

**Executive Committee
School of Science and Engineering
600 Lindy Boggs
August 24, 2007
8:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

MINUTES

Present: Altiero, Burdsal, Gaver, Heins, John, Kalka, Koplitz, McLachlan, McGuire, McPherson, Mullin, Nelson, Parker, Ruscher, Tasker

Absent: Engleman

Update on Vision 2018 - Altiero

Nick Altiero briefed the group on the status of “Vision 2018” implementation. He noted that enrollment and retention of undergraduate students, research funding, unrestricted and restricted fundraising, and new and improved infrastructure will be the keys to success of our strategic plan.

A major concern is the availability of suitable space, especially laboratories, to accommodate new faculty. Nick talked about the short-term and long-term plans to create new space. This includes renovation of the Taylor Laboratory building, renovation of Stern Hall, and construction of a new building. The new building may well be a joint life sciences facility with the School of Medicine and the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. There ensued a lengthy discussion about the potential location of such a facility and logistics such as transportation, video conferencing, etc. Nick agreed to invite Ben Sachs, the new Dean of Medicine and Sr. Vice President for Health Sciences, to a future meeting.

Gary McPherson briefed the group on the status of departmental moves and the current availability of space.

Faculty Hiring - Altiero

During the past year, the School has hired 12 tenured/tenure-track faculty, 13 professors of practice, and 9 research professors. This brings the total number of faculty in the School to 103 tenured/tenure-track faculty, 20 professors of practice, and 11 research professors. There are 13 approved faculty searches in progress and Nick is putting together a faculty hiring plan that will include requests for several additional searches. Two new positions that will definitely be added are associated with the PKFSI project and must be in the area of computation, computational biology and/or computational materials science.

Nick emphasized the importance of faculty diversity and urged each of the departments to do their best to identify women and minority candidates. He said that he plans to meet with each of the search committees to discuss this and other issues associated with the searches. It was the general feeling of the group that family issues such as positions for spouses, K-12 education, and tenure-clock extensions, are of critical importance in attracting and retaining outstanding faculty members. Nick agreed to bring this topic to the attention of the Dean’s Council.

Personnel, Budget and Space Issues – Parker, McPherson

A new organization chart for the dean's office was distributed and there was a discussion about changes in personnel and the roles of staff members. Senior Associate Dean Gary McPherson will now oversee research and graduate programs, Associate Dean Carol Burdsal will oversee undergraduate programs, Assistant Dean Sandy Parker will oversee Budget and Personnel, and Kat Engleman is the Senior Development Officer for the School. The organization chart contained the names of all support staff as well as positions yet to be filled.

A question was raised about the machine shop that reports to the SSE dean. Nick responded that the machine shop needs to be better publicized to departments that are not taking advantage of its services. A committee will be formed consisting of representatives from the School of Science and Engineering, the School of Medicine, the School of Architecture, the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, and the Primate Center to look into how the machine shop can be changed to better serve the needs across campus.

It was pointed out that undergraduate students are very confused about what is handled by the Newcomb-Tulane College and what is handled by the School of Science and Engineering. The respective roles need to be clarified by the University.

Sandy Parker described the new Workforce Management Group that consists of Human Resources, Institutional Equity, and Payroll. She also outlined the new on-line personnel action form (PAF) system and the on-line effort reporting system that will soon be expanded to include all units. She noted that appointment forms for postdoctoral fellow positions will now be sent directly to the Office of the Provost.

Several members of the group expressed concern about the shortage of staff members in various units of the School. Nick agreed to put together a "staff hiring plan" to be coupled to the "faculty hiring plan" described above. If a unit head has an urgent staffing problem, he/she should send a staff hiring request to Nick with the next two weeks.

Gary McPherson distributed information on the FY08 budget and there was general discussion of how this will differ from FY07. The University still plans on returning to a decentralized budget model by as early as FY09. Thus FY08 should be viewed as a transitional year. Nick Altiero and Sandy Parker will meet with each unit head quarterly to track all of the ledgers and make sure that we stay on course for a balanced budget.

Sandy verified the names of faculty members who are up for tenure review or 3rd year review this year. Binders to be used for the review dossiers will be distributed to the departments next week.

Research and Graduate Programs Issues – McPherson

Joining Gary McPherson were Kay Orrill and Christi Longlois. Kay has agreed to stay on one more year in a consultative capacity and Christi will become the lead staff member for the graduate program. A new staff member, Eric Taylor, will be joining us soon. Gary and Christi will be meeting with each of the departmental graduate directors to discuss the operation of the dean's office relative to the graduate program.

The School currently has 352 graduate students, 271 of whom are enrolled in PhD programs. We are welcoming 74 new MS students and 63 new PhD students this fall.

Graduate recruiting will be a major priority of the Provost's Office this coming year and we will need to work closely with Associate Provost Brian Mitchell. There was general agreement that we should put more emphasis on our web sites, publications, and other public relations materials

and that we need to better coordinate research assistantships, teaching assistantships and fellowships into attractive financial aid packages. There was also general agreement that it is more effective to bring prospective students to campus than to attend graduate fairs. It was suggested that the pipeline program with Xavier can be an excellent source of minority students.

Undergraduate Programs Issues – Burdsal

Carol Burdsal reported that the latest Fall 2007 undergraduate enrollment count for the University is 1323 first time freshmen and 197 transfer students. Of these, 403 have declared majors offered by the School of Science and Engineering and she broke this figure down by degree program.

Carol also went over the SSE freshmen welcome week events scheduled for Sunday, August 26. The first will be a noon reception for DHS and DSA scholars and their parents hosted by the School of Science and Engineering Honors Society. All SSE administrators are asked to attend this function. At 2:30 PM, there will be an open house for all incoming freshmen and their parents and departments are asked to send faculty representatives to meet the students and answer any questions they may have.

Finally, the University will hold a Study Abroad Fair during the second week of September and the School of Science and Engineering will follow up with its own study abroad event a week later.

Board of Advisors and Fundraising Issues – Engleman

Kat Engleman was unable to attend but Nick Altiero updated the group on fundraising activities and outlined the tentative agenda of the October 26 Board of Advisors meeting. All Executive Committee members are asked to participate in the Board meeting and, as in the past, each will be assigned to a working committee. Executive Committee members and spouses/guests are also invited to the reception for the Board of Advisors to be held the evening of October 25 at the Audubon Park golf course clubhouse.

Events and Public/Alumni Relations – Altiero

Candy Guedry joined the meeting to discuss publications, the web site, upcoming events, and alumni relations. She asked that the department chairs, center directors, and associate deans send her news items that can be included in upcoming publications and can be used to make the web site more dynamic. She also outlined plans to grow a School of Science and Engineering Alumni Council and asked that the names of active alumni be directed to her. The alumni database on Millennium is our most thorough source of information about our alumni and everyone is asked to help keep it current.