

Perspectives on Being the Campus Representative as an Assistant Professor: Lessons Learned

Donald P. Visco, Jr.

Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering
Tennessee Technological University

Presentation Outline

- Brief history
- How I became Campus Representative
- What worked, what didn't
 - Lesson's Learned
- Thoughts on the future

Why ASEE?

- Had an interest in engineering education
- Introduced by then CR Thomas Weber (UB, SUNY)
 - Encouraged to form a student chapter of ASEE
 - <http://www.eng.buffalo.edu/Students/Organizations/asee/officers.html>
- Read ASEE Prism...excited that such interest in education existed (if only in small pockets)

How did I become CR?

- Hired on in August 1999 at Tenn Tech
- Later that year, questioned the Dean about who is ASEE Campus Rep
 - Dean: “I am...are you interested in the position?”
 - Me: (thinking: *Wow...an opportunity to get in good with the Dean...take on this service opportunity*) “Yes...I’d be happy to.”
 - Dean: “Okay” (thinking: *Wow...I don’t have to do that anymore*)

Lesson's Learned: Lesson 1:

□ Meet with the Dean regularly

- Keep him/her in the loop on activities, even if not asked
- Have something written (perhaps in an email) about any commitment from the Dean
- Easy to promise things in July (after the fiscal year)...harder to deliver the following June. Paper trail helps.

Lesson 2:

- Make sure you can answer the question:
What is the value of an ASEE membership?
 - When recruiting, this will come up.
 - Be familiar with ASEE literature (benefits of membership)
 1. ASEE Prism
 2. Sectional membership
 3. Division/constituent committee membership
 4. JEE at a nominal cost
 5. Discounted registration at ASEE conferences and related events
 6. ASEE members only access to www.asee.org (JEE archives, etc.)

Lesson 3:

Use ASEE National Resources

- Tim provided me with back issues of ASEE Prism
 - Used in recruiting letters (not email) to those faculty who were non-members
- Fliers available as well

Lesson 4:

- Do more than “make information available”
 - Identify faculty who would be good candidates for sectional and national awards
 - Form committee to internally “nominate” those individuals
 - Send letters (with cc to Chair)
 - Provide support in any way asked
 - Most nominated faculty are very grateful to be recognized, even internally

Lesson 5:

- Start a Brown Bag Lunch Seminar Series
 - It costs no money (Dean will like!)
 - Doesn't need to be every week (maybe just once a month)
 - Informal → perhaps just getting together to discuss a relevant topic
 - Be pro-active: invite speakers to moderate from ENG/CHEM/PHYS/CS/BIOL/MATH/C&I/PSY
 - Be consistent
 - Don't have six sessions one semester and zero the next.
 - Perhaps identify "liaisons" in different departments to help in advertising

Lesson 6:

- If possible, explore the idea of a Teaching Workshop
 - Likely already have great resources on campus
 - Use them
 - “Expert Teachers”, C & I faculty, PSY faculty
 - Good to recruit new ASEE members
 - ½ day – full day (Dean might spring for lunch)
 - Cover pedagogy, both in theory and practically
 - Perhaps have someone discuss what works
 - Potentially open it up to more-experienced faculty
 - Even faculty from other colleges, if applicable

Sample Workshop

- Dean Welcome
- Eng. Education – Introduction
 - ASEE (National/Sectional/Local)
 - Expert Advice on Instructional Methods
 - PBL, Learning Styles, Active Learning, etc.
- Discussion on Exams/Grading
 - Importance of Assessment
- Educational Items on Campus
 - PCB, Team Member Selection
- STEM Center
- On-Line Technology/Tech Institute
- Outreach/Service Learning
- Educational Scholarship
- REU/RUI/NSF
 - Reports from those who have been successful
 - Discussion of Educational-aspect to Career Award

Lesson 7:

- This is probably not the best service for a new Assistant Professor
 - Wherever you go, it seems that there is a shift from education-related activities to technical research activities associated with tenure
 - Only more so for education-related service activities...on campus!
 - There are other ways to get involved as an Asst. Professor
 - Make suggestions to campus representative

Final Thoughts...

- Comments/Questions
- Acknowledgement
 - Dean David Huddleston