ECU Chapter Society for Neuroscience
Council Minutes for August 10, 2006

Present: Alex Murashov (Chair), Abdel Abdel-Rahman, Sherri Jones, Jian Ding, Erik Everhart, Qun Lu, Amy Friesland, Teresa Lever, Sarath Vijayakumar
Excused Absence: Kori Brewer

Meeting called to order at 2:35pm

Item 1. Introductions
Members introduced themselves. Alex congratulated the council members for being elected to serve and commented on the enthusiasm across campus for reviving the neuroscience chapter. Current email list includes 87 members. Alex also thanked Ed Lieberman and Larry Means for the foundation and many years of service to the chapter.

Item 2. Introductory Comments from the Chair
Alex listed several areas that he feels are important for the chapter to revive and flourish:

1. Hold regular council meetings and elections and maintain minutes.
2. Include individuals (both members and administration) in various chapter activities.
3. Develop and maintain mechanisms and a structure to support the chapter regardless of the individuals holding office or council seats.
4. Establish standing committees for various chapter activities.
5. Revitalize the annual chapter meeting. Suggested ideas included:
   a. Adopt a scale for the symposium that is affordable for the chapter.
   b. Secure a guest speaker
   c. Present various awards at the end of the meeting.
6. Obtain financial support. Suggested ideas included:
   a. Consider instituting dues for faculty members, perhaps $5 to $35
7. Increase visibility. Suggested ideas included:
   a. Emails
   b. Regular newsletter
   c. Website

Item 3. Open Discussion
Alex distributed a packet of information including the list of council members, list of chapter members, major tasks, proposed standing committees, proposed nominees for standing committees, proposed schedule, tentative agenda for the next meeting. The floor was then open for discussion.

Erik Everhart currently serves as the Director of the Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Program and discussed the current status of the program. Several areas were highlighted:

• Lack of documentation regarding student progress in the program. Erik is currently revising syllabi and documentation requirements for students.
• Guidelines for senior theses are being developed.
• No secretarial support for the director even though the department is housed administratively in the college of arts and sciences.
• Lack of student response and participation in the Neuroscience Club. Erik feels that the club will improve this year.
• One of two capstone courses (cellular and molecular neuroscience) used to have a guest lecture format but is now taught as an online course, which may not be optimal for student learning.
The undergraduate program currently has several students. Last year, 10 students graduated. Five students are expected to start the program this fall.

The department of psychology offers a master's degree with emphasis in neuroscience.

There is an established PhD program in Biological Sciences wherein students may emphasize neuroscience. There has been no enrollment in this program due to availability of student funding past two years.

Following council discussion, the following action was agreed upon: Erik will email the curriculum and thesis guidelines for the undergraduate neuroscience program. He will also send information on the PhD program including who oversees that program at present. These items will be discussed at the next meeting.

Abdel Abdel-Rahman questioned the extent to which the chapter could or should direct the educational program(s) available on campus. He noted that the chapter bylaws have a clear mandate to promote research, but do not contain a mandate for curriculum development or program oversight. However, the chapter should encourage and seek ways to maximize research experiences and research training in existing programs and should actively participate in education.

Jian Ding led a general discussion on the need to establish a PhD program in neuroscience. A general sentiment that this would be very difficult in the current administrative climate was expressed and perhaps such a program could evolve from the existing PhD in Biological Sciences, for which Erik will be seeking additional information.

Qun Lu discussed the proposed timing for the annual neuroscience symposium in relation to the annual SFN meeting. Alex and Abdel stated that the symposium was traditionally held before the annual meeting, but this year it will be held after the annual meeting due to time constraints.

Jian Ding proposed ways to fund activities including drafting a letter to John Lehmann requesting his support for the chapter, seeking funds from external sources and establishing closer ties with Chapel Hill. Jian will prepare a draft letter for discussion at the next meeting.

Abdel emphasized that we need to establish collaborative research efforts among the ECU neuroscientists. This will facilitate requests to administration for support as well as increase external funding options.

**Item 4. Selection of Standing Committee Chairs**

- Alex and Abdel will co-chair the Annual Symposium Committee
- Jian will chair the Finance Committee
- Erik will chair the Neuroscience Program Committee
- Qun will chair the Neuroscience Seminar Committee
- Public Relations and Strategic Planning Committees remain open at this time.

Amy Friesland and Teresa Lever will work with Erik to report on the Neuroscience Club at the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 7, 2006 at 2:30pm in the Physiology conference room.

No additional business. Meeting adjourned at 4:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sherri M. Jones, Secretary