Minutes of the Department of Materials Science and Engineering Faculty Meeting
Monday, February 10, 2014
IMS Room 147-A

Attendance: Faculty: Mark Aindow, Pamir Alpay, Hal Brody, Rainer Hebert, Bryan Huey, Manoj Kumar Mahaprata, Harris Marcus, Radenka Maric, Serge Nakhmanson, Rampi Ramprasad, George Rossetti, Prabhakar Singh; Staff: Lorri Lafontaine

I. Meeting called to order by Pamir Alpay at 11:00 a.m.

II. Minutes of the meeting of January 13, 2014 were approved as distributed.

III. Department Updates: Pamir Alpay
   A. Faculty Search Update: Pamir Alpay shared an important message from Dean Kazem Kazerounian that Provost Mun Choi has asked the Deans to cut 3% from the 2015 budget. SoE currently has 13 active faculty searches. As a result of this budget cut, 5 or 6 faculty searches may be postponed. The Dean has left the option to move forward with searches to the departments taking the chance of a position being withdrawn at the end. Pamir Alpay has forwarded the short list of candidates for the MSE faculty search to the Dean. Rainer Hebert reported 212 total applications were received. The search committee interviewed six candidates via Skype and have identified three top candidates. The three applicants will be interviewed March 5, 6 and 7. Discussion followed.

IV. Undergraduate Issues: Pamir Alpay
   A. Application Numbers: MSE had the highest increase of applications in SoE. Applications in MSE were up 56% with 67 total applications.
   B. Outreach Activities: Rainer Hebert reported the promotional video, created by Chris LaRosa and posted on YouTube, will be sent to high schools as a recruiting tool along with a cover letter to raise awareness of UConn MSE. Harris Marcus inquired about a target enrollment for MSE. Pamir Alpay responded the labs could accommodate 40-50 people per year with a maximum of 160-200 students. Pamir Alpay reported six emails were sent to freshmen and sophomore engineering majors of the top reasons to join MSE in an effort to recruit undecided majors. He noted it’s difficult to track its success rate but the majors have increased from 120 to 148 in a couple of months. Bryan Huey added 10% of the total majors are honors students.
   C. Courses and Curricula: Two proposals were unanimously approved by MSE faculty via electronic vote and SoE Courses and Curricula Committee: 1) Replace CHEG 3156 as a current requirement for the engineering physics students with MSE track with an additional MSE elective (three credits). 2) Replace the current list of MSE electives for engineering physics students (MSE 4004, MSE 4005 on one website, outdated MMAT courses on old paper copies) with the following description of MSE electives for engineering physics students: “All 3000 and 4000 level MSE classes except for the required courses MSE 3001, 3002, 3003, 3004, 3055, 3056, 4003, 4901W, 4902W, are accepted as MSE electives for engineering physics students with MSE focus.”
   D. Advising - Plans of Study: In response to Criterion One for ABET, a temporary plan has been created for Plans of Study (PoS), substitutions and exemptions. The goal would be to have a system similar to the Kuali financial system where review and signatures are all done electronically. The SoE Undergraduate Advising Office has asked faculty to only sign straight-forward Plans of Study, exemptions and substitutions; questionable requests should be sent to Dan Burkey in the Undergraduate Advising Office. Advising bars will be lifted by the advisors and the PoS bars will be lifted by SoE Undergraduate Advising Office; students will not be able to register until both bars are cleared.
V. Graduate Issues: Bryan Huey  
A. Applicant Review Process: Bryan Huey reported MSE received 145 graduate applications. He stated with the amount of work required for graduate admissions, it is critical to replace Trista Albert, the Graduate Admissions coordinator. He added the Graduate School’s online system is a challenging one. MSE has applied for the Graduate School’s special awards, including the Outstanding Multicultural Scholars Program and the NextGenCT Scholars Award. He asked faculty to advise him regarding how many graduate students they will need for the upcoming academic year. Pamir Alpay thanked Bryan Huey and Cathy McCrackan for their efforts on the graduate admissions process.

VI. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

IMPORTANT DATES

Monday, 3/10: MSE Faculty Meeting (10:00AM - Noon), IMS-147A  
Monday, 4/7: MSE Faculty Meeting (11:00AM - Noon), IMS-147A  
Monday, 5/12: MSE Industrial Board Meeting (9:00AM - 1:00PM), IMS-159  
Monday, 5/19: MSE Faculty Retreat, Time and Location TBD

Respectfully submitted,

Lorri Lafontaine  
Administrative Services Specialist