

MCB FACULTY MEETING MINUTES

Friday, May 8, 2020; 3:00 – 4:00pm

Virtual Meeting via WebEx

In attendance: Abbott, T, Alder, N, Alexandrescu, A, Audette, D, Benson, D, Broderick, N, Campellone, K Cole, J, Feldman, K, Daggett, D, Gage, D, Giardina, C, Graf, J., Heaslip, A, Knecht, D, Kline, E, May, E, Gogarten, P, Klassen, J, Lee, J, Mellone, B, Nelson, C, Teschke, C, O'Neill, M, O'Neill, R, Papke, R, Hird, S, White, S, Nyholm, S, Robinson, V, Zweifach, A;

Called to order 3:04pm

1. Graduate Student Support (Joerg Graf)

A survey was taken of our current graduate students to assess the climate. It was found that a large majority of the respondents felt they had little or no support from advisors. In these times, this is a major concern and it is important we reach out and communicate regularly with our graduate students who look to their advisors as their major source of information. We (Michael, myself and Carol) held a virtual forum for the graduate students last week to answer any questions and hear their concerns. We have updated the MCB website's main page with COVID-19 banner including FAQs gleaned from the forum. There will be periodic forums every few weeks for the graduate students. The MCB site has been updated with milestones, PhD requirements, etc., for everyone's reference.

2. Policy Review (Carol Teschke)

- Mission Statement
- Merit
- Workload
- Promotion

Discussion regarding aforementioned policies. It was decided to post the documents on a google drive for all to edit and add commentary. Will vote at the September faculty meeting.

3. Re-opening of Research Protocols (Nathan Alder)

Chair Radiation Safety Committee advised on development from EHS. Amy will send summary of salient points to pass onto faculty. OVPR website is key to watch as it evolves daily. Training component on site is fantastic and mandatory, safety plan and applying for Phase 2 reentry. Don't hesitate to contact them directly. Main message was to work remotely unless critical need to be on campus at this time.

All in person training cancelled and conducted via WebEx.

Permitted work and policies

- All work with radioactive suspended until Phase 3
- No undergrads permitted on campus until University opened

Ordering (coordinate all purchases)

- Any supplies work at home delivered at home
- Any supplies for ramp up – must be delivered to lab on campus; central warehouse normal operations now; husky buy – 6297 – deliver to them and coordinate delivery
- Non-hazardous can be picked up at Central Stores; hazard must be delivered by Central Stores to department
- Need someone at department to accept

Online resources for EHS

- Husky SMS - online safety management (IDC protocols, lab specific site) beta testing; launch in fall

BPB Protocols for 2nd floor – how many people per lab; common spaces, etc....in the process of developing a comprehensive plan to manage/monitor density per floor. Any questions please contact EHS managers.

Discussion ensued on how Phase 2 would be implemented. At this time, those who are up against contract deadlines, students who need to graduate, etc., should apply and then the remaining research labs.

Suggestion was to err on the side of caution and be aware of individual risks for each staff member on whether they are returning. Faculty were asked to indicate plans to Maggie – particularly who is coming back and who is not. We have created google floor calendars to assist with logging people and equipment usage. Floor coordinators have been designated for BPB – Nathan Alder, 2nd floor, Adam Zweifach, 3rd floor and Joerg Graf, 4th floor.

4. Cluster Hires (Carol Teschke)

Department was asked to propose potential cluster hires. There were no specific rules or criteria from the Dean. Individual faculty have put together the attached proposals with input from their colleagues. These will be forwarded to the CLAS Dean's Office.

5. Tuesday Seminars (Michael Lynes)

It was decided to postpone format changes until June 20 when decision on Fall semester is decided. Some faculty feel it is important to continue with the seminars online regardless of University decision.

6. Fall Graduate Student Funding (Jonathan Klassen)

Jonathan gave an update on TA assignments and next steps. Faculty will be asked whether their student will be placed on a TA or RA. Social distancing in lab for TAs and working on a survey to graduate students as to whether they are comfortable teaching F2F. We are also working on course modalities and logistics of lab sections.

Issues were raised on what support faculty with children may have. All we can do is make the best decisions for ourselves and the department will support you. A reminder of the 1yr delay in tenure clock if desired.

7. Announcements

David Benson retirement is in June; we will plan for a celebration when opportunities to gather safely are clearer.

Adam Zweifach and Kathy Feldman received notice of promotion recently; congratulations to both.

The new provost (Carl W. Lejuez) has arrived and is working at UCONN in advance of his formal start date at the end of May.

Admissions update:

PhD

Total students applied: 111

Total students admitted to date: 36 (32%)

Total students accepted admission: 12 (33%)

Total students declined admission: 20 (56%)

Total students to request to defer admissions decision to Fall 2021: 3 (8%)

Pending Decisions: 1 (Waiting on answer from Marika David)

MCB MS

Total students applied: 61

Total students admitted: 25 (41%)

Total students accepted admission: 5 (20%)

Total students declined admission: 6 (24%)

Total pending students: 14 (56%)

PSM/PM (includes Spring 2020 as well)

Total students applied: 17

Total students admitted: 17 (100%)

Total students accepted admission: 4 (23%)

Total students declined admission: 4 (23%)

Total pending students: 9 (54%)

Masks, face shields, gloves orders have been made to facilitate re-opening laboratories. The face shields are washable, the others are to cover immediate needs, but individual labs should be making plans for their own PPE as well. We are also making plans to purchase Purell-type stations for near elevators in BPB, TLS, ESB and Beach. There is some concern Purell may not be available at this time.

We have assembled extensive information regarding graduated PhD student outcomes that is available for training grant needs.

Kat Milligan-Myhre and her family will arrive in mid July to mid August, 2020, and Stacey Hanlon will arrive for January 1, 2021 start date.

We need to discuss: fall seminar series, how to manage new graduate students in the fall, and the August retreat format, but until we have guidance from the university, those conversations are premature. Keep an eye out this summer for contacts to discuss these things as we have new information.

We need to configure a committee to plan for how to move into the fall semester for lab, discussion section and lecture teaching, given that we are being asked to plan for two alternatives: face to face with large class lectures on line, and entirely online formats. Email me if you would like to volunteer, and I will assemble a committee. **This plan, and thus faculty contributions to the plan, is due by May 26.**

Joerg and I had a productive meeting with the graduate students (about 40-50 of them) a week or so ago to answer their questions as best as we could. Plans are to offer this opportunity again in the future.

Individual IDC and salary savings accounts - the Dean is asking us to compile a plan for each of you that represents your plan to spend those funds. This plan must be submitted to the dean. I will be starting with the largest accounts, but we need to have a plan for all of them.

The dean has appointed Bri Diaz to be in charge of CLAS social media. Is there anyone in MCB interested in being our point person for social media (a “tweeter in residence”)? If interested please let me know.

Please let me know by next Wednesday if you were left with flight costs that have not been reimbursed by your grant, or by someone who invited you to speak. We will try and make good on as much of this as we can.

We will need to start submitting ramp-up plans. This is an online form that the OVPR has assembled, along with a safety plan for each lab. It will also be important for labs that share bathroom space make a plan (e.g. an “occupied” sign to orchestrate individual bathroom use), and to plan for how lunch spaces, shared equipment and shared spaces will be used. Please designate a contact person in each lab cluster to let Maggie and me know that you are working on this. Jon Klassen, Thane Papke, Ping Zhang and David Goldhamer will need to define their individual operations for me. Maggie has shared link where you can find the ramp-up plan you will each need to fill out.

- i. NOTE: I am told that the metrics of ramp up (e.g. how smoothly it goes) will be part of the decision for the fall semester format.
- ii. I am told that NO undergrads can be part of the plan.

Pre-tenure extensions to the clock are automatic, but extensions to the startup funding you have gotten are not automatic. Extensions will only be given upon request and with justification that is persuasive (e.g. plans to buy equipment at the end of the time and reason for waiting such as waiting on grant funding to add to purchase). Just holding on to startup funds to stretch availability will not work, apparently. You do not need to elect for extension – automatic and you are not obliged to take it, but must apply to not take it.

The dean has expressed the thought that there are many departments in which a few faculty are not teaching to the level of their obligation to the college. We will be having conversations with faculty regarding class size, and considering instances where a course may need to be shifted to alternate year scheduling.

I have been in touch with Deborah Shelby about space allocations and renovations. I hope to have more clarity in the next few weeks as she speaks with the new provost about space and renovations. At that point I will activate

the space committee to advise me on possible relocations. Note, Kat will be located on the 4th floor BPB, and Stacey on the 3rd floor of ESB.

The dean has decided to keep meeting with department heads on a monthly basis over the summer to keep lines of communication open. I will report anything that I think you need to know from those meetings by email.

Saturday May 9th will be a virtual commencement.

HR has started to engage with the CLAS administration to review the mapping of CLAS staff to the new job descriptions; about 75% of the positions in CLAS staff are under review.

Motion to adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 5:41pm

Submitted: Maggie McDonnell