

Meeting Minutes
Executive Committee of the AFSE
February 4, 2022
12 NOON via Zoom

Present: Christopher Buneo, Samantha Brunhaver, Marcus Herrmann (chair), Dianne Hansford (secretary), Rosa Krajmalnik-Brown, Pitu Mirchandani, Jitendran Muthuswamy, George Pan, Rod Roscoe, Sefaattin Tongay, Yong-Hang Zhang

Absent: Anthony Lamanna, Yalin Wang

Guests: Kyle Squires

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from January 2022 were unanimously approved.

Dean's Dissertation Award

Marcus: Let's continue our discussion of the purpose of award. (See the December 2021 minutes.)

In an email, Yong-Hang has suggested a modification of the dissertation award definition.

The main criteria for the thesis award are based on its contributions to scientific discovery and technological advancement. The impact of thesis will be evaluated based on the recommendations of the nomination materials, and the student's publications in both peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings, **demonstration of practical applications, or successful commercialization of the developed IP.**

Yong-Hang: The highlighted can be deleted. Basically, it will be better to include some measurable matrix to minimize controversy if only subjective matrix are used.

Kyle shared some insight into the evolution of the award. At the undergraduate level, we have an "Outstanding Graduate Award" and an "Impact Award". The two awards pick out 5% of graduates. (At this time, this is about 40 students). We thought that maybe the undergraduate structure can be mirrored at the graduate level. We have approximately 150 – 200 graduate students per year.

Rosie: Do we want a best dissertation award and a best graduate award?

Kyle: The Dean's Dissertation Award might be the only award, but we need to be clearer as to what the criteria are.

Pitu; I think there is an argument for two awards – best dissertation and best student.

Sef: I suggest two kinds of awards; one research, one broader impact than just research. One being a good community member in addition to being a good student.

Rod: Let's unpack what research means. It could be broader. The impact of the research is important in the evaluation of what is good research. We cannot divorce research from the world. (Discovery and societal impact)

Pitu: We cannot define research because there are many different definitions. It is easier to say that one

award is for research, and one is on impact/service.

Rod: we should think about impact as an important part of research.

Chris: one award with a focus of Rod's comments seems to satisfy ASU mission. (Rod and Chris shared the following links in chat.)

<https://www.asu.edu/about/charter-mission>

<https://newamericanuniversity.asu.edu/about/design-aspirations>

Jit: All "valuable" research has impact; it can take a long time to realize impact.

Sef: We need specific metrics to identify who should receive award. These need to be quantitative measures: number of patents, etc.

Jit: We are already asking the letter writers to measure impact. We have to depend on that; we cannot judge this as a committee due to the variance across fields.

Rod: Maybe the term "impact" is problematic. We could look at "innovation". Is it commitment to community responsibility? Excellent scholarship and what it can do for the world.

Pitu: The NSF asks what the impacts are. The applications should have a section like that.

Marcus: We do have an intellectual merit and broader impacts section. Maybe we need the letter writers to focus on this section, and also discuss the "New American University".

Pitu: The summary page is important for evaluation. What the nominator thinks are the intellectual contributions and impacts.

Yong-Hang: Let's get these ideas in writing to finer tune and summarize our ideas. I like the impact award idea.

Rosie: How about just renaming the award, to take the focus from the dissertation only.

Marcus: we want award to be broader, so a different name would give us that flexibility. However, everything does come back to the thesis work.

Marcus: Dianne, me, others, come up with language for the application. Let's add new American university language and be more specific on what the letter writer should address.

Rod, Pitu, Yong-Hang have volunteered to help with the language. Then we will discuss this at the next meeting

Pitu: do we want to have awards at two times per year?

Kyle: Please include a time-line in this refresh of the award. Let's look at when students are graduating. (In old days it was always May.) If there are more in Fall, then it makes sense to create a 2nd round of nominations. The number of awards given should be a percentage of graduates.

Update to the Bylaws

Some language was sent to Vice Dean Marco Saraniti. Kyle: we have discussed this and we plan to continue the discussion.

Rod: I have not received worries or pushback from faculty regarding the administrative change wording.

Dean's Distinguished Lecturer

Lalitha Sankar has scheduled Robert Calderbank <https://ece.duke.edu/faculty/robert-calderbank> for April 22. Waiting to hear if the talk is in person.

Rosie: this date is Passover, so some people will not be able to attend.

Marcus: We should go ahead with dissertation award poster sessions. Should there be a short presentation too?

Who orchestrates lab visits, introductions, etc?

Kyle: Lalitha would lead this with help from Dean's side.

EC Secretary Election

No input

COVID19 Update

Kyle: Not a lot has changed since last meeting. The accommodations list on the faculty/staff side has gotten shorter. Students who are employees will need to get vaccinated too. We don't have all the information we need from some.

When people contract covid, we do like know. We also need to know vaccination status.

Masks are still required in classrooms. The University is thinking about when to change the protocol.

Rosie: if testing done through ASU, then does ASU know about test results? Kyle: yes, that is my understanding that the results will go to the dean of students. Is that for faculty too? No. Employee wellness will contact you and you will be asked to contact your supervisor.

The University is also considering how long should the "daily health check" app be in place.

Marcus: Is there special planning for finals? Are there any changes to steps to take if a student is infected during finals?

Rosie: What about spring break? Kyle: it is still on the schedule. Soon I will have meetings in which we plan to discuss all these issues.

Rosie: Going to conferences is stressful with testing and the different protocols in countries.

Meeting adjourned

ACTION ITEMS

- Dean's Dissertation Award definition and time-line update: Marcus, Pitu, Rod, Yong-Hang will create language that the committee can review at the March meeting. Dianne will help get the email communication started.
- Can we change talk date so not on Passover? Dianne will contact Lalitha Sankar.

Next Meeting

Friday, March 4, 2022 at noon

Location: Zoom <https://asu.zoom.us/j/81081444516?from=addon>