

Senate Growth and Development Committee
Meeting Minutes 11.18.17
10:00-11:00am
Senate Conference Room, Hall Building

Present: Janet Barnes-Farrell, Robert Bird, Joerg Graf, Andrew Moiseff, Faquir Jain, Kylene Perras, Jeffrey Shoulson, Tracie Borden, Louise Lewis, Carl Rivers, Jeffrey Shoulson

Guest: Pamir Alpay, Executive Director of the UConn Tech Park

Dr. Alpay began by summarizing the history of the Innovation Partnership Building (IPB). The IPB was certified for occupancy in October and now provides both tenant and lab space. IPB has advanced engineering and other tools in order to interact with industry. Some tools, such as those related to electron microscopy, are the only ones available for use in New England. The IPB encourages interdisciplinary engagement that will build interactions between the university and industry. Ten companies are currently in the tech park with expectations to grow. Firms such as United Technologies, Eversource Energy, and other small firms have relations with the IPB.

The committee discussed long-term success metrics and graduate student involvement. The IPB is anticipated to be a center of activity that encompasses not merely a single building but becomes a hub for the university. In that way companies will be fully involved in the university environment as IPB solves the problems they are facing. The plan is then to establish partnerships that help develop their next products, specifically ideas and concepts that they can develop with our assistance. Specialized instruments and expertise will help industry and faculty work together in the long-term.

Regarding graduate student involvement, graduate students can use the equipment at any time. Students can get training to use these instruments. Prices for using machines will be reasonable, and the IPB is in the process of establishing hourly rates. Scholars are also in place in conjunction with firms that support six graduate students.

There is currently no uniform business plan, which Dr. Alpay is hoping to change in the next few months. Need to establish prices for rent, expertise, research scientists and related expenses. The IPB is also establishing an operational plan, budget, and arrangements with schools and departments to help the IPB sustain itself over the long term.

Regarding expansion of IPB to other sciences, the IPB is currently providing physics faculty vibration-free space. There is an interest in engaging chemistry faculty as well as reaching out to the UConn Health Center and other constituencies in the coming months.

The IPB is also engaging in outreach to other companies to expand their partnerships. Town relations also need to be developed. There are concerns that about housing and off-campus space needs that might impact the surrounding community.

Dr. Alpay noted that the IPB needs to build its publicity, marketing, and communication resources. A capable center such as IPB needs to disseminate to the public what it is doing. Opportunities for publication and promotion are needed in partnership within the highest levels of administration.

The meeting adjourned at 10:51am.