FACULTY OF ENGINEERING
Dean’s Staff Advisory Committee

Tuesday, March 19, 2015
1:00 am – 2:00 pm
E2 - 3324

MINUTES

Present: Jayne Dean (Chair), Pat Anderson, Tara Gingerich Hiebert, Andrea Hagedorn, Jen Fung, Karl Janzen, Donna Kellendonk, Vicky Lawrence, Martin MacLeod, Jennifer Moll, Martin Scherer, Mark Sobon, Pearl Sullivan, Marilyn Thompson, Tim Weber (Acting Secretary)

Regrets: Mona Skuterud, Ian Taylor, Dawn Cheng

Jayne Dean introduced herself and welcomed DSAC members and guest speaker Marilyn Thompson to the meeting. Roundtable introductions were made.

1. Guest Speaker: Marilyn Thompson, Associate Provost, Human Resources

Marilyn Thompson spoke to priorities for Human Resources (HR) at the University of Waterloo. One of the priorities for HR is the Robust Employer-Employee Relationship theme outlined in the University of Waterloo’s Strategic Plan. In order to meet the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan, HR is working on creating a recruitment strategy, solid career experiences, and leadership management opportunities, as well as keeping up on policy review and doing exit interviews with those who have been given offers of employment but have turned them down. Also a tentative agreement has reached between the university and the staff association on staff salaries which is the same agreement between the university and the faculty association for faculty salaries. Part of the agreement includes conducting a total compensation review within the next year. Marilyn informed DSAC what would be covered in the total compensation review and explained why the Hay system would not be included. Another priority for HR is the commitment of implementing the Excellence Canada standard across campus. The Library was selected as a pilot and has received bronze certification. The next parts of campus to participate are the Faculties of AHS and Math, with the Faculty of Engineering participating at some point in the future. Marilyn explained the history of Excellence Canada and the University of Waterloo’s choice to use the Excellence, Innovation, and Wellness (EIW) standard.

Marilyn answered questions from DSAC members on a variety of topics. The issue of performance review clarification and consistency was acknowledged and it was noted that there is no plan to move to the 360-degree feedback method. It was explained that there is not a high enough turn-over rate among staff to justify posting available positions more often. Finally Marilyn provide further updates on initiatives currently being undertaken in HR including quicker on-boarding for new staff, investing in psychological help in the work place, a new HR system, and management leadership development plans.

2. Report from the Dean

Pearl Sullivan reported on various matters affecting the Faculty of Engineering.
The months of January and February have been incredibly busy with the Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF) application. The University of Waterloo submitted one application with three distinct sections, with the Internet of Things section led by Catherine Rothenberg and the Faculty of Engineering. Pearl thanked Engineering Research Office staff members Jon Walgate, Page Burton, and Dave Dietz for their assistance in the application. The results of the CFREF first competition will be announced in July 2015 and the second competition deadline will be in October 2015 in which the Faculty of Engineering is anticipated to submit a second application in advanced manufacturing.

Graduate Studies has become a priority for the Faculty of Engineering as there has been a decline in Domestic PhD students has affected the operating budget. This is important because of government funding as less domestic PhDs will result in losing future grants. A number of measures have been put in place to attract top domestic students. Staff members involved with graduate students have lots of work and there is a need to emphasize customer service. Pearl noted that international students are important for academic purposes but there is a need to be financially responsible to support our operations.

The new budget model is currently being developed to move the University of Waterloo to an environment of transparency and accountability. The day to day operations costs will be passed to the Faculties resulting in space could be a concern. It is important to begin utilizing space more efficiently and optimize Faculty resources. New technology may be able to help to some extend but Pearl reported currently having to make tough choices and thinking long term.

Pearl also spoke to the importance of student services, academic excellence, and becoming a world class institution. As well the importance of co-op and connections to industry were also addressed.

Pearl answered questions on budget cuts, clarifying the causes and presenting the plan moving forward.

3. DSAC webpage

Tim Weber reported the need to move the DSAC webpage to the Waterloo Content Management System (WCMS). Due to timing it was decided this item would be addressed over email.

4. Other Business

Jayne Dean requested that DSAC members email her with their suggestions for future DSAC guest speakers.

Adjourned: 2:00pm