Faculty Meeting Minutes  
Friday, September 11, 2015

PRESENT: Amasino, Attie, Bednarek, Butcher, Clagett-Dame, Cox, Fox, Friesen, Hayes, Henzler-Wildman, Hoskins, Kiessling, Kimble, Landick, Markley, Martin, Mitchell, Pagliarini, Palmenberg, Pike, Raines, Record, Senes, Sussman, Wickens and Wildonger

ABSENT: Ansari, Craig, Holden, Ntambi, Ralph, Raman, Rayment, and Weibel

Fox called the meeting to order.

1. Landick announced the reopening of the Biodesign/Biocatalysis faculty search. Faculty should encourage excellent applicants to apply, in particular, those with a focus on cutting-edge plant biology. Assured consideration date for applications is December 1.

   Fox announced Raines’ receipt of the 2016 Ralph F. Hirschmann Award for Peptide Chemistry from the American Chemical Society.

   Fox announced Kimble’s appointment by President Obama to chair the Committee on the National Medal of Science.

   Fox advised the faculty that the CALS Deans will be visiting next month’s faculty meeting (Oct 9). Any questions or suggested items for discussion should be sent to sarah.saunders@wisc.edu by September 30.

   Fox advised the faculty that Carl Gulbrandsen plans to visit the Biochemistry faculty meeting on November 13.

2. Amasino proposed to the faculty that Paul Ludden be put forth for emeritus status. After brief presentation of Ludden’s history with the department and contributions to science and academia, Amasino made a motion to grant Paul Ludden emeritus status. Raines seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. Raines updated the faculty on the progress of his nomination of William Rutter for an Honorary Degree. Raines received verbal endorsement from Craig (then Chair) early in 2015; the university’s Committee on Honorary Degrees voted in May to advance Rutter’s candidacy. Raines presented Rutter’s contributions to science, academia, and the community, and made a motion that the
department officially endorse the granting of an Honorary Doctor of Science degree for Rutter. Sussman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

4. Markley reminded the faculty that in 2008 the faculty approved a Steenbock Symposium to honor Helmut Beinert which was never held. He advised the faculty of an opportunity to fulfill this vote by holding the next International FeS Meeting in Madison. Markley made a motion that this International FeS Meeting be organized as a Steenbock Symposium in 2017. Amasino seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

5. Amasino proposed a new policy for voting on spending from principal of the endowment. Discussion followed. Amasino made a motion that voting on spending or reallocation of the endowment principal shall be by private ballot and shall not occur until at least seven days after the second faculty meeting at which the reason to consider spending or reallocation has been discussed. Markley seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

6. Fox announced that Pagliarini was named the new director of the metabolism initiative at the Morgridge Institute for Research.

7. Fox thanked the faculty for the opportunity to serve as Chair, and provided an update on the state of the department in the areas of research, teaching, service, staff, and finances.

Research: Fox noted that Biochemistry dollars comprise about 1/3 of CALS’ research funds, and the department currently conducts approximately $30 million in research activities. He also noted a 10% decline in total departmental research dollars since 2012, which is consistent with campus-wide performance. He encouraged the faculty to consider pursuing opportunities for multi-investigator grants such as will be supported by seed grants from UW2020 ([https://research.wisc.edu/resfunding/uw2020-initiative/](https://research.wisc.edu/resfunding/uw2020-initiative/)) in order to boost the standing of the department. He reported to the faculty on the relevance and potential relationship of the 2014 CALS Strategic Plan to staffing, resource, and research decisions (here: [http://www.cals.wisc.edu/departments/office-of-dean-and-director-2/cals-strategic-planning/strategic-planning-mission/](http://www.cals.wisc.edu/departments/office-of-dean-and-director-2/cals-strategic-planning/strategic-planning-mission/)).

Teaching: Fox noted that Biochemistry is the second largest instructional program in the college at the undergraduate level. Enrollment and undergraduate major totals have increased by 30% in the past decade. Fox noted the opportunity, being promoted by the Chancellor, to increase tuition revenue by creating a summer course. He charged the undergraduate committee with developing a departmental policy on an acceptable teaching load. He charged the faculty (led by Henzler-Wildman) to develop a course for entering graduate students in the IPiB.

Service: Fox reminded the faculty of new committee charters and upcoming meetings. He reminded the faculty of the responsibility to attend faculty meetings according to FPP 8.02b.

Staff: Fox encouraged the faculty to use office staff as a knowledgeable resource.

Finances: Fox advised the faculty that the department has three sources of endowment funds: Foundation and Trust (gift) funds, which carry specific terms and directives as determined by the donor; and WARF (patent-earned) funds. Three classes of funds were created in WARF by departmental action: 1. Apparatus and BIF/BOC, 2. Professorships/Fellowships, and 3. General
operations. Fox advised the faculty that convergence of several unanticipated issues have depleted department cash reserves. Amasino made a motion that the department withdraw from the principal of the endowment $3 million to cover these commitments. Discussion followed. In accordance with the aforementioned decision on voting on endowment principal (see item 5), discussion of the motion will be revisited at the next faculty meeting (October 9).

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian G. Fox
Chair, Department of Biochemistry