Present: Members: Scott Clark, Rahul Gomes, Abby Hemmerich, Mary Hoffman, Marquell Johnson, Carol Koroghlanian, Bill Miller, Kati Morley, Dalete Mota, Jamie Tester Morfoot, Evan Weiher
Guests: Margaret Cassidy, Doug Dunham, Jean Pratt, Jill Prushiek, Aleks Sternfeld-Dunn

Presiding: Chair Marquell Johnson called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

1. Approval of minutes from March 15, 2022
   ▪ Motion to approve the minutes of March 15, 2022, as submitted. Motion was seconded and approved (8-0-0).

2. Department of Materials Science and Biomedical Engineering Program Review
   ▪ Doug Dunham was in attendance to provide information and answer questions. Recently became a department, program review process was valuable/able to get feedback on both academics and outreach, department is in a continuous growth pattern -- began with materials science major added a materials science and engineering major followed by a biomedical engineering major.
   ▪ Discuss what the NanoSTEM DIN award of $2M has supported, effects of budget reduction, and funding of staff scientist positions
     • $1.9M base budget every year to fund 12 positions and capital equipment/supplies. Department has never had 12 positions and with a few budget cuts, overall budget allocation has decreased. The staff scientists are academic staff that used to have rolling contracts. HR is no longer issuing rolling contracts even though FASRP states it as an option (would like clarity on this). They are critical and the department wants them assured they will have a contract.
   ▪ Things impacting time-to-degree and retention of those at-risk students (courses only offered 1x year, business courses as electives, share elective courses with other UW institutions)?
     • 92 crs within major and 120 crs to graduate, students behind in math or those needing to retake courses affects time-to-degree, have considered and are pursuing collaboration across system which would allow students to take a course in the timeframe needed. Pre-Covid discussions with UW-Milwaukee as each institution has courses that help the other; may be a better chance of moving forward now that many courses were adapted for remote learning
   ▪ Number of credits offered due to accreditation or due to required content knowledge and comprehension? Consolidation possible?
     • Researched other institutions and couldn’t find any ABET-accredited in engineering with less than 120 credits. Driven by ABET even though there is no indication they require it. MSE is broad; couldn’t even begin to cover it with 200 credits.
   ▪ Are all interested students accepted into the program?
     • No limitations in number of seats. BME majors can declare immediately. MSE students enter as “pre-MSE” and need to acquire a certain GPA in courses to become a major. Don’t want students too far along before changing majors to something else. Department will continue to grow the current majors – created three majors in a short time and no current plans to add more.
VC Crickette wants everyone to have a rolling contract automatically renewed every year. The issue is that it is in the handbook. If it isn’t followed and someone doesn’t get renewed, they can appeal and will win. Professional Academic Staff already have rolling contracts and the staff scientists should also.

Number of engineering programs nearby, would UWEC’s be more attractive if the Fundamentals of Engineering Exam was offered?
- There are dedicated exams for mechanical and civil engineering, but not materials science and engineering so those students take the “general” engineering exam. Very few MSE students across the nation take it. Students are told that if they’re interested, UWEC will pay for it but don’t want to require it. Students who want to be a professional engineer must pass it; very few MSE majors become professional engineers (able to sign legal documents). They design the materials that go into products that others sign off on. Professional development opportunity, but probably no impact on career.

How much outreach at schools? Appears to be implicit outreach on campus (windows into labs and 3D printers in hall) – adding informational text may help?
- Went to 8-10 schools per year pre-Covid, STEM nights, trained high schoolers with activity bins who then provided HIPs for elementary students, nano demos, after-school events. Hope to be able to start offering them again. Recently did STEAM night in Chippewa. Think what is being done is exciting so added the windows to labs so science is visible. Excitement surrounding 3D printers and with space constraints in the lab, they were moved to hall. Great idea to add text to indicate what’s printing.

Diminished interaction with support services and resource availability in Library?
- Support services: Engineering is very costly, utilizes a lot of supplies and equipment. Replenishing these items has become more difficult, e.g., software renewal due in June and request is submitted months ahead of time and it’s still not completed on time. Process is too long. Used to feel Purchasing would help in any way they could, now it seems like “you can’t buy that.” Doing this for the students and everything has become harder, including travel, and there isn’t help to make things happen.
- Library: Worldwide issue. Scientific journals can cost $40,000/year. Library has had cuts and department understands. More access is needed to journals but unable to solve it. Library can’t justify spending $40,000 for engineering when they only have a $100,000 budget. Some faculty memberships allow access to journals, but are told it’s not a University expense and should be paid out-of-pocket. Pre-tenured faculty need access to the journals, tried to find workaround but getting pushback.

Growth of the department is also tied to increased cost to deliver the program. Is there a financial model in place?
- Not aware of a cost-per-student. As majors increase, the cost will go up because of supplies. Have an extra charge of $700/semester for junior and senior engineering majors which is the standard amount all UW System engineering programs charge.
  - $1,400/year – scholarships available? Yes, some of the $700 is used for needs-based scholarships. Awards to MSE majors have been distributed for a few years and will begin for BME majors next year.

Have discussed recruitment and addressed EDI issues, does the dual 3-2 model help with time-to-degree or recruitment? Would a consortium-type model ease some concerns that have been expressed?
- 3-2 is three undergrad years and then two years at an engineering school. Plan to explore the 3-2 Bachelor’s-Master’s program (3 years at UWEC + 2 at UW-Milwaukee) which would allow a student to earn a bachelor’s from UWEC and a master’s from UWM in five years. Would help with recruitment.
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- Library resources – are the work arounds working, how bad is it?
  - Issue is there are so many different journals but have a work-around for now. In the past had a consortium with UW-Madison, it’s going to get worse.
  - Long-term problem. Budget is static and prices increased. Inter-library loan isn’t perfect but can get just about everything relatively quickly. Is a worldwide issue. Doing the best we can to share among UW System, but it’s not a perfect solution
- Program Review Form Discussion: No. 6 – Can leave blank or agree with dean to add faculty. Leave blank and include info in the memo indicating that if adding FTE isn’t an option, agree with the department that those reassigned outside return to department
  - All in favor of leaving No. 6 blank. Approved (10-0-0).

Chair Marquell Johnson adjourned the meeting at 2:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Forcier
Secretary for the Meeting