Minutes of the  
Department of Materials Science and Engineering Faculty Meeting  
Monday, August 24, 2015  
IMS Room 147A

Attendance: Faculty: Mark Aindow, Pamir Alpay, Hal Brody, Barry Carter, Avinash Dongare, Rainer Hebert, Bryan Huey, Theo Kattamis, Seok-Woo Lee, Radenka Maric, Serge Nakhmanson, Rampi Ramprasad, George Rossetti, Prabhakar Singh; Staff: Cathy McCrackan, Lorri Lafontaine

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

II. Minutes of the meeting of May 18, 2015 were approved as written.

III. Departmental Updates: Pamir Alpay

Pamir Alpay welcomed back Hal Brody and George Rossetti, who recently completed productive sabbatical leaves.

A. Seminar Schedule: Pamir Alpay announced the guests scheduled for the fall semester, including three department heads: Dr. Priya Vashishta, University of Southern California (9/11/15); Dr. Rajendra Bordia, Clemson University (9/18/15); Dr. Anthony Giamie, United Technologies Research Center (9/25/15); Dr. Valeria Milam, Georgia Institute of Technology (10/2/15); Dr. Venkat Vedula, UTC Aerospace Systems (10/23/15); Dr. Pawel Keblinski, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (10/30/15); Dr. Cato Laurencin, UConn Orthopaedic Surgery, CBE, MSE, Biomedical, Biological, Physical and Engineering Sciences, Institute for Regenerative Engineering and Connecticut Institute for Clinical and Translational Science (11/6/15) and cosponsored with BME; and Dr. Jonah Erlebacher, John Hopkins University (11/20/15). Pamir Alpay requested faculty meet with guests whenever possible noting this is an opportunity to increase the department’s visibility and ranking.

B. New Travel Policies: The School of Engineering and MSE will not require pre-approval of faculty travel; IMS still requires pre-approval. All student travel must have pre-approval from their advisors and requests should be submitted to Lorri Lafontaine. Travel Services requires pre-approval for: 1) international travel, 2) Bradley parking permits, and 3) travel advances. Attached is a summary of highlighted changes.

C. Faculty Lines: Pamir Alpay stated he continues to request needed faculty lines, especially in the area of Polymers.

D. Undergraduate Program: Pamir Alpay announced undergraduate enrollment is the highest ever at 161 total, with 18 freshmen. ABET will be discussed at a special faculty meeting in November.

E. Strategic Planning: Pamir Alpay asked faculty to gather for a special strategic planning faculty meeting in December to discuss the department’s short- and long-term goals. What does MSE want to achieve? Where should MSE be going? How does MSE compare to other MSE departments?

F. Dean’s Advisory Council: Pamir Alpay asked for volunteers to serve on the recently formed Dean’s Faculty Advisory Council, which provides an opportunity to interact with the Dean.

IV. Undergraduate Issues

A. Open House: The Undergraduate Open House for prospective students is scheduled for Sunday, September 20. Faculty volunteers are needed; please see Rainer Hebert if faculty are available.

B. Senior Design: Rainer Hebert reported there are 28 seniors and 14 projects. He will forward the list of capstone topics to faculty shortly.

V. Graduate Issues

A. Graduate Student Orientation: Bryan Huey announced the new MSE Graduate Student Orientation will be held on August 28. Ten new PhD students will begin in the fall 2015 semester.

B. Qualifying Exam: Bryan Huey stated the Qualifying Exam will be slightly modified. The Graduate Committee is working towards restructuring the Qualifying Exam with fewer questions.
Faculty Meeting Minutes (8/24/15)

V. Graduate Issues continued

C. Graduate Student Award Competition: Bryan Huey announced the winner of the Graduate Student Award Competition held April 10, 2015 was Zheng Ren.

D. Graduate Assistant (GA) Insurance: As a result of the collective bargaining agreement between UConn and the new Graduate Employees Union, GEU-UAW, graduate assistants will be eligible for medical and dental insurance similar to the state employee plan. Current and new graduate assistants must enroll or waive coverage by September 22.

E. Graduate Assistant (GA) Employment/Union Updates: The University recommends hiring graduate assistants semester by semester. Departments are not required to renew appointments but if a GA was released during a semester appointment, this could be grieved. GA’s are allowed three days of leave per semester; leave time is prorated according to percent of employment. The Graduate Employee Union contract can be found at: http://lr.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/988/2015/07/GEU-UAW-Collective-Bargaining-Agreement-FINALw-SDD.pdf.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorri Lafontaine
Administrative Services Specialist