

Science Chairs' Council
Summary of First Meeting, September 8, 2009

Attending:

Chairs: Dave Bercovici, Mikhail Kapranov, Bill Kelly, Jeff Kenney, Scott Miller, Tom Pollard, Rick Prum, Avi Silberschatz, Mitch Smooke, Doug Stone

Divisional Directors: Bill Jorgensen, Bill Sessa,

Provosts: Steve Girvin, Tim O'Connor

Guests: Lloyd Suttle, Alice Prochaska, Kari Swanson, Kenny Marone

1. Library Journal Subscriptions & Cancellations

(Lloyd Suttle, Alice Prochaska and Kari Swanson, Kenny Marone)

The librarians (Prochaska, Swanson, Marone) explained their budget pressures and various factors which constrain choices. They explained the iterative process by which they decide on possible journal cancellations, which includes a solicitation for faculty input, although relies on faculty clearly speaking up. We identified structural reasons (e.g., journal packages) that may favor large departments, and this is important to consider before cutting journal subscriptions of interest to small departments.

2. High Performance Computing (Steve Girvin)

Steve Girvin gave a presentation on the present state and planned future for HPC at Yale, and provided copies of a brief report on HPC at Yale ("Five-Year Projections") given to Yale's Officers. Yale is considering incremental expenditures on HPC of \$5-10M/yr, which is on top of the ~\$4M/yr(?) currently being spent. The group discussed 2 proposals made by Bercovici, Smooke & Kenney: 1.) Yale should appoint a dedicated scientific leader/director for HPC. 2.) Yale should appoint an external review panel for HPC. Steve agreed in principle that both would be good things. The chairs strongly felt that given the large investment Yale will be making in HPC, it is smart to spend a small fraction of that total on good leadership, to ensure that the HPC investment is wisely spent. It was the consensus that an external review panel should follow the appointment of a Director/the establishment of an HPC Center. Members are urged to suggest names for an external review panel, including those from industry as well as academia.

3. Discussion on Changing the Nature of the Science Chair's Council

Both the Chairs and the Provosts were interested in more regular communications, so the Provosts are now regularly invited to SCC meetings. The group discussed whether the Provost's Office should "convene" the Science Chairs Council meetings, or whether this should be left to the Chairs, as we have done. Despite some advantages to the former approach (ensures that the Provosts interact regularly with the Science Chairs, adds year-to-year stability to the Council, and relieves the Chairs of yet another administrative duty), the Chairs felt it was important to maintain (some?) control of the agenda, since the Chairs are sometimes interested in non-provostial issues, or may have different priorities. For the current year, Kenney will work closely with Girvin in planning the agenda for the meetings.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 13, 12pm -KBT 1202