

School of Natural Sciences
Meeting Minutes - Friday, August 17, 2007
Start Time: 1:05 pm

In Attendance:

Dean Chikwem	David Royer
Amar S. Tung	Laurellen Treisner
Timothy Niiler	Elizabeth Sieminski
Lynn Roberts	Tong T. Bahn
Helen Major	R. Naik
Mazharul Huq	Moses Haimbodi
Ali Barimani	Fidelis Omuyeh
Robert Langley	Pallavi Pathak
Karen A. Baskerville	Jawahar Pathak
Nancy N. Smith	Goro Nagase
Dianne York	Derrick Swinton
Anna Hull	Reginald Myrick

Item 1. Welcome & Introduction

Item 2. Appointment of School Secretary for 2007-2008 Academic Year

Dr. Timothy Niiler volunteered (That's pronounced "NEEL-er")

Item 3. Trends in graduation rates

Shown on agenda, page 2. Historically, graduates from School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics have accounted for approximately 25% of Lincoln graduates. Since 2005, this has been falling, and as of 2007, percentage was as low as 16%.

Dr. Chikwem:

- * Need for aggressive recruitment to combat this trend
- * Need for changes in classroom paradigms to encourage students

Identified Issues

- * Many of our recruits are under-prepared
- * Are teachers responsible if students never show up?
- * Is placement a factor in failure rates?

Commentary

NIILER: Students in MAT105 often lack skills required from MAT 103.

ROBERTS:

- * Students often have misconceptions regarding what college is about, but are capable of adjusting.
- * Suggestion of dividing classes into modules which can be completed at the

student's leisure or allow unlimited attempts at testing.

HAIMBODI:

* If a class is entirely below expected level, why not have registrar change the course number to avoid scheduling conflicts, but also teach to the level of the students.

HUQ:

* A bad physical environment will interfere with learning (specifically HVAC issues)

CHIKWEM:

* Can't make changes to older buildings without making major changes to bring them up to code.

* On the other hand, the new science building will be ready sometime next year, and the portable classrooms will be available shortly.

NAGASE:

* Multiple experiences teaching the same class: sometimes it really is the student that is lacking. Suggestion: do diagnostics for placement.

CHIKWEM:

* **Do diagnostics ASAP for placement.**

* **Get names of students who don't show up ASAP and submit them so that we can get on top of them.**

SWINTON:

* Too much infighting in meetings

* Need to adjust paradigm in teaching to work with students

ROBERTS:

* **Should students do extra-curriculars when taking remedial courses? (Is there an NCAA rule about this????)**

Item 4. Preparation for Late Dr. Henderson's memorial

Summary: Dr. Henderson, former chair of the biology department, died of a heart attack last year. We have been waiting for the Chapel to be repaired before holding his memorial service as this is Mrs. Henderson's wish. Dr. Green has been requested as the minister. The service will be held on Thursday, October 11. Dr. Chikwem reminded everyone to contribute to Dr. Henderson's endowment.

Item 5. Science Fair: October 13, 2007

* Record number of students involved in internships this summer. They should be preparing from the "get-go" to submit abstracts and present at the fair.

* Faculty should remember that they are responsible for the door prizes.

* Retention of last year's organizing committee

* The location will probably be in the Gymnasium.

Comments:

TREISNER:

* A former student is working as an engineer on Lincoln's construction project. Perhaps he could come as a speaker?

TUNG:

* A speaker from Haverford was scheduled and then canceled last year. Perhaps this person (name?) should be invited back.

P. PATHAK:

* Should we invite high school students?

Item 6. School Journal

* We've been trying to publish for 4 years

* Four articles have been submitted from Math and Computer Science and it is intended that the Science Fair abstracts will be published there as well.

* Cut off date for more articles: end of August!

* Name of journal is "IHE" pronounced "eehey" meaning "light".

* Need an editorial board

Suggestions

1) Name?

2) Dr. Chorney (Penn State)

3) Dr. Roberts

4) Dr. Haimbodi

5) Ms. Sieminski

Item 7. Assessment & Advising

Most of this was covered in the last couple of days.

Comments:

CHIKWEM: Find out what the student is really interested in.

TUNG: Concern that falsely elevating students via letters of reference puts Lincoln University in a bad light for subsequent students.

SWINTON: Send students to schools/summer programs that will give them a positive experience and not turn them off to science.

ROBERTS: You never know how a student will do (don't be afraid to write references as you should be known by your publications).

SWINTON: Mentors are ultimately more important than what school a person comes from. Also: how can we take under-prepared students and interest them in science?

Item 8. Math Course Numbering

Summary: This was discussed in detail at the Math Department meeting this morning. It was agreed that there is confusion surrounding MAT105 because of its numbering and that the numbering should be changed to reflect that it is more difficult than MAT106. It was suggested that MAT105 be changed to MAT110.

Item 9. Any other issues

J. PATHAK: The MSPGP (Math and Science Part. of Greater Philadelphia) conferences will be happening again. Members of the School of Natural Sciences and Math will be contacted about participating.

NIILER: Can we address the poor snow-day notification system? Last year no notice was on the web page or in any of the places it was supposed to be during any of the marginal days we experienced. Web page notification would be optimal.

CHIKWEM: I am on a committee to address emergency preparedness and will raise the issue.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.

Secretary: Timothy Niiler