

Minutes of the Physics Department Meeting Wednesday, January 25, 2006
Called to order by Don Cox 12:19 in Chamberlin 5310
Minutes by Lori Turner, Assistant to the Chair

No Policy Actions were taken at the January 25, 2006 meeting

1. Announcements: No announcements
2. No matters arising.
3. Mary Anne Clarke distributed and discussed the trends of enrollment for Physics courses for the past three years. See attachment.
- 4) Added item: Mary Anne and Jim Lawler presented the ongoing dilemma of grad students having guaranteed support not finding research groups. This caused considerable discussion. The eventual conclusion was that our current offer letter covers the situation, reporting the need for acceptable progress, and need not be revised before the offers go out. What is required is to define acceptable progress to include progress toward finding a research group, and force accountability on that requirement.

The discussion of detail was tabled until next meeting,

The trend of the discussion involved creation of a form that a grad student would have to obtain and have filled out by a prospective major professor during the second semester of their first year. The form has the professor agreeing that this person is moving toward attachment to his/her group. Some versions suggested that it should also identify a "project" in which the student is becoming involved. The student would then have to return the form to the dept office in order to continue to be considered to be making acceptable progress. Presumably this would need to be repeated each semester or year until the student has an RA.

The purpose was to create a mechanism for discomfiting those students who take the support guarantee to mean that they can take n years to find a major professor. It puts a process in place that makes them face their obligation to move on.

Without successful completion of the form, the support guarantee would lapse.

Meeting adjourned at 12:46pm