

SIS Council Meeting
July 7, 2006
9:30 a.m.

In attendance: Voting Members

Stephen Hirtle, SIS Council Chair
Richard Cox
Ellen Detlefsen (by phone)
Marek Druzdzal
Sherry Koshman
Paul Munro
Bob Perkoski
Kelly Shaffer
Rich Thompson

Non-voting members

Theresa Benedek
Mary K. Biagini
Ronald Larsen
Marsha Washington
Martin Weiss

Non-members

Karen Gracy
Daqing He

Welcome

Stephen Hirtle, Chair of the newly formed SIS Council, welcomed the group and announced several changes to the agenda as distributed. Dr. Hirtle gave an overview of the council membership and noted that student representatives will be elected in the Fall Term. He especially looks forward to heavy involvement from student representatives.

Charge from Dean Larsen

Dean Larsen suggested that this working group will create a new model for addressing challenges and fostering communications between Council, SIS Faculty, Staff and Students. This first year will be a “learn-as-we-go” experiment that the Provost will be watching closely. Details about procedures and processes will be worked out as the Council proceeds. One faculty member suggested that we think of this new process as a research project and that we observe how similar governance structure function at other schools. Dean Larsen thanked the council members for taking on this challenging responsibility and elevating the level of concerns that affect the future of the School.

Dean Larsen also stressed the importance of being on time for the Council Meetings, and distributing information that will be discussed at the meeting in a timely fashion so as to give members sufficient preparation time.

Calendar and routine communication

Bob Perkoski suggested that one central repository be made available for the SIS Community to view documents with motions, etc. The decision was made that a SIS Council web-page be created to access minutes, agendas, and other documents. Posted information will be made available to audiences within the “pitt.edu” domain. In addition, Stephen Hirtle requested that public documents should also be readily available on the website. These would include the Promotion and Tenure Guidelines; Peer Evaluation of Teaching, etc.

Action Item: Distribution of Memos. Richard Cox suggested that routine memos sent from the Provost's Office and other University areas, such as "Syllabus Statement Concerning Students with Disabilities", "Faculty Activities" announcements, etc., be sent directly to faculty and staff as PDF files rather than to the program chairs to distribute. Everyone was in agreement with this proposal.

Mary K. Biagini brought up the critical issue of a school-wide calendaring system and proposed that it be a high priority for this Fall. Bob Perkoski also suggested that the SIS Council address the use of technology during this year, especially standardization of technology usage. He recommended that a small group be appointed to look at some of these items and make recommendations to resolve issues in a timely manner.

The SIS Council suggested that Mark Steggert be invited to attend the Council Meetings and give a report on Technology issues.

Action Item: SIS Calendar. A Task Force was formed to look at School-wide calendaring and have a suggested solution before the beginning of the Fall Term. The Task Force members are:

Bob Perkoski, Chair
Mary K. Biagini
Paul Munro

PBC Activities: The SIS Council will take on many of the activities traditionally undertaken by the PBC including strategic planning. The Dean's Office will take the lead to begin preparing the text for the School's Strategic Plan, which is due to the Provost's Office on March 1, 2007. Parts of the document can be prepared this summer particularly updates about the reorganization of the School, the SIS by-laws, the MLIS COA Accreditation, etc. The content of the strategic planning document will be determined by the SIS Council. A Council Retreat will be scheduled to talk about the elements to be addressed in the strategic plan for next year. Throughout this Fall, to the SIS Council will begin exploring short-term and long-term goals for the School..

Ron Larsen reviewed with the group the SIS Tactical Plan prepared by MBS Marketing and suggested that this document be used as a tool for communications, explicit assignments, and goals. The MBS Marketing plan will need to be updated to reflect current and future items, as well as to parallel the SIS Strategic Plan. Monthly Progress Status Report Forms will be made available electronically and prepared by the Strategic Leaders identified in the Tactical Plan. The reports will have a color coded system indicating if the goal is "on target" (green); "behind plan/target" (yellow); "area of concern" (red); and if the goal is completed (black). Monthly reminders will be sent to the Strategic Leaders to complete the reports and send them to the Dean. These reports can also be used by the SIS Council to keep track of the progress made in reaching the School's goals.

Action Item: Benchmarking

Martin Weiss suggested that an Ad Hoc Committee be created to determine what we want benchmarking to achieve, what it will be used for, and how we go about doing it.

The Committee will decide what is to be measured internally and externally. The Ad Hoc Committee Members are:

Martin Weiss, Chair

Richard Cox

Kelly Shaffer

Mary K. Biagini

One faculty member from Tele or IS will be asked to join this Committee

Action Item: Research Interest Groups

Martin Weiss informed the group that at the first faculty meeting, faculty will be asked to engage in conversation and give ideas for possible research interest groups. The most popular ideas will become the School's sanctioned research groups; faculty can then join the groups which suit their interests. Entrepreneurial funds will be used to seed research activities. These research groups should have the potential to grow into a million dollar research center within three years. The Research Advisory Committee will be chaired by Martin Weiss and comprised of members from the research interest groups. Examples of possible groups would be a Digital Libraries Research Group to piggyback on the upcoming digital libraries conference in Pittsburgh and an Ethics and Policy Group to piggyback on the IGERT proposal. Stephen Hirtle suggested that a blog be used to propose potential research groups prior to the September faculty meeting. Martin will send an e-mail to the faculty to start thinking about possibilities for research groups.

Student Advisory Council

The Student Services Advisory Committee will be chaired by Mary K. Biagini. The other members of the committee will be designated by the four program chairs.

Communication

Given the need to update the website to reflect the reorganization of the school, Stephen Hirtle suggested that the Council form an Ad Hoc Communications Committee. The committee would make recommendations on all school-wide communications issues, including revisions to the website, improved communication with students through email listserves, blogs and/or courseweb, and an improved infrastructure for the faculty and staff to communicate with each other, such as a school-wide intranet. Ron informed the group that Patty Beeson, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies, has offered us the opportunity to use provost funds to redesign the School's website utilizing the University Marketing staff.

Action Item: Ad Hoc Communications Committee was initiated and charged with researching and recommending ways to: use the intranet, enhance web presence, use e-mail communication with students and other related matters.

Paul Munro - Chair

Mary Kay Biagini

Ellen Detlefsen

Bob Perkoski

Martin Weiss

Kelly Shaffer

Other faculty members to be appointed

Action Item: Promotion and Tenure Guidelines

The Council voted unanimously to continue to enforce the current Promotion and Tenure Guidelines for one more year, especially in light of the two/three cases that will be reviewed this year. An Ad Hoc Committee will be appointed at the Fall Faculty Meeting to review and revise the current Promotion and Tenure Guidelines. The new Guidelines will be implemented in the Fall 2007.

Action Item: Peer Evaluation of Teaching

The Council agreed to have the Committee for the Peer Evaluation of Teaching give a report of the past year's activities at the Fall Faculty Meeting. The Committee has recommended several revisions to the current guidelines that will need faculty approval.

Action Item: PeopleSoft Update

Mary K. Biagini reported that by the beginning of August each faculty member will have access to information about their individual advisees through PeopleSoft. She shared with the group documentation on how faculty will be able to access PeopleSoft to see their Student Advisee Roster. Mary K. will be sending an e-mail to faculty and staff informing them when the system will be ready for use along with instructions. Paul Munro asked if faculty could access records for other faculty advisees – Mary K. will look into how to do so.

Action Item: Space

Conversation centered on space utilization in the building. This issue will be revisited in November when a Standing Committee on Space will be appointed to review the current situation. The Standing Committee will make a recommendation to the SIS Council on its findings and it will also be part of the objectives for next year's strategic plan.

Next scheduled meetings:

Faculty Meetings: – once a semester – First scheduled meeting: September 8, 2006

Council Meetings: September 15, October 13, November 10, December 8,
January 12, February 9, March 16, April 13, May 18

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.