

Earth Science and Astronomy Department Meeting Minutes

November 10, 2014

Attendance: Mark Boryta, Julie Bray-Ali, Micol Christopher, Michael Hood, Heather Jones, David Mrofka, Becca Walker, Craig Webb

Meeting called to order at 4:33pm.

1. Minutes from October department meeting were approved.
2. The Astr 11 course proposal was discussed. Micol has worked on some of the revisions suggested by curriculum committee. The major issue is whether the course could exist as a stand-alone course or whether it could be considered part of an AA degree in Astronomy. Becca suggested that Astr 11 should be part of the AA in Natural Sciences. She will try to get it included in the AA in Natural Sciences and we can proceed. Mike wondered if there is a physics degree that the course should be a part of. Micol will check on this and follow up as necessary.
3. Geol 29 has been returned by Curriculum to the department. The discussion turned to what appropriate prerequisites would be for this class. The department decided that the prerequisite should be completion of one of more of the following: Geol 1, Geol 8L, Geol 24, or Geol 25.
4. There was no Academic Senate report.
5. Michael reported on the Faculty Association.
 - a) The negotiations survey is due on Wednesday. Issues related to 99 classes are on the list.
 - b) There will be a special election for Vice President. Joan Sholars is the only nominee, but there will still be an election. Look for your ballots.
 - c) There will be a Faculty Association open house next Monday, November 17th from 9am to 4pm.
 - d) You should have received a letter regarding the contribution to the Political Action Fund. \$15 per member of association dues are transferred to a fund to be used for Board of Trustees elections. You can return the form to opt-out of this, but it will not change your association dues.
6. Heather gave a planetarium/observatory report.
 - a) The solar eclipse event was a great success --- all of the planetarium shows were full and approximately 350 visitors attended. There was also an amazing sunspot on display that day. We used our new Hydrogen alpha telescopes as well as all of our other solar telescopes, and all the telescopes were busy the entire time. Mark commented that the publicity seemed to go out at just the right time to catch everyone's attention.

b) Over the summer, Zeiss visited to look at the problems with the projector. They decided that the entire Northern Ball needs to be replaced. Most of it is covered as manufacturer's defect; however, we still need to pay for transportation costs, etc. for the technician. These costs will run around \$10,000. There is a chance that the planetarium may be shut down for a day for the repairs.

c) The Reach for the Stars program application is now online. The deadline to apply is November 21, 2014. We will need some help to pick program finalists. We are planning to meet at 4:30pm on November 24, 2014 to look at applications.

d) The Leonids peak Monday night, November 17th. The predictions are for about 20/hour, but they are normally quite bright.

e) We have been having some problems with the CCD camera on the observatory telescope. Some of the software problems have been solved, but there is still a shutter problem. We are waiting to hear back for a quote from the technician at SBIG.

f) The next public telescope night is Friday, November 14. We could use some extra volunteers, so consider offering extra credit to your students to volunteer.

7. Mark reported on the Division meeting.

a) The Natural Sciences Division computer lab has been having a lot of business this semester to the point that at times it is impacted. The Division is going to look into how other divisions run their computer labs and whether non-Natural Science students should be allowed to use the lab. Also related to this, please be advised that if you bring your students to the computer lab you need to be present.

b) There was a change to the Travel/Field Trip form removing the date that a class will not be in session in lieu of the field trip. The Division office needs to know whenever you will not be in front of your class, whether it is hours in lieu of a field trip, a switching of time with another faculty member, or any other reason (sick/personal necessity, etc).

c) Our Oceanography position has been approved (#2 on the list), so it is time to start working on the hiring packet. The sooner we can get moving on this, the better chance we have to get our position out early in the cycle. There is a report that the Academic Senate voted that it is not obligated to follow the hiring prioritization list from Divisions and the Instruction office. The department is bothered by this report.

d) Our Geology equivalency needs to be submitted by November 18th.

e) The equipment budget has been completely allocated. We have received the telescopes that we were requesting. For the future, we should make sure that all equipment requests are in our PIE document and tied to student learning outcomes.

f) We need to change our 99 courses from lecture to lab since that more accurately reflects what is occurring in the classes.

g) There have been some changes to how adjunct faculty hiring/recruitment will be conducted. We will now be able to keep department hiring pools open full-time without having to go through H-R to request opening the position. The word is that H-R will no longer screen for minimum qualifications for adjunct faculty. Also, those who are interested in serving on hiring committees should take EEO and PeopleSoft training.

h) EIWOS is being replaced by SchoolDude. More information will be forthcoming.

i) There is a study being conducted regarding room usage. The goal of this study is to make sure that classes and groups are meeting in rooms appropriate to the number of people in attendance. Our lab rooms are protected from other groups meeting in them, but not our lecture classrooms.

k) The Division office wants us to send the Division a department photo to use in newsletters, etc. Heather is going to send some pictures from the Solar Eclipse event.

l) Lights will be changed out in Building 60 over a weekend in December. Speak with Matt if you have any concerns.

8. There was a meeting last Friday about FIPs (Faculty Inquiry Projects). Mike attended the meeting. Around Thanksgiving an application will go out for those who are interested. There is an architecture professor who has approached Heather regarding a FIP using the planetarium to project architecture animations for student presentations. There was some question as to what could be funded in a FIP, but the general idea was that it was mostly to fund time for faculty to meet to discuss their FIPs. The department expressed uncertainty as to whether the proposed project would fit into the FIP model because it was unclear what the problem is that needs to be solved. Mike and Julie have discussed a project related to how to make our GE classes more successful. They would like input and potential involvement from others in the department.

9. The Outcomes committee is looking at our SLO data in more detail than they had before.

10. The Counselor document with descriptions of a typical field trip need to be completed. If you haven't done that, please do so immediately.

11. We would like to have a packet of information to give to our adjunct faculty. This should include information on field trips, the adjunct faculty evaluation process, final exam information, etc.

12. We need a location for our December department meeting. There has been a request to meet at a place besides Islands. If you have any suggestions, preferably within a 10 minute drive, please let Julie know. The meeting will be on the Monday during final exam week at 4:30pm.

13. Julie distributed a previous version of the Hiring form for Oceanography. Please look over it and give feedback as soon as possible so that we can move forward with the hiring process.

14. Micol reported that he would like to take the Spring 2016 as a banked leave semester and is very willing to assist in whatever way needed to help with staffing during that time.

15. Meeting adjourned at 6:01pm.

Respectfully submitted: Micol Christopher