

## **DASNR Faculty Council Meeting Minutes**

May 10, 2006

**Members Present:** Lynn Brandenberger, Bill Weeks (for Dwayne Cartmell), Jim Criswell, Udaya Desilva, Gerald Horn, Mike Kizer, Ramamurthy Mahalingam, William McGlynn

**Members Absent:** Shiping Deng, Sam Fuhlendorf, Steve Hallgren, Sissy Osteen, Derrell Peel, Dan Tilley, Sharon von Brombsen

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Bob Whitson, Vice President, Dean and Director, DASNR

**Call to Order:** Chair Lynn Brandenberger called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM in Room 001 Ag. Hall.

### **Agenda:**

Brandenberger asked if there were additions to the agenda. Bill Weeks asked if there would be a discussion of 9-month appointments. Dr. Whitson said that he had an item related to 9-month appointments, so the topic was added to the agenda. Udaya Desilva moved and Jim Criswell seconded the agenda be approved as amended. The motion passed.

### **Minutes:**

Brandenberger asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the February 9, 2006 and March 21, 2006 meetings. Mike Kizer pointed out that the minutes from February 9 show the next regularly scheduled meeting would be May 3, 2006 rather than May 10. Gerald Horn moved and Criswell seconded that the minutes be accepted as corrected. The motion passed.

### **Questions for the Dean /VP:**

1. *Is it accurate that the only way a non-tenured track person can apply for employment at OSU is through OSU's online form or by physically going to the OSU employment office in Stillwater?*

Dr. Whitson reported that classified and A&P positions can only be applied for on-line, currently. Applicants without networked computer access can go to 106 Whitehurst to apply. For non-Stillwater positions, DASNR has applied for and received authority from central administration to be the approving body for non-faculty hires. DASNR Human Resources is receiving training to make sure that all appropriate rules and regulations for hiring are followed. The main reason for this arrangement is to facilitate hiring of staff at field stations remote to Stillwater in a timely fashion. More details of how the system works will be forthcoming. Before advertising for a position outside of the Stillwater campus contact DASNR-HR (Sue Bonner) for the most appropriate way to handle the advertising and application process. Criswell commented that if an applicant does not have an electronic version of their resume' it takes over two hours to fill the on-line employment application form. Also, many older applicants for manual labor positions lack the computer skills to apply on-line without assistance.

- 2. Unless the University's plans are changed, it is likely that the issue of displaced parking spots for faculty and staff in the vicinity of the football stadium during various building projects will have a domino effect on the lots where DASNR faculty and staff park. For example, our colleagues in Engineering North, Engineering South, and Cordell might well be trying to park in the lots east, northeast, north, west, and south of Ag Hall that are mostly used by DASNR employees now. Does the Division have any thoughts on how to alleviate this problem?*

Dr. Whitson said estimates are that about 1000 parking spaces will be lost campus-wide during anticipated construction projects. There is very little that DASNR can do because nearly all of the decisions affecting the loss of parking are made outside the Division. Remote parking lots with a frequent shuttle service to central campus may help relieve the pressure for more parking. Gerald Horn suggested that providing input to discussion of the issue at University Faculty Council is probably a good idea. Kizer pointed out that some of the pressure on parking lots used by DASNR faculty and staff may be relieved a bit because of the conversion of 270 student parking spaces south of the football stadium to faculty/staff parking which will aid CEAT and ATRC faculty and staff and prevent their migration to lots near NRC and Ag. Hall.

- 3. What is the procedure for getting capital improvement projects within the DASNR on the University's Plan for capital improvements?*

There are two different plans for improvements on campus. First, there is the Campus Master Plan, with its 5-year phase that is already approved and under way, and the 20-year phase that is in the development and approval process. The Master Plan addresses only the Stillwater campus. Second, there is the University Capital Improvement Plan which includes university facilities throughout the state. The process for getting a project on the University plan is to work through your unit head and Monty Karns, the Experiment Station Engineer, who is the DASNR liaison for getting projects on the plan. If you have financial backing for a project, that helps a great deal in getting it on the plan. Not every project in the University Capital Improvement Plan is included in the Campus Master Plan.

- 4. What input does the College of Agriculture have into planning of workshops, providing teaching support (Blackboard), etc by OSU's Institute for Teaching and Learning Excellence?*

Dr. Linda Martin and Dr. Doug Needham are DASNR contacts for activities included in the ITLE. Bill Elliott is the Institute director. If you propose a workshop or seminar directly to him, please send a copy to Dr. Martin, as well. Horn commented that DASNR is providing financial support to the Institute and asked if we are getting our fair share of support. Udaya Desilva replied that the Institute had only existed under its current name for about a year, and that previously it was called the Faculty Support Center. His experience has been that they are very supportive and helpful. Horn said that he had heard that Blackboard was being phased out, and wondered how that decision was reached. Desilva said that he had heard that support of Blackboard would continue for 1 more year, and it would be replaced with new software. Two new software packages are currently being reviewed and one will be selected soon. The Institute can provide assistance in converting lectures in Blackboard to the new software.

5. *What is the timeline for the search for a new department head for Animal Science in view of Dr. Wagner's impending retirement?*

The search & screen committee will meet soon and update the job description. Advertising will begin soon after that. Regulations require advertising for at least 60 days. We hope to be looking at applicants to create a short list of 3 or perhaps 4 candidates in mid-August, with interviews in the September-October timeframe. If we can adhere to that schedule we can possibly have someone on board by January 1. Dr. Wagner's retirement time schedule is still somewhat flexible, and it is possible he will extend his retirement date by a month or so if it will eliminate the need for an interim before the new department head arrives. Discussion of the Agricultural Economics department head search should probably be addressed, as well. That search process should follow closely behind the schedule for Animal Science. The new Natural Resources department should be searching for a head soon, too. The degree program still must be approved by the State Regents, and is on their agenda for late May. We hope the department will be up and running by July. There will need to be interim leadership for the department while a head search is completed. We hope to have students enrolled next fall, but we will need to remain flexible during the transition period. Students will not be penalized for changes in their degree requirements during the creation of the department. There is an offer pending for a new department head of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology. Its acceptance depends on spousal accommodation. Animal Science will be interviewing the spouse, who is quite an accomplished researcher and has several large grants from NIH. The seminar has already been scheduled.

6. *What is the rationale for restricting Sitlington graduate scholarships for US citizens from this year onwards as they were open to all qualified applicants in the past?*

Sitlington graduate scholarships have always given preference to US citizens at the stipulation of the scholarship donor. Some additional funds from OAES have been "married" to the Sitlington funds to make a very sizeable award to attract top scholars. Those scholarships, called Centennial Scholars, are restricted to US citizen only. We will review the exact wording of the Sitlington agreement to see how specific the rules are with regard to citizenship. Any specifications made by the scholarship donor must be adhered to or we risk losing the funding.

7. *If salary savings are requested from a grant and obtained, would the division consider a way for the saving to get back to the recipient? (i.e., something similar to the veterinary school practice of crediting the recipient's expense/grant account)"*

Currently, 10% of salary savings are retained at the division level and 90% are returned to the PI's home department. The portion that actually is returned to the PI is up to the individual units. Some give all of it to the PI. Some units retain it for common-use equipment. The Division is hesitant to force a common policy on all units. The individual faculty groups and unit heads should be able to decide how they want to use their monies. This is much like the present DASNR administration's philosophy with regard to staff positions. If a department loses a staff position, the funding for that position should remain with the department to allocate in whatever way best supports their mission, rather than returning to the division level. The 10% of the

salary savings that the Division retains is generally used for expenditures that support division-wide activities.

8. *Now that an Associate Director for OCES has been hired, do you anticipate charting any new directions to ensure the relevance and value of OCES to the taxpayers of the state?*

I do not see any wholesale changes in how OCES functions. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Initiative Funding being sought will support the hiring of new faculty. The new Associate Director will play a major role in deciding which positions are filled and what new positions are created. Some new positions will go to support emerging program areas. TIP helps focus OCES & OAES resources on high priority areas. We don't need a whole new structure to do this. The current system is adequate to meet the needs. We do need to identify more ways to deliver programs in the urban and urban-rural interface areas to increase our relevance with those audiences. However, agriculture is too important to Oklahoma, and we will not do anything to jeopardize our support with the audience that has been our base of support for many years. We plan to revive the Extension Advisory Group, which hasn't been active for a few years. We need to do more to raise the visibility of both OCES and OAES, especially with the state legislators. We need to develop simplified materials which explain the important work being done by these agencies that benefits Oklahoma. We need to do a better job of utilizing Agricultural Communications to promote DASN. The Division will consult with Dr. Ellen Ritter, formerly Director of TAMU Ag. Communications, about suggestions on how to meet expectations of the Division and units, given the resources available to the Agricultural Communications Department. Horn suggested that we have several resources within the state legislature who could help us learn how to better present our story at the capitol; specifically Ron Justice, Clay Pope and Terry Hyman, who know DASN and Extension very well.

9. *Will there be any effort to improve the credentials and professionalism of the county staff? Will there be any effort to improve the physical infrastructure and appearance of the county extension centers?*

We have implemented the Career Ladder for field staff and are trying to identify funding to support that program. A decision should be coming soon on that. The TIP program has targeted enhancement of team support, not just of OAES and OCES, but also of campus and field personnel in the Division. We will be hiring Assistant Directors for both 4-H and FCS soon. We plan on implementing an improved mentoring program for new County Educators. To promote educational development of Extension field staff we need to make assistantships and leave time available for graduate study. Anything we can do to improve the distance education capabilities of programs of study for our field staff would certainly be a benefit. Bill Weeks suggested that more classes need to have their technical content tailored to the professional development needs of County Educators (and Vocational Agriculture instructors). Extension may have to financially support some of the costs of developing and delivering distance education coursework for field staff. There must also be a salary incentive for OCES field staff to reward them for obtaining a graduate degree. Brandenberger asked if there was a way to balance the position of the field staff with the campus faculty as far as their professional development. Dr. Whitson said that the Career Ladder was developed just for this purpose. The quandary the Division faces is that campus faculty are under-paid with respect to their Big-12 counterparts.

The president is committed to improving this situation. Pay raises for campus-based teaching faculty can be supported with tuition funds. Off-campus programs do not have access to tuition funds. Thus, off-campus programs must fund all pay increases from base funds provided by the State. If the \$2.9 million funding for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Initiative comes through we will have the support to add positions. If continuing funding for salary programs does not come through in subsequent years, it may become necessary hold some positions vacant in the future to fund raises for the remaining ones. The current House bill proposes only \$25 million in additional funds for Higher Education, which would support no raises and probably require a 15% tuition increase. The Senate version proposes \$87 million in new money which would probably support a 3% salary program and limit the tuition increase to 10% or less. The State Regents originally asked for \$125 million in new money, since the State is currently enjoying one of the biggest budget surpluses in some time. We will not know what the funding situation is until the legislature adjourns the end of May.

**Announcements:**

**9-Month Appointments:**

Dr. Whitson distributed a draft of a proposed policy for 9-month faculty appointments that he intends to take to the Provost for her reaction. The purpose is to set some expectations for professional activity throughout the calendar year. One item addresses the beginning and end of the academic year with regard to student advisement, etc. The aim is not to increase the level of regulation which must be followed, but to avoid misunderstandings between faculty and administration with regard to professional expectations, especially when classes are not in session. There do not appear to be any such guidelines in the University Faculty Handbook. No official action was taken by the Council, which was invited to look over the draft and offer any suggestions in the next 30 days to Dr. Miller.

**Adjournment:**

Horn moved and Criswell seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Michael A. Kizer, Secretary  
DASNR Faculty Council