Integrated Science Meeting Notes for Tuesday, April 29, 2008

Members Present; Todd Primm, Solomon Schneider, Marcus Gillespie, Bobby Lane, Matt Rowe, Brian Loft, Doug Constance, Chris Baldwin

Meeting began at 3:35 and ended at 4:50

Approved minutes from 4-22 meeting

Discussed using "Foundations of Science" naming for the course to avoid pre-judgments on the current naming "Integrated Science."

Potential causes of resistance against this course in the future:

a) There is concern among faculty that this course will be "watered-down" science.

b) Another possible concern may be which department "owns" the course. How will shared ownership work?

A key assessment: track students grades in other science courses after completion of this course.

Also, track how many students from this course become science majors as compared to other non-majors courses.

Issue: how to compensate faculty for guest lectures, that is covering one or two modules for a course officially taught by another instructor?

Discussion on which assessment tools to use.

A favorite of several committee members was EBAPS. Will use this test as the preliminary baseline assessment in the fall of 2008. As optional means of administering the test it was suggested that: 1) we give this to a random sample of students in introductory science courses at the end of the semester; 2) that we give it to a random set of classes at the end of the fall semester and/or 3) that we give it as part of a final exam. Concern was expressed that students would not take the test seriously and would simply fill in answers. Because of this concern, we felt that it might have to be linked to a grade or to a test even if the answers to the EBAPS were not included as part of the test grade. This approach would have to be taken up with the human subjects committee.

Lots of support was also expressed for the critical thinking case studies in biology materials as it represent one of the core goals of the course, which is to teach students how to evaluate claims using critical thinking and the rules of scientific investigation.