduate majors with Katherine Russell – Stewart

It was noted that ENST has requested access to our GIS classes for their majors. One concern is that this will reduce the demand for our majors and minors but if we do not collaborate, they may try to duplicate our classes and we should be the recognized experts on campus. Should we consider a streamlined double major with ENST?

Action Item: Discuss with ENST – Dubayah and Stewart

We need to review our courses to determine if they are attracting students to our major and how to strengthen our magnet courses.

Discussion of participating in partnership with Anthro in the MEES Program is on-going. Coupled Human-Natural Systems will become a new major on campus and if we don't get ahead of that we will lose even more majors – we need to think about rebranding.

Action Item – Discuss MEES Program with BSOS and Anthro - Dubayah, Justice, Hubacek and Prell

A double major with engineering or computer science was also discussed. The new Chair of the Computer Science Department is interested in collaborating with us.

Action Item: Mini one-day retreat need on this topic. Agenda needs to be developed – Justice/Dubayah

- Graduate Committee – DeFloriani

Part-time PhD students are fully funded but the negative side is their lack of participation in the Department, as they are working full-time.

The Graduate School does not distinguish between part and full time in regards to graduate student benchmarks. How does the NRC assessment of PhD programs evaluate these students in determining the length of time to graduation?

We need a policy on part-time graduate students in our department – the Graduate Committee is working on a draft. We have started accepting part-time students and now have to manage expectations on both sides.

The graduate committee continues discussion on the possibility of short PhD courses. The campus policy is not more than one credit per week. One credit consists of 15 contact hours, for example a one credit course could take a month by meeting once a week with a combination of lecture and lab hours. We need to determine if students want this format and what topics they are interested in. We would also need to determine how to handle these courses and faculty workload.

- Graduate Director Academic Issues – Sun

Faculty need to recruit PhD students, including at the conferences we attend. Each faculty member should identify a candidate to recruit and research faculty can do the same.

We all need to recruit at conferences

- Update on proposal to campus to waive tuition on external funds for GRAs to make a GRA more cost effective.

Action Item: Discussion topic at the campus Research Council – Hurtt

We need to revisit, how many graduate students per faculty should we have? This was developed by Dubayah some years back. We need them to allow our teaching load to be just 3 courses but we are higher in PhD student per faculty compared to other departments.

Action Item: Review the numbers of PhD students and progress since the ‘right-sizing’ of our graduate program was implemented - Sun

Action Item: Discussion with Dean about rightsizing the number of PhD students and possible reallocation of resources. – Justice

- Research Director Issues – Hurtt

CMS is back online and we won four joint GSFC proposals. DOE funding is still unknown. The Research Director is searching for a replacement to Christine Kang.

The Provost Council on the Environment is moving slowly but has a broad charge to reorganize Environment on Campus.

- Research Faculty Committee – Ellicott

A couple of departments on campus served as models for the PTK merit guidelines. We were one of the models so we shouldn’t need to change our policy.

Post-Doctoral Associates are part of the Research Faculty Committee and are included in the Research Faculty PTK policy.

The Research Faculty Committee will present a proposal for better voting representation at Departmental Committee meetings at a future Departmental Committee meeting.

- Faculty Specialist Committee – Baker
 - Motion: To vote in the attached modifications to the departmental PTK Faculty Specialist procedures

18 yes votes, 1 abstention – motion passed.

- Diversity Task Force – Hansen

Reminder that there is now a national list of students listing their GPA, major and ethnicity to help with diversity recruiting. Rachel Berndtson has access to this database and can provide names if you are looking for a graduate student.

- Computer Task Force – Hansen

The HPC model for buying in (as a recharge center) is being reviewed.
Fine tuning of numbers is underway.

A lot of proposals submitted include HPC \$\$ we then need to incorporate the hardware in the system

Provost is interested in funding a campus HPC lab. The advantages is the Provost would pay for the hardware and future upgrades.

We need to come up with a list of possible courses that would benefit from such a lab, for example high end visualization, land cover characterization or lidar processing

Action – Provide a list of potential courses for such a lab - Hansen

Tech staff are working on Inventory management and engaged in a security firewall discussion about putting Hartwick behind the campus fire wall.

- MPS Advisory Committee Update – Stewart

New MPS GEOINT and Micah Brochman new lecturer we are up and running with small cohort for this first offering.

An info session will be held for December graduates interested in a career in intelligence. The next admission for the MPS GEOINT is the spring and December graduations could apply for admission.

MPS GIS – NOAA collaboration is on-going. This winter two classes offered at NOAA Headquarters.

Starting to recruit international students for quarter program. Enrollment was down this year and we are trying to determine why.

China MPS first year – Ma and Bergery went to NNU to meet students and faculty. Nine Students now enrolled in this program.

- GIS Center Update – Stewart

Organizing our inaugural event:

We will have two invited talks

Inviting other chairs including from Computer Science, ENST, ISchool and the new ENSP director

We need good turn out from our department

- DAC Response – Justice (Outstanding Issues addressed at the Town Hall Meeting)
- Proposed Issues for Provost Visit – Justice

Reminder that the Provost will be meeting with TT faculty immediately following the November 3rd Departmental Committee Meeting:

Need a list of slides for our plans

Discussion about AV Williams before she comes.

How should we handle the AV Williams decision; majority vote or executive decision?

If we say no to AV Williams, we may not get another option. We could do a design and layout proposal for AV Williams and let the Provost do a cost/benefit analysis based on the cost of renovations.

- Any Other Business

Challenging sustainability is the topic of AAG. Doug Richardson is the key note speaker for the MAD meeting. Zero graduate students from GEOG have submitted abstracts. Do not worry about missing the deadline, submit your abstracts. The MAD is in the Department on Nov 3rd and 4th and our students should be participating.'

Upcoming Events

- 11/1/17 1:30-6 pm - CGIS Center Opening Ceremony
- 12/19/17 6-8 pm – University Commencement
- 12/20/17 11-2:30 pm – BSOS Geographical Sciences Commencement
- 1/17/2018: PACs
- 1/18/2018: 9-12: Returning student Review; 1-4: Incoming Student Review
- 1/19/2018: 9-12: Teaching meeting