

Minutes of the SDSM&T GGE Advisory Board Meeting

April 18, 2015

Board Members present: Steve O'Rourke (Board Chair), David Hammond (Board Secretary), Jeanne Goodman, Bill Siok, Ahmad Ghassemi, Paul Ching, Rich Arnold, Ray Wuolo, Paul Nelson, Stuart Buchholz, Paul Murphy, Barb Beasley

SDSM&T Administration present: Heather Wilson (President), Richard Sinden (Interim Provost & VP for Academic Affairs)

GGE Faculty present: Laurie Anderson, Nuri Uzunlar, Tim Masterlark, Foster Sawyer, Zeynep Baran, Maribeth Price, Christina Belanger, Sally Sheldon, Ed Duke

SDSM&T Foundation representatives present: Joel Kincart (President), Ron Jeitz

Welcome, Introduction, Minutes and Agenda Review: Steve called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. He introduced President Wilson and Joel Kincart, and then turned the meeting over to Laurie. She asked attendees to introduce themselves and reviewed the meeting agenda and went over the handout packet materials.

Remarks by President Wilson, Interim Provost Sinden and Joel Kincart: Laurie introduced President Wilson who described many of the new developments and issues affecting the School in general as well as specific to Mineral Industries and the Department. These included progress on enrollments for the Fall semester, the competitiveness for top students nationally and hence need for SDSM&T to be able to offer significant scholarships, need for the School to increase procurement of research funding—we are getting traction but it takes a long time to develop a project portfolio, the formal constitution of the new Energy Resources Initiative (ERI) and search for a center director, and status of the planned Minerals Industry Building rehabilitation. President Wilson then described the unexpected budget shortfall that occurred for the University overall and the implications for enrollment growth, new faculty recruitment, and program expansion over the next two years as the institution gets back on its feet. She then took questions and responded to a number of member queries concerning the cause of the budgetary problem and the distribution of funding cutbacks being made to address it. President Wilson concluded her remarks with an update on the search for the new Provost, and described credentials of Dr. Demitris Kouris who has accepted the position and will begin serving in August 2015.

Laurie next introduced Interim Provost Sinden, who made remarks also related to the budget problems facing the school. Laurie then introduced Joe Kincart who made remarks from the Foundation's perspective.

Steve asked for any changes to and approval of minutes for the September 24, 2014 AB meeting. Jeanne moved to approve the minutes with second by Paul. Motion was approved.

Department Update: Laurie began her presentation by going over the material in the left-hand side of the Board packets. She reviewed the significant accomplishments during the current academic year by the Department, faculty members and the students. These included an impressive number of awards and scholarships. Student retention and placement continue with high success, with 90% and 100% placement of BS Geologists and Geological Engineers respectively. Over the last five years undergrad GEOL enrollments have increased 61% and GEOE 104%. GEOE continue to receive the highest average starting salaries of all SDSM&T programs. Laurie next briefly went over the GGE Strategies for Mines Pursuit of Excellence Strategic Plan approved by faculty October 14, 2014, and described progress regarding the Six Goals that are set forth. She next outlined what is needed in the candidate for the ERI leadership position, including desired leadership and technical skills, industry and government contacts, and profile in the energy industries. Ron Jeitz outlined the Foundation's efforts in procuring funding to support the ERI, but noted that the present time is not the best environment in which to solicit donations from the petroleum sector, as it works through the current downturn in oil and gas prices. He described the success the Foundation has to date in ERI funding, and asked for AB members' help in identifying potential donors. Laurie responded to Steve's query about the Department's plans to mitigate damage from the budget shortfall affecting the University.

Nuri provided an over view of Field Station activities planned for the 2015 season. All are oversubscribed. Enrollments continue to grow, with necessary expansion of contract faculty to deliver the camp experience. He also described the newly commissioned and planned expansions of camp offerings, with special attention to the upcoming Petroleum Field Camp, which will be the first of its kind and with all slots filled. Laurie finished the update with current status of the MI Building renovation and Dept. open house plans for the July All-School Reunion.

Maribeth Price went over the final results of the South Dakota Board of Regents required Institutional Program External Review of GGE's MS and PhD programs. Dr. Herb Wang of the University of Wisconsin-Madison served as the external reviewer. Dr. Wang conducted a campus visit and interviews in March 2014 and submitted his report April 17th. He noted that what the graduate programs are accomplishing is impressive, especially in light of the limited number of faculty members delivering a wide diversity of study area offerings. In this regard however the number of unfilled positions is a serious deficiency. Other key findings are the need to establish outcomes for graduate students, improve communications and governance of programs, including completion of a graduate handbook, and better manage the time required for students to finish their degrees. The Final Report will be forwarded to the Board of Regents in June.

Larry Stetler reported on status of activities related to for the upcoming ABET 2016-2017 Cycle re-accreditation evaluation of the Geological Engineering program. Everything is progressing satisfactorily and development of the Self Study Report is underway.

IAB Business Meeting: After breaking for lunch, Steve reconvened the meeting at 12:59 PM in members-only session. He began with an overview of the important issues facing the Department and asked for a discussion on what the AB can do to assist in addressing the most critical ones. Paul questioned the degree of discrepancies in TA funding across all the University

departments and whether GGE is getting short-changed. An extended discussion was then conducted on the matter of AB governance. The current draft of the Advisory Board Expectations document was reviewed, followed by extended discussion focusing on the two fundamental elements of the document: (A.) the expectations of what the AB is to undertake and accomplish in supporting the Department and all of its programs, centers and facilities, and (B.) expectations for individual Board members for participating in and fulfilling the AB's mission. Restrictions Federal/State employees are subject to concerning participation on boards such as the AB were noted. A motion was made by Dave to adopt the current Expectations draft as an addendum to the AB Charter, with second by [REDACTED]. Motion carried unanimously.

In response to a question by Bill Siok, Laurie clarified the budgeting process the University uses and the limitations all departments/programs have on input and control.

Old Business:

1. The feasibility of adding a AB vice-chair with Western South Dakota residency to serve as local liaison with the Laurie and Department if the AB Chair was located out-of-state had been brought up at the last meeting. After further discussion the conclusion of members was that there was no real need of this at the present time.
2. The continuing need for the Department to come up with funding for its allocated share of the architect's cost for initial design for the MI Building remodel was reviewed. The AB had committed to cover this cost (\$10,000) but only limited progress has been made to date.

New Business:

1. The present GGE faculty vacancy and status of the present recruitment campaign to fill it were discussed at length. The AB views this is an extremely critical and immediate need and University Administration must allow a hire regardless of the budget problems. Among others concerns, the AB is worried about the ability of the Department to continue delivering the GGE programs, passing the ABET re-accreditation review next year, and impact of understaffed faculty on moral and Department reputation. Members concurred that the AB's concerns about the underfunding of faculty positions must be articulated as soon as possible to the Administration. It was directed that Steve and Dave draft a letter to that effect, which will be circulated to members for comment. All members are to personally endorse the finalized version. Motion to that effect was made by Dave with Rich's second. Motion carried unanimously.
2. While establishing new facilities for the Black Hills Field Station is a very import need for the Department, there is presently a short-fuse opportunity to acquire a tract of land near Lead for siting the camp. The condition of Camp A facilities and unclear intentions of current owners indicate that new facilities may be needed sooner rather than later. The AB endorsed working with the Foundation to support the acquisition if the location and purchase terms are appropriate.
3. The need to enhance recruitment of graduate students, and associated need for financial support was discussed.

4. Steve outlined the need for review of the existing AB committees, with restructuring of the organization as the AB decides is necessary. Paul suggested that a faculty member take the lead role for each committee. The following organization was established:

ABET Matters: Faculty Lead: Foster Sawyer/ Larry Stetler
AB Reps: Jeanne, Ray, Ahmed

Field Station: Faculty Lead: Nuri Uzunlar
AB Reps: Dave, Paul, Steve, Ron
Foundation: Ron Jeitz

Museum & Paleo: Faculty Lead: Sally Shelton/Christina Belanger
AB Reps: Paul, Barb

Graduate Recruiting: Deferred to next AB meeting

Election of New AB Officers and Board Members:

Terms for Board members Scott Foss, Ahmad Ghassemi and Ray Wuolo expire in 2015; Steve recommended that Ahmad and Ray be reappointed if they would be willing to serve again. Ahmad and Ray both said they would be willing do so. Paul moved for acceptance of all nominees with second by Bill. The motion passed unanimously. Greg McDonald and Janet Carter were elected as new members.

Steve indicated that while he was willing to continue as AB Chair if necessary, he did not see his role to be "permanent" and hoped other members would be able take on the responsibility. Ray nominated Dave, who declined at the present time in light of his ABET Commissioner duties. Paul then indicated he would be willing to serve, and Dave nominated him accordingly with second by Bill. Motion passed unanimously. Jeanne nominated Dave to serve another term as AB Secretary, with second by Steve. Motion passed unanimously.

The date for next meeting of the AB will be determined at a later date.

Motion to adjourn was made by Jeanne with second by Paul. Motion carried and Steve closed the meeting at 2:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David R. Hammond
GGE Advisory Board Secretary

