PPBC Meeting minutes, 1/31/2019

Present: Deb Donovan (chair), John Gilbertson, Steve McDowell, Takele Seda, Andy Klein, Pete Stelling (scribe), Brad Johnson (Dean), Ben Miner (Assoc. Dean)

Minutes from last meeting approved
- Unanimous vote to approve from voting members present.

Consideration of Internal Budget Proposals

Discussion of the nature of the proposals. What is the intended size and scope? (Generally <$400K) Where do these go after they leave PPBC? (Goes to UPRC; funding decisions lay with President). We decide the scope and nature of our comments. We can recommend changes as well, but time is pretty short (Due to UPRC by Feb. 14th, the same date as our next scheduled meeting).

Engineering proposal: Wanting to upgrade an existing 0.33 FTE NTT position to 1.0 FTE TT position. Discussion about heavy service component and how progress toward tenure would be assessed. Maybe convert this position to full-time directorship/admin position? Need to look at Jen Nimtz’s position (director of 1st year math as part of 1.0 FTE TT position). Strength is need. Weakness is description of tenure evaluation procedures.

Computational Science at Western (CSAW): This proposal represents the first step to separate the compute cluster from computer science to provide access to everyone in the college. This would move infrastructure out of CS and free up Dan Van Pelt to do his assigned duties in CS. Existing hardware is reasonably adequate for current users but it will need to grow (possibly through startup packages for new CSE faculty). Weakness is lack of direct inclusivity component, although as CSE departments hire more diverse faculty this project will support these new hires in their research.

Physics: The Physics Dept. is requesting 2 TT positions, 10 undergraduate learning assistants, and a 1.0 FTE NTT intro lab manager/director due to large demand for intro physics labs. Strategic direction is to alleviate pressure on the labs (new sections) and increases access to URM. Weakness: it is expensive. Strengths: more access, more sections, more support.

SMATE: Requesting two 0.75 FTE staff positions (9 months, with summer salary on soft money). The prior funding model for two existing staff positions is no longer reliable and SMATE is requesting permanent internal funding. Position 1 is a director of K-12 partnerships and professional development. Position 2 is a director of Educational Grant Evaluation, and would serve as an external evaluator for all STEM Education grants (an increasing requirement by funding agencies). Strength: this is an urgent need.

Math Early Childhood Education: Mathematics Dept. is adding a new course series in Early Childhood Education (P-3) to complement the K-8 Elementary Math Education (EME) sequence. The addition of 0.5 NTT FTE staff will to teach these courses and supervise the Math Lab. Math Ed. Dept. on campus oversees all programs on satellite campuses. This is in response to new programs on Poulsbo campus that need oversight and evaluation. Also asking for 1.0 FTE TT position to help teach MATH 380 series (K-8 Math Education), which is burdened by changes in the SMATE cohort model for EME. Strength: Problem appears to be acute. Weakness: this is essentially a band-aid on a larger problem that will require significant changes in funding a number of TT faculty.
Implementing Improvements in Beginning Math: The Mathematics Dept. is requesting funding for five 1.0 FTE NTT and four Graduate TA positions to increase curricular development, meet EID needs and reduce class sizes in beginning math classes. First year math is struggling because new freshmen are coming in less and less prepared, so success by the end of first year is difficult to achieve. This is especially problematic for URM and first-generation students. Strength: this is an urgent need that is founded in many of the strategic goals of the College and University. Weakness: this is an expensive request.

Microscopy Center: An interdisciplinary group that includes representatives from nearly every CSE department is requesting space to house a consolidated microscopy center, especially high-end instrumentation. This group is requesting money for a remodel of existing space to house existing and future equipment. Total cost of remodel is not certain because the new space hasn’t been identified. Strength: this is an important need and is a one-time expense as there are no faculty or staff positions requested. Weakness: The need is not urgent.

Discussion of these proposals was extended, and concrete goals for PPBC involvement (ranking? Comments? Recommendations?) were not identified. Discussion of the role of PPBC and summary documents will continue via email prior to the next meeting.

Discussion of EID information in CO-PEP

- The next PPBC meeting will include a visit from a member of the EID committee, along with student representatives.

Student Representation at PPBC

- Earlier this year the student senate was formed with two senators from every college. Student senators are members of EID, too. This is a mandate that comes from Associated Students, the President, and the Provost. Discussion ensued regarding which aspects of PPBC business would be most beneficial for student input and which aspects would be inappropriate for student participation. Internal Budget Proposals (like today) are excellent topics for student participation. Students should not be present for PTR or other faculty evaluation meetings where confidential material will be discussed. There was general agreement that students should be encouraged to make regular (e.g., quarterly) visits and be invited for specific discussions that would benefit from student input and exposure. Deb and Ben will meet with members of EID and other committees to discuss a list of appropriate topics. Once decided upon, PPBC and the student senate should meet to discuss.

Additional items

- The current T&P recommendation form contains three summary check boxes (recommend, do not recommend, cannot make a recommendation). The third option is not allowed on any faculty review forms (probationary faculty, T&P, PTR) based on the CBA, and needs to be removed. Andy made the motion to delete this option from all forms that have it, Pete seconded, unanimous approval. Because some faculty have already submitted T&P review
forms this year, this change will not be applied for T&P this year but will apply to the upcoming PTR. PPBC members should tell departments not to use this option if it is available.

Meeting adjourned 10:01 am