

Institute for Cross-college Biology Education (ICBE) Town Hall Meeting

October 23, 2006

Called to order at 2:05 PM

Attending: Brian Asen, Janet Batzli, Robert Bohanan, Janet Branchaw, Brian Bubenzer, Richard Burgess, Daryl Buss, Jane Harris Cramer, Donna Fernandez, Cindee Giffen, Jeffrey Hardin, Michelle Harris, Jean Heitz, Patricia Henrikson, Robert Jeanne, Raymond Kessel, Sarah Kuba, Brian Manske, Sarah Miller, David Nelson, Kevin Niemi, Robert Ray, Gary Roberts, Thomas Sharkey, Mary Smith, Karen Steudel, Kevin Strang, Kenneth Sytsma, Lillian Tong, Alan Wolf

Announcements

Introductions

Incoming class

- Rob Seltzer reports student interest in biology continues to be very strong on campus
- Last fall more students enrolled than expected, creating an increased demand on introductory biology courses this semester.

Cell and Molecular Biology Graduate Program

- The Graduate School directed the program to find another administrative home. ICBE may be a possible match due to the interdisciplinary nature of the institute. This would require an enlargement of the current mandate for ICBE, which would be discussed widely before any changes would be made.

Instructional Building for Biology

History

- Recommendations for an interdisciplinary building/instructional space dates back to the Hearn Committee and the Undergraduate Biology Education Committee.
- Rose Barroilhet coined the term BioStar to link biology interest groups.
- Governor Thompson pledged \$320 million to support BioStar I through IV, \$50 million intended for BioStar IV.
- The Biological Sciences Strategic Planning Committee put instructional space in Biostar IV as a high priority.
- Provost Spear envisioned the Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery as an enhanced research wing associated with BioStar IV.
- BioStar IV disappears as campus asks for access to the \$50 million (a 2 for 1 match provided by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation and Morgridge family). This likely saved the \$50 million from being lost forever.

What next?

- Campus has limited building resources. Biology needs a very high position on the funding line to move instructional space plans forward. The biology community needs to decide what kind of building is needed.
 1. Interdisciplinary?
 - a. Chemistry won't drive an interdisciplinary discussion, but might be a willing partner. Chemistry wants a new building and renovations, and plans to move towards that goal.
 - b. Biocore would appreciate access to chemistry facilities
 - c. Physics just renovated their space
 2. Site?

- a. Noland Hall/Zoology Research - in need of major overhaul, plumbing not good, coal dust affecting equipment.
- b. Psychology Building (Brogden Hall) is a possible location
- c. The Medical Sciences Center location should be investigated.
- d. Botany and Zoology space would be extremely expensive to remodel.
- e. Backfill plan needed
- f. Physiology Department needs teaching space

The Advisory Committee supports a mixed used facility, which might increase the likelihood of garnering WARF/donor dollars. Any plan would need broad political support. Tom is encouraged to work with the Biological Sciences Deans, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs), L&S and other colleges who have common interests.

Should focus on what would interdisciplinary science look like 20 years from now.

Access to Introductory Courses

There are three introductory course sequences, Zoology 101/02 and Botany 130 (accepted by all biology majors except Medical Microbiology and Immunology), Biology/Botany/Zoology 151/52 and Biocore.

Growth

1. Since 1985, 151/52 has been enlarged in bursts of 200, with CALs, Governor's initiative, L&S, and ICBE all contributing to the expansion of the course.
2. Primarily sophomores enrolled in 151/152
3. Waitlist has diffused some anger over course access

Constraints to increasing the size of the courses

1. Lecturers have gone from 6 people/year to 30/year.
2. Teaching Assistants/Coordinators/Supplies. Requires Full Time Equivalents and cash
3. Limited lab space, currently scheduling allows for about 200 students per lab room. A10 to 20% increase might be possible with different scheduling but no more than that.

Problems for students not getting into 151/2

1. Students closed out of the Fall semester may not get to start biology until their fourth semester, a substantial inconvenience
2. Students unable to get into 151 in the Spring will be mostly first year students and delaying until the beginning of their second year may not be as much of an inconvenience.
3. The demand for 151 last Spring was less than 400 students while the demand this Fall was much greater than 600. Should the nominal 400 Spring/ 600 Fall 151 access be modified (e.g. 200 Spring/800 Fall)?
4. Many students were accommodated in 101/2 plus 130. ICBE is committed to keeping these departmental courses a viable option but also to providing room in the courses that students want and not forcing students into other courses because of limited capacity.

The biological sciences majors have grown 50% over the last few years (handout), but not resources. ICBE's goal is to support departments and interdisciplinary courses, and not to undercut department authority. The institute wants to foster ownership of the interdepartmental course throughout the entire biology community.

Steering Committee Vacancy.

Donna McCarthy Becket, School of Nursing, will leave the University in January, creating a vacancy on the Steering Committee. Nominations for Donna's replacement are welcome. The Steering Committee members should have broad knowledge of ICBE functions as opposed to

representing one constituency. However, at present there is no one from the executive committees of any of the majors, and this expertise could be helpful to the Steering Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM

submitted by Mary Smith