Senate Growth and Development Committee 2016-17

Meeting Minutes 9.26.16

10:00-11:10 am

Senate Conference Room, Hall Bldg. Rm 123

Present: Robert Bird, David Benson, Jeorg Graf, Michelle Judge, Lyle Scruggs, Tracie Borden, Greg Bouqout, Nick Ferron, Faquir Jain, Min Lin, Tina McCarthy, Andrew Moseiff, Kylene Perras, Lawrence Silbart

Absent: Louise Louis, Maria Gordina, Suzanne Wilson, Carolyn Lin

Guests: Kazem Kazerounian (Dean, School of Engineering) and Michael Accorsi (Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Education).

In order to give maximum time to our guests, approval of the current and prior minutes was tabled for voting over email.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the discussion of strategic initiatives in the School of Engineering.

Dean Kazerounian explained how the School of engineering is having an influential impact on industry in the State of Connecticut. The School is engaging with multiple research partnerships in industry, including partnerships with Pratt & Whitney, UTC, Comcast, and others. The tech park is an important influence on these partnerships, enabling all of the School's interaction through a cohesive venue.

Associate Dean Accorsi stated the School is focused on teaching how to write NSF career proposals and seeking larger and more complex proposals to attract a diverse funding base. Proposals have also been joint with industry partners in seeking support from federal agencies. Successful companies are coming to UConn for expertise. New research awards have doubled in the last two years. This is attributable to seeking larger and more complex proposals in the $1-$20 million range.

The benefit to Connecticut's economy was discussed. Dean Kazerounian stated that Pratt & Whitney is expected to increase its technical workforce by 8,000 employees over the next decade. Other firms in Connecticut are growing their employment. The state is expected to have a shortage of engineers over the next few years. It was also noted that small firms in the supply chain can also benefit from independent research. Also, Pratt & Whitney is increasing 8,000 in technical workforce over next decade. Other large companies staying in Connecticut (e.g. Electric Boat) and growing employment and 20-30% may be engineers.

Dean Kazerounian noted that the School is reforming its curriculum to meet industry needs and also give a broader educational view, citing human rights for engineers, a manufacturing minor (Pratt & Whitney collaboration), and fine arts collaborations as examples.

Strategic challenges were also discussed. The School has not received increased space since 2004. Student population is increasing by a factor of two and the faculty population has doubled. The School is 100% short of space for existing growth. To address this challenge, the School is moving away from space allocated to individual faculty and having shared facilities in the central part of the new building to

go online next August. The tech park will also accommodate industrial partnerships to relieve pressure elsewhere.

Dean Kazerounian also explained that the highest challenge is supporting our research and that the School is actively supporting research goals within the university given the resources available.

Associate Dean Accorsi emphasized the importance of creating strong clusters of faculty in key subject matter areas, with Centers and Institutes being an especially effective way to do so. Centers of faculty with similar research interests create a powerful group of faculty to seek large proposals. Developing processes to review and establish Centers at the university was also discussed by the committee. Center support and distribution of indirect costs was also discussed.

Dean Kazerounian discussed K-12 outreach programs. The School provides summer training that if students complete may be accepted into the School of Engineering. Approximately 60-70 high school students get in through the program. This group has the highest graduation rate in the school and far higher than national averages. The School is also increasing gender diversity, with a 43% female student population in the 2016-2017 freshmen class, a significant increase from past years.

Adjourned at 10:50am.