**Minutes of the Physics Faculty Meeting**

**Monday, 3/19/2012 at 3:30 PM in SE 330**

**In attendance:**

G. Perry, W. Miller; A.Fuchs, S.L. Qiu, C. Beetle, J. Engle, A. Lau, W. Tichy, K. Sorge, L. Martinez,

G. Kreymerman, Th. Leventouri, S. Chakrabarti, M. Troshinsky

**Absent:**

R. Gross, L. Wille

**Call to order 3:30PM – Dr. Gary Perry**

Gary Perry, CESCOS Dean, began the meeting with an update on the budget and other pertinent information that he learned in a recent meeting with the Provost. The Provost has asked all Deans to meet with their Departments and answer questions that their respective faculty may have. The budget overview is that the State University System (SUS) is taking at $300 million cut for the next fiscal year. FAU will suffer an initial budget cut estimated at $25 million. There are two additional factors however that have to be considered in this equation: (1) For the second year in a row, we will not receive PECO money and (2) for the second year in a row, the state is not providing the $2 million that the University is contractually obligated to pay Palm Beach County annually as reimbursement for the Scripps Building on the Jupiter campus. That brings the effective budget cut to FAU closer to $30 million. The Provost is interested in the Faculty’s ideas concerning these cuts and is encouraging everyone to submit possible suggestions for review.

The Provost is currently looking over all faculty assignments/teaching loads. The recommended teaching load is 3 and 3, which is inconsistent with a research university. Faculty time is considered within labs, etc.

Next fiscal year, we will be operating on the same budget as fiscal year 2009.

**4:00PM – Dr. Warner Miller**

Warner Miller, Physics Chair, began his presentation with a discussion pertaining to what the Dean had just talked about. He also reiterated the Provost’s request to faculty members to voice their concerns and suggestions to the Provost’s Office.

An overview of projected faculty assignments for the Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 semesters was given. Faculty assignments were increased in accordance with the Provost’s guidelines. Dr. Miller posed the idea of having a “Chair’s Award” whereby one faculty member would be given a reduced course load for one semester based on merit. That vacant course would be taught by Dr. Miller.

The Physics Department’s TA allocation for the next fiscal year was discussed. The Physics Department will be given 25 slots to fill for Ph.D. students only. We are currently supporting 30 students. We will not be able to award the Presidential and Provost Fellowships that we have been given if we cannot have any more TA slots for next fiscal year. Additionally, the Board of Governors requires 3 Ph.D. graduations per year (in 5 years an average of 15 graduations). Without incoming students, it will be difficult to meet this benchmark. We must find a way to bring in 4 new students next fiscal year. A possible solution might be that if Dr. Miller is able to put some of his salary on a grant, then we may be able to use the freed up E&G money toward TA salaries.

Ph.D. mentorship was discussed in terms of those students that have faculty advisors and those that are still not assigned to a faculty member. Those that are not Ph.D. candidates are not yet assigned to any faculty member. Faculty that currently are not advising students were recommended to present their research to available students so that the students are made aware of the faculty’s research areas.

An 80 credit tuition waiver allocation for each student was proposed (prior to the meeting). This is 10% over the tuition waivers in general. This would have a substantial impact to the physics curriculum, students, and program.

Summer 2012 classes have a new minimum enrollment requirement for the class to run: 24 students for an undergraduate course and 11 students for a graduate course. Although 1/10 of 1% of the student population is considered to be a healthy Physics program (and we are consistent with that statistic), it will be near impossible to satisfy the revised enrollment numbers for the summer for some of the courses offered. This enrollment requirement could also carry forward to the fall and spring terms.

**4.45PM – Dr. Chris Beetle**

Chris Beetle, Curriculum Committee member, discussed a proposal that was presented to the faculty approximately one year ago. It entailed (1) canceling General Physics 3 and (2) transitioning Quantum Mechanics 2 and Statistical Physics into electives instead of keeping them as required courses (and rotating them on the schedule). The proposal also would require students to take 2 electives. We have many options of elective physics courses that could be offered by a good number of our faculty.

Additionally, we would be gaining 4 upper division classes via an undergraduate seminar course. These 4 courses would be 1 credit each and would consist of 2, 3000 level courses and 2, 4000 level courses. The fall course would focus on career skills and the spring course would focus on an introduction to scientific computing. The pre-requisites for these courses would be in line with keeping the students mathematically prepared and on the same footing as their peers. Dr. Beetle suggests that 2 faculty members be involved per semester for this course. \* It was noted that changes at the course-level are enacted easily, however changes at the curriculum level are more difficult to enact.

**Motion proposed - W. Miller:** Should the new Physics curriculum that was outlined by C. Beetle be adopted?

Unanimous approval was given to accept the new curriculum

(Note: R. Gross and L. Wille absent from voting)

Regarding the graduate curriculum, first year students might be given the opportunity to choose their type of course load. They can either (1) take 3, 3 credit courses in one semester or (2) take 2, 4 credit courses + 1 colloquium credit. The first scenario is more rigorous but designed for those students that may already have a solid background in the core courses. The second scenario has more flexibility and is not as intensive.

Regarding the number of credits, it is suggested that the Physics Department create an internal form for exception and irregularities.

**5:15PM –Meeting Adjourned**