

**Meeting of the College Faculty
11 September 2003
Alumni Lounge
4 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

Minutes of the last meeting were approved as posted.

Kudos

to Jose Fragoso and Kirsten Silvius (Environmental & Forest Biology), whose work on seed dispersal by tapirs was recognized in a News and Views article in Nature. (Moore, PD. 2003. Palms in motion. Nature 426 (6 November 2003): 26-27)

to the Green Campus Initiative for being recognized by the Campus Ecology Project of the National Wildlife Federation for accomplishments in recycling, waste reduction, energy conservation and assessment <http://www.nwf.org/campusEcology/dspGreening.cfm>

Informational Items from the Floor

Betsy Elkins brought two posters that were presented at a recent New York Library Association meeting. One was "Dreaming of New Spaces in the Moon," some of which have already been implemented. The other poster was "Practicing What we Teach," about the Library's role in the Green Campus initiative.

Brenda Nordenstam reported that the SU Senate has recommended a new New Paradigm to the administration, which will soon be available on the web. They are trying to achieve the goals of better using classroom space and living up to the schedule, with less disruption. The open period is gone from the proposal.

Committee on Instruction (Craig Davis)

A. Course Proposals

We have two new course proposals that have been out for review and are recommended by the committee. No comments were received. Both were approved without discussion.

BTC 497 Research Design & Professional Development

EFB 334 Woody Plants in the Natural and Built Landscape

EFB has proposed to drop a block of courses. The proposal was sent out for comment and no comments were received. The group of proposals was approved without discussion.

EFB 403/603 Biodiversity and Conservation of Adirondack Ecosystems

EFB 421 Ecology of Freshwaters

EFB 454 Wood Deterioration by Insects

EFB 478 Microcommunity Ecology

EFB 481 Behavioral Ecology

EFB 483 Biology of Birds and Mammals

EFB 580 Wetland Wildlife Ecology and Management

EFB 695 Urban Wildlife

B. Policy Proposals

1. Policy on incomplete and missing grades:

The committee took into consideration the discussion at the last meeting, and recommends approval of the proposal discussed at the last meeting.

Discussion: The grade of NR shows that the absence of a grade is not the fault of the student. Students who notice an NR on their transcript will know to nag the relevant professor. If we do our jobs, there should be no NR grades assigned.

Note that currently, students can graduate with a grade of "I" if the credits are not required; this will remain the case with both "I" and "NR" grades.

The motion passed unopposed.

2. Policy to limit credit hours for students on probation

The committee recommends approval of the policy statement as written and as discussed at the last meeting. "Students who are on academic probation may register for no more than 15 credits per semester." This policy calls attention to the need for students and advisors to pay attention to the academic load. It will be common to petition for somewhat heavier course loads. Passed.

3. Policy on Signatures Required for Form 3B.

Presently, only the major professor is required to sign Form 3B. The following policy should help to strengthen the participation of committee members in the mentoring process. "All steering committee members shall sign the 3B form."

Discussion: If the committee changes, the new committee should be required to sign off on the form. Revisions of Form 3B are common, and will require these signatures. Committee members outside ESF are particularly important to include in the process. Dialog within the committee to reach consensus will be healthy. Recall that Form 3B is due by the start of the second year for MS and PhD, and by the start of the third semester for the MPS. There are no penalties for not meeting those deadlines, as many of you know. Elen Deming suggested that the major professor should have the responsibility for directing the student, and that involving the committee creates an additional burden on us. Some of us were not aware that there could be a problem, but we have also been looking for where we sign off on the Form 3B, and the current form fails to acknowledge the participation of the committee. Are there other ways to solve the problem of involving the steering committee with the student? Jim Hassett points out that we have no procedure requiring the involvement of the committee in the student's proposal. This proposal will only solve the problem of deciding the student's course work. Adding a check to the congruence of the committee can only help. Improving the timing of the form is a separate issue not addressed in this proposal.

The motion passed with a minority opposed.

Committee on Research (Chris Nowak)

1. Research Programs

The committee has been charged to provide support to the College research strategy to "increase sponsored research expenditures at ESF by \$2.4 million by 2005." The committee will request your input via a survey asking what would help you grow your research programs. The goal is to distribute the survey by Monday November 24th with a short deadline (Dec 1st). The committee will be reported to the President's ad hoc "ESF Initiative on Research Committee" (reconstituted from Year 2000) by January 1st and to the ESF faculty at the first faculty meeting of 2004.

2. McIntire-Stennis 2004-2005

Full proposals will be due by December 31, which is two months later than in previous years. Reviews will be requested from many of you during early February. The review process will not change. Recommendations will be made to the Office of Research Programs by March 1st, 2004.

Discussion: No, without Ed White, we can't tell you anything about feedback on your pre-proposals.

3. Spotlight on Student Research and Outreach 2004

The date is set: Tuesday, April 13th. The GSA "Shifting Paradigms" conference will take place on Wednesday, April 14th. Let us know whether you preferred Nifkin or Moon as a venue. Titles will be due March 1st, abstracts on March 14th.

Discussion: Admissions might be liked to be informed, because this event is such a good showcase for the college. Greg Boyer pointed out that undergraduate students will be hard pressed to provide an abstract so early.

Committee on Public Service & Outreach (René Germain)

Endorsements and Cosponsorships include "Improve your World" radio spots, which include five topic areas: Use of Native Plants, Explore Your Watershed, Save Energy - Save Money, Urban Forestry: The Value of Trees, and Upstate Recreation: Get Out and Enjoy Nature.

The President's Award for Community Service are given to an individual student, an ESF student organization, and a staff or faculty member. Nominations are due November 21, please contact Julie White for details.

ESF Environmental Challenge Science Fair and Career Exploration Day will be Tuesday, March 9, 2004, for seventh and eighth grade students of Syracuse City School District who placed in the top 10% of local school-based science fairs.

Spotlight on Student Research and Outreach: We will identify research posters suitable for diffusion to outreach audiences, and ask authors to package their work for the Environmental Information Series.

Environmental Information Series Website: Paul Otteson converted eight brochures, linked them, and now gets 200,000 visitors/year. "Why leaves change color" got 27,000 hits, up 2000 from last year. How can we improve our presence? We would see benefits to extension, recruitment, visibility, alumni identity, fundraising, and taxpayer support.

Assessment of General Education (Scott Shannon)

The movement to system-wide assessment of General Education has been opposed by the SUNY Senate, as it was by many campuses, including ours. The Chancellor will be establishing a new working group to develop a system-wide but campus-based approach. At least it will not happen without us, as did the initial adoption of Gen Ed procedures. The system includes community colleges and technical colleges, who are not comfortable being compared to the comprehensive colleges; this is the motivation for using two tests (entrance and exit).

Joanne Ellis and Chuck Spuches are currently in Albany at the system-wide conference on assessment.

Undergraduate Student Association

Jason Goodman couldn't be here but wanted us to announce a TGIF on Thursday December 4th and the December Soiree on December 6th.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10.