

DEPARTMENT OF EARTH SCIENCES

Departmental Meeting

Wednesday April 18th, 2018 at 12:30 pm

In attendance:

Diana Allen, Andy Calvert, Kevin Cameron, Gwenn Flowers, Dan Gibson, Dirk Kirste, Brent Ward (Chair), Glyn Williams-Jones, Tarja Vaisanen, Matt Plotnikoff, Bonnie Karhukangas, Erik Young (Grad Rep), Crey Ackerson (Undergrad Rep)

Not attending: Brendan Dyck, Shahin Dashtgard, Robbie Donald, Cindy Hansen, Doug Stead, Derek Thorkelson, Eileen van der Flier-Keller

1. **Approval of Past Minutes:**

Motion to approve minutes of February 8th, 2017 K. Cameron, Seconded: D. Allen

Approved unanimously

2. **Business from previous minutes:**

- i. Seminar Series – on agenda (see below)
- ii. Associate Member – online vote was in favor to accept Associate Member Dr. Bernhard Rabus.

3. **Chair's Report:**

- i. Natural Hazards position update: Jessica Pilarzyk will be offered the position. She has indicated the ideal start date would be January 2019.
- ii. Department Review: Have not heard any results back from our Dept Review...optimistic that our space issue will be addressed as the possibility of the new Dean of Science coming to EASC we will need to find new lab space as well.
- iii. Personnel: Rodney's retirement is June 15, 2018. There will be a retirement BBQ on Monday June 11.
- iv. Raise the Profile of EASC:
 - We are looking at the possibility of having a display cabinet in the main hallway. Estimated cost \$16,000 (\$8,000 for architect and \$8,000 to build). Possible to get donation? Can we outsource the build? If we reduce the work that facilities has to do it would help with the costs. Keep an eye out for companies that are getting rid of display cases that we could possibly use?
 - Another possibility is to have a video monitor at the bottom of the stairs highlighting EASC items/news etc. 70" with touch screen would be approx. \$10,000. A plain TV mounted would be approx. \$3,000.

4. **Graduate Committee:**

- i. Review of Graduate Program Overview and Student Satisfaction: results from Dept Review Study (see attached)
 - Overall program is looking pretty good, and positive SFU experience from Alumni and current students – biggest issues are student funding and common space
- ii. Student Rep on Grad Committee: Grad students have not been active on Graduate committee. Will encourage the Graduate students to elect a representative of the Graduate student caucus as a voting member of the Graduate Committee.
- iii. Student Stipends: Regular increases to recommended minimum graduate student stipend.

MOTION: GPC proposes to raise the recommended minimum to \$22k per year starting Fall 2018, and to increase the recommended minimum by 2% per year starting Fall 2019.

Discussion:

- Anything that can give us better advantage for getting/competing for students is a good idea.
- Hard to be competitive with other schools (US) especially tuition.

- Grad committee was unanimous in support of this increase, noting that Vancouver is becoming very expensive.
- We need to encourage quality students, and to have more activity /publish more papers.
- Is there a spreadsheet available of what the prospective tuitions are from other institutions?

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR (1 abstention)

iv. Supervisor-Student Expectation: intended to help stimulate and guide discussion (see attached)

Discussion:

- Wonderful document – easy to modify for each supervisor...great idea.
- Increase in publishing...make it a requirement? Is there merit to having it a dept policy, or would this just get bad papers published? Would this actually help underachieving students?
- Provide feedback to Gwenn for the sample document that can be uploaded to the Web. Supervisors can choose to make their content relevant for their students.

5. **Undergraduate Committee:**

- i. EASC is now officially part of the double minor program
- ii. New Intro Chemistry courses are coming that are enriched and will deliver at an advanced level.

6. **Seminar Series:**

- i. The seminar series will be on Thursdays at 10:30 am for the fall. Looking at getting more high profile speakers. Will reduce seminars to 1 every 2 weeks or so.

7. **Safety:**

- i. NYWSO online module for students – send completed form to Bonnie
- ii. Lab Safety training component will also include the NYWSO portion. Lab Safety training may not be a component for each student – supervisor will need to have students up to speed on what they need to know. Not everyone receiving the Lab Training emails...**Matt will double check to ensure all are getting informed properly**
- iii. Field Safety plans should be in place before field work takes place (it should be as detailed as possible, but it is not needed for each trip). Chair approves – **he will send out an acknowledgement email.**
- iv. Vehicles: Drivers Abstracts need to be updated (yearly). When booking, will need an account number that the trip should be charged to.
- v. SFU has developed a more comprehensive plan for travel outside of the country – a registry of people (for any University activity). See website for more info: <https://www.sfu.ca/srs/travelsafety.html>

8. **AOB:**

- i. SFU Mail: M. Plotnikoff
 - April 28 new mail system will be implemented and the transition will start, but it may take time have all of your items migrated. The old SFU Connect will remain accessible until March 2019. Any new message will be sent to the new SFU Mail.
 - There will not be a briefcase function with the new mail program. SFU Vault is similar and will work in the same manner.
 - Calendar content will transfer over with the owner of the calendar. All shares will need to be re-established. We are planning to centralize the dept calendars so that there is a single owner.
 - The website has FAQ to help with the transition. <http://www.sfu.ca/newemail.html>
- vi. Truck Charges:
 - We will be changing the charges for the department trucks. Current policy on website has not been revisited for a while. There is a km charge and a minimum charge for bookings (\$25/day). This was in place to discourage people from taking the vehicle for a longer period if it was not actually in use. We will be changing the minimum charge rate to \$15/day.