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UNIVERSITY
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Office of the Provost and Vice President,
Academic Affairs

25800 Carlos Bee Boulevard, Hayward, CA 94542-3007
510.885.3711 (phone) • 510.885.2295 • <http://www.csueastbay.edu/OAA>

February 18, 2009

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Michael K. Mahoney".

From: Michael K. Mahoney, Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs

To: Michael Leung, Dean, College of Science
Ann McPartland, Chair, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

Subject: MOU Meeting – B.S., B.A. in Chemistry, B.S., B.A. in Biochemistry, and M.S.
in Chemistry

On February 16, 2009, I met with Michael Leung, Dean, Science; Alan Monat, Associate Dean, Science; Ann McPartland, Chair, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Danika LeDuc, Assistant Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry; Aline Soules, Chair, CAPR; and Carl Bellone, AVP Academic Programs and Graduate Studies to discuss the Program Review for the B.S., B.A. in Chemistry, B.S., B.A. in Biochemistry, and M.S. in Chemistry and to develop an MOU as required by CAPR 9.

The Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry offers five degrees including several options. It is noted that the Forensic Science Option in the B.S. in Chemistry is gaining in popularity. The Department has experienced considerable growth over the past five years with a 45% increase in majors and a 50% increase in FTES.

There has been significant turnover of tenure-track faculty over the past five years (5 faculty members have separated). The Department had 7 tenure track faculty five years ago and now has 8 but one is on leave and it is unclear if she will return. The Department feels they need at least 2 more tenure-track faculty members to meet the growth in FTES and majors. The Chemistry and Biochemistry faculty is very productive with their own research agendas and with promoting undergraduate and graduate research. It is important for undergraduates to have research experience if they want to go on to graduate school.

The Department revised the B.A. in Chemistry to provide more options for students. The B.A. in Chemistry requires fewer Physical Chemistry and calculus courses so there is more room in the curriculum for options. The Department is planning on adding an Option in Teaching Chemistry to the B.A. in Chemistry.

CAPR reported that the Department is doing well with its assessment of student learning. The Department has ideas for improving its assessment efforts.

The external reviewer praised the program but warned that the faculty cannot sustain their workload without more compensation. He was concerned with the potential of faculty burnout.

The Department would like to improve student advising in the major and expand its tutoring services. The SCAA does not tutor in Chemistry or Biochemistry even though a Chemistry problem might essentially be a math problem. The Department has relied upon student volunteers to do tutoring. Dr. LeDuc is participating in the CSU Transforming Course Design project for Chemistry and as a result has implemented supplemental instruction courses for the first year Chemistry sequence. Student attendance and success in these supplemental courses has been good. Student facilitators are the instructors for the supplemental courses.

The CAPR Report made three recommendations as follows: 1) the department should aggressively pursue additional tenure track hires to keep pace with enrollment growth; 2) the 2 WTUs of assigned time currently earned by faculty to mentor students on research projects should be increased; and 3) the Department's office staff allocation which is now 1.75 should be increased to 2.0.

The results of the MOU meeting are as follows.

1. The Department is in need of additional tenure track faculty. Unfortunately, due to the current budget situation hiring of tenure track faculty has been curtailed. However, it is noted that tenure track faculty for Chemistry and Biochemistry is high on the priority list for the College of Science. Academic Affairs recognizes that the Department has a strong case for additional tenure track positions.
2. The Chemistry and Biochemistry faculty have been receiving 2 WTUs per year of assigned time for mentoring student research projects. This level of assigned time has not changed for many years. With the dramatic growth in students the Department would like to set a goal of establishing a better correlation between WTU and student research participation. It believes an increase to 4 WTU is reasonable at its current level of participation but understands immediate implementation is difficult with the present fiscal situation.
3. The Department's request for an additional .25 office staff allocation is reasonable given the increase in FTES and majors. However, given the current budget situation the awarding of additional staff resources is not likely to occur over at least the next 18 months. As the budget situation improves, Academic Affairs will give serious consideration of increasing the staff allocation by 0.25.
4. The Department is commended for its efforts on the assessment of student learning outcomes and is encouraged to do more in this area—especially the collection of data that can be used to improve learning.

AVP Carl Bellone and I are convinced that the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry is a very strong department that works well together for the benefit of students. The Department is to be congratulated for its efforts to promote undergraduate and graduate student research. Clearly the Department's graduates (and its service courses) are critical to the university's goal to enlarge the STEM and healthcare workforces of the region.

Finally, our thanks go to the CAPR members for their time and informative report.

c: Alan Monat, Associate Dean
Aline Soules, CAPR Chair
Sue Opp, Academic Senate Chair
Danika LeDuc, Chemistry and Biochemistry
Carl Bellone, AVP, Academic Programs & Graduate Studies