

Program Review for Physics & Astronomy

Development of Action Steps

General Comment:

The reviewers were impressed with the curriculum, highlighted student satisfaction with the program, but also identified challenges that could impede the program's growth and erode some core strengths (plant biology expertise and collaborations related to it)

Commendations:

1. The Department is a valuable resource and has demonstrated very high quality in research and education
2. Morale is high
3. Faculty, graduate students and undergraduate students are involved in exciting research
4. High student satisfaction with faculty
5. Active partnership with the American Museum of Natural History via the AstroCom NYC program

Identified Issues:

1. Seniority of faculty members/risk of loss from retirement. The Solid State group with two faculty is particularly vulnerable
2. The Department's research composition is almost entirely theoretical, which is reflected in the curriculum with a lack of advanced lab courses
3. Office and research space is limited
4. The number of physics majors is small
5. Students expressed concern about the lack of a community environment on campus, course availability, and tutoring resources
6. There is a burden for maintenance of instructional lab equipment and rapid replacement of supplies

Recommendations:

| Recommendation | Strengths Leveraged/Issues Addressed | Notes | Responsible Party | Actions Taken |
|---|--------------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Add one additional tenure-earning faculty member within the next few years to strengthen the Solid State group | Issue 1 | | Provost Dean Program | |
| 2. Develop a plan of action with the senior administration to guarantee "one-to-one replacements" of retiring faculty | Issue 1 | | Provost Dean Program | |

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| 3. Consider hiring more faculty in experimental physics | Issue 2 | | Provost Dean Program | |
| 4. Develop curricula that can attract more physics majors. Complete the development of the astronomy minor and begin development of a medical physics program | Issue 4 | | Dean Program | |
| 5. Provide greater physical plant support, particularly more student and faculty offices. Each faculty member should have an individual room | Issue 3 | | Provost A&F Dean Program | |
| 6. Establish a student lab fee or a dedicated funding line for the daily operations of the instructional labs | Issue 6 | | Program | |