Budget planning for next year - While we don’t yet have hard figures from campus for growth funding, we should get the second three-year chunk of $4 million in new funds next year. After that, the increase in funds will be smaller but likely to occur each year. Rob urged the departments (again) to be liberal in making offers to new PhD students and also to begin planning for staff additions (on average, one per department for next year). Also, the college was able to provide 60% of the first $350K for faculty startup packages this past year. Rob is anticipating an increase to the college/campus doing two-thirds of the first $450K for hires starting next year. Much of the departmental portion could come from graduate TA funds provided to the departments, as well as from vacancy funds.

Space planning for next year – Campus planning for a major ($24 million) renovation of the Engineering Center is beginning, with the main focus on the ECES (former ChBE) wing. It is anticipated that conceptual and detailed design will take place in 2015, and the renovation work will take place in 2016. The classroom and teaching lab space in the Biotechnology Building is now done, with classes being offered this semester. The fifth wing of the Biotechnology Building is currently being designed, and it is anticipated that state funding will be provided in FY16 for its construction. SEEC office space is expected to be completed this summer, and lab space next winter. The Aerospace Building is awaiting a state funding decision, which could come this summer but more likely another year. Rob asked that units hold off on requesting to-be-vacated space until we have more information and send out a call (hopefully later this semester).

Faculty and staff evaluations and forms – Self-evaluations for exempt staff are due 31 January, and comments by evaluators are due 9 February. The chairs agreed that we will use the new narrative form for faculty, in which the faculty member’s self-assessment from item 201 Annual Activity Summary of the FRPA will be placed on the form, and then the evaluator will have a space to add comments.

Guidelines on research evaluations and teaching loads – It was confirmed that summer contributions to research and scholarly work should be included in the annual evaluations of faculty performance, whether or not the faculty member received pay for summer research. And, sabbaticals and other leaves with a focus on research and scholarly work will have higher weightings for research (typically 80% for that period). The principle of higher teaching or service loads for those faculty members with lower research activity and productivity was also confirmed, but prior guidelines need to be revised now that we are no longer using numerical scores in the annual evaluations. A grace period to improve research was also recommended.

First-year curriculum task force – It was noted that departments have added first-year courses that are specific to their majors, making it more difficult for a student to change majors after the freshman year, and also to transfer into a major from open option, without being behind or having his or her number of elective courses reduced. Rather than forming a task force at this time, it was recommended that Diane first assign one of the staff members to look at a variety of curriculum paths, in which a student enters a given major at the end of the first year from another major or open option, and determine if the flexible first-year concept is still working or if there are too many constraints.

In attendance: Rob Davis, JoAnn Zelasko, Doug Smith, Sarah Miller, Diane Sieber, Scott Palo, Penny Axelrad, Dan Schwartz, Balaji Rajagopalan, Jim Martin, Bob Erickson, Clayton Lewis, Mark Gross