

Earth and Environmental Sciences Department Alumni Advisory Board

Meeting minutes

October 25, 2024, 9:00 – 12:00 Central

135 Trowbridge Hall

In person:

Mike Burkhart, Jim Eagan, Melissa Evans, Brian Hartman, Lee Phillips, Todd Ririe, Eric Small, Noah Stern, Tim Stroope, Amy Sullivan (Faculty/Staff: Tiffany Adrain, Emily Finzel, David Peate, Kate Tierney, Matt Wortel (EES), and Travis Foss (Advancement); Guest: Matt Burreson)

Remote:

Katie Goff, Luan Heywood, Ben Howard, Liz Maas, Aaron Suzuki;

Not Attending:

Richard Denne – in the field and was not able to attend

Roll Call, Agenda Overview (Phillips)

Review April 2024 Minutes and Actions -> No comments, as distributed.

Introduction from everyone.

Nominating Committee (Phillips/Maas)

Liz on bus cannot speak-> Lee updates board

Four board members are completing 3-year term (**Todd, Aaron, Jim, and Richard**). Since members may only serve 2 consecutive terms on board, we offer thanks and gratitude to **Richard** and **Todd** for their contributions and service to the EESB.

Aaron and Jim wish to continue serving for another term. **Jim** has offered to cover where needed

We have a need to populate the board with new folks. **Ben and Eric** can reach out to classmates. We also need to attract members from geography.

Fundraising Committee: (Stern, Foss, Phillips, Peate)

All numbers reflect June 2023 to May 2024: UICA outright gifts: \$165,640; UICA Deferred gifts: \$224,270; Sum of gifts: \$389,910.

Pledges are down compared to previous years, but that is often a result in a higher number of gifts.

Aaron asks: Are our alumni as generous “Per capita” compared with other departments? Yes, EES has a high amount of philanthropic participation, especially compared to CLAS. There will be a data pull for the exact numbers. Currently, engagement for giving is higher in geology than geography. Emily asks if the data pull for philanthropy can be distributed prior to spring meeting.

One Day for Iowa 2023: 27 gifts from 14 states, \$3,850 from board, which was counted as one of the 27 gifts. Including match is \$7,010 raised for field courses. This highlights that we can raise money for field courses. We will be doing this same fund raising program next year.

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The department can highlight another fund for One Day for Iowa. This does not mean we are going to. Field courses remain a high priority. No word yet on how field course fund raising going to work post-merger of departments. We will need to assess priorities when that time comes. IF we highlight funds, less than 5 is ideal (Political Science highlights 3). Regardless, money is often allocated based off of the donor's interest.

How can we get more involvement from [young] alumni, for example, it would be great to get 200+ \$10 gifts, rather than huge gifts from few donors? Social media presence is often an indication of the success of involvement in young alumni. The board then spoke about the possibility of using LinkedIn.

Estate gift for the new school: Alumni from Tippie who donated-> they have an interest in climate. The gift was \$100,000.

Plan for this year: Fundraising Committee has the task of creating next year's plan, discuss further at next meeting.

Open discussion of new ways to generate funding not yet explored. **Ben and Eric** can help mitigate and promote the involvement of their alumni cohort. There was a lot of discussion about reaching out in a personal and massive (Biltz like) fashion. **David Peate** suggested that we can have a section in the next newsletter that highlights exactly how the field course fund was used for that year, which could help develop interest in supporting the fund.

Departmental Updates (Peate, Finzel, Tierney)

Please update here

Departmental Research Updates (Payré, Dannenberg)

Matt Danneberg (Assistant Professor in GES) and **Valerie Payre** (Assistant Professor in EES) provided a summary of their current research which focuses on the response of vegetation to climate variability and efforts to understand the prospect of Martian tectonics, respectively.

Mentoring Committee (Ririe)

We need a new head for the mentoring committee. Can we get the department's mentoring program on the university's website? **Emily** suggests adding a link on the dept website to the mentorship program. **Eric and Ben** volunteered for the mentorship committee.

Lee mentioned that when we bring people into this program, we need to make sure we are ready to serve. We need to check if there is foot traffic for the mentorship program and make sure there are updated materials.

Alumni Outreach Committee (Hartman)

2025 Distinguished Alumni Award nominations: List of nominees remains strong, and at least one new nomination is in development (**Amy**). Qualifications for the Distinguished Alumni Award: Recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to earth and environmental sciences throughout their careers. Awardees have personified service to and passion for the discipline and community.

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How do we get more alumni involvement in the board meeting? We can include it in the weekly newsletter. Alumni contact information is held by the foundation and if individuals haven't been added or have elected to be removed, then we don't have access to that information.

There is opportunity for engagement in the alumni board, especially for younger board members. This is a big year as we are celebrating 150 yrs of the geological sciences at the University of Iowa. We could get alumni more involved by posting to Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn. We should make an alumni group for all/some of the aforementioned websites for the department. **Ben** will reach out to the head of the DFW (Dallas/Fort Worth) alumni group for advice on the growth of the DFW LinkedIn group. How can we mimic this on our scale? **CAN** we mimic this at our scale?

Alumni outreach committee has had a slow year. This can be more integrated with the fundraising committee and consolidated. Do we have a list of alumni that we can reach out to talk to about joining the board/donating? Yes, but again, it is held by the foundation. On the outreach note we can grow the alumni group via the foundation or LinkedIn.

Other Business

Bylaws Revision – Call for ad hoc committee (3-5 members) (Burkhart)

As the department transitions to be a part of the School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability, **Lee** has formed an ad hoc committee to revisit the EES bylaws. **Mike Burkart** has agreed to chair the committee, which will also include **Lee** as a member. The committee will focus on board membership to be inclusive of Geographical and Sustainability Sciences alumni. The ad hoc Bylaws committee should also review each point so as to be inclusive of the merger as possible. The committee should meet regularly between now and the spring meeting, where it should be ready to present revisions for board consideration. **Mike and Lee** will seek to build a committee of no more than five to work on this.

Final Comments (All)

Spring meeting on the first or second Friday of April.

One day for Iowa in spring is at the end of March.

Passing the figurative gavel to **Melissa Evans**, Chair Elect, who will take over EESB leadership in January.