REPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Senate Committee: Academic Policies

Brief History of Issue - why the issue is being considered:

When the Materials Science Program was established, two faculty members were appointed to staff it. Each one has a 75% FTE appointment in the Materials Science Program and a 25% FTE appointment in a “home department,” Chemistry for one and Physics and Astronomy for the other. Since the Materials Science Program cannot form a Department Personnel Committee or develop its own Department Evaluation Plan (DEP), the performance of the two faculty members is evaluated according to the DEPs of their home departments.

The lack of a DEP designed specifically for materials science faculty has proven to be a problem. Since the establishment of the Materials Science Program, three searches for materials science faculty have failed because of candidates’ reservations about the fact that their performance would be reviewed by departments in which they would hold only 25% positions and which have different guidelines for performance review.

To promote the continued development of the program and attract applicants with specialization in materials science, a Department of Materials Science is needed.

Establishment of the proposed department will not affect the interdisciplinary nature of the program. Materials science is inherently an interdisciplinary program involving chemistry, physics, biology, geology, computer science, etc. Faculty in the proposed Department of Materials Science will continue to hold joint appointments in other departments and teach courses in those majors.

Establishment of the Department of Materials Science will have no budgetary impact. Each of the two current faculty members holds a 50% teaching assignment and a 50% administrative assignment. The administrative roles are supported by an Academic Department Associate with a 50% position allocated to materials science. All of these positions, as well as those of faculty and staff yet to be hired, are funded by the Nano Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math DIN.

Points Discussed by Committee:

Importance of the interdisciplinary nature of the materials science program
Problems in evaluation of materials science faculty using DEPs created by other departments, especially Chemistry and Physics and Astronomy, for their own faculty
Problems in hiring new faculty
No need for additional funding to establish the department

Pros of Recommendation:

Provides a home for the Materials Science program
Increases the visibility of the Materials Science program
Promotes recruitment of materials science faculty
Cons of Recommendation:

None

Technology/Human Resource Impact:

Staff time needed to include the proposed Department of Materials Science in the University Catalogue and other documents.

Committee Recommendation:

By a vote of 6 yes, 0 no, the Academic Policies Committee recommends University Senate approval of the creation of the Department of Materials Science.

Implementation Date: Upon Approval
MOTION FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

The University Senate Committee:

by a vote of ____ for to ____ against on ____________________ (Date)

Recommends that

Implementation Date:

Signed: _______________________________________

Chair of the Committee

Send to: University Senate Office