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Subject Call for Undergraduate College Directors

To: All Faculty

Over the last few years Stony Brook has put in place a number of programs that are improving the undergraduate educational experience from the very start of a student's career here. Stony Brook's undergraduate colleges, which focus largely on the first year, are important elements of this effort. In turn, the colleges are important in attracting to Stony Brook students who are most able to benefit from all the strengths of a research university such as ours.

In the last several years the performance measures of entering Stony Brook students have risen dramatically, partly as a result of these new programs and activities that make our university a more attractive place to study. They will also be important in drawing a larger fraction of our students from outside the NYC region and thereby in increasing the geographical diversity of our students, e.g., from upstate New York, from out of state, or from outside the U.S.

A crucial component in the success of the undergraduate colleges is faculty involvement. Every college will be open to faculty members in all disciplines and we expect that eventually every full-time Stony Brook faculty member will have an affiliation with one of the six colleges. Each college will have a faculty director, a faculty advisory council, and full-time faculty teaching the small one-credit seminars for first-year students that will be the heart of the colleges' academic program.

The college themes are not tied specifically to particular majors, but are very broad and designed to appeal to a wide range of student interests. The first college, the College of Information and Technology Studies, was established last year under the leadership of Prof. Imin Kao of the Department of Mechanical Engineering and has enjoyed great success. This year we opened two more: the Colleges of Arts, Culture, and Humanities, for which Prof. Perry Goldstein of the Department of Music is the faculty director; and the College of Science and Society, with Prof. Jeffrey Levinton of the Department of Ecology and Evolution as faculty director. Each of these colleges, through the excellent leadership of the founding directors, has attracted a group of dedicated full-time faculty members who are offering seminars this spring semester.

In the fall 2004 semester the remaining three colleges, one built around the theme of Global Studies, one centered on Human Development, and the third devoted to Leadership will be inaugurated.

I ask for your help in identifying candidates to be the founding faculty directors of these three colleges. The terms of appointment of the directors are similar to those for chairs of departments, and are negotiable. Please send nominations for the position directly to Deputy Provost Mark Aronoff, who is coordinating the Undergraduate College effort.

I believe that these colleges are a very effective and practical way to enhance the undergraduate experience through engagement with research faculty in ways that complement classroom experiences, or research experiences enjoyed by a fraction of our students. The fact that these colleges are for first-year students addresses an issue faced by most research universities like ours, helping entering students gain a sense of what drives academic inquiry and learning. The commitment of time and effort on the part of faculty (and students) associated with the college activities is compatible with the myriad other demands on time, and modest compared to the payoffs.

The character, and ultimately the sustainability, of the colleges will be determined largely by the creativity and effort of the founding directors, and it is for this reason that I ask for your help in identifying outstanding candidates for these remaining college directorships

Thank you,
Bob McGrath

A description of the themes of all six colleges follows:

College of Information and Technology Studies

The College of Information and Technology Studies is designed for students interested in the growing areas of technology development and information processing and management. The College seeks to infuse students with a sense of wonder as they discover the power of information and technology and consider their own role in shaping the future. The College of Information and Technology Studies provides an enriched first-year experience by creating a learning community focused on leadership, scholarship, integrity, and creativity. The Information and Technology Studies College is home to the Science and Engineering Living Learning Center.

College of Arts, Culture, and Humanities

The College of Arts, Culture, and Humanities is designed for individuals who are interested in the wide scope of human activity--the making of art, the study of behavior, the varieties of language, society, and culture that make up our world. Through programs that point the way to opportunities to think, make, do, and perform, the College is intended to encourage students to stretch their imaginations, hone their skills, and enrich their minds. The College also boasts a newly refurbished arts and cultural center, including a performing arts space and digital media, broadcasting, music and art-making facilities. CACH is home to the Interdisciplinary Arts and Media Arts Living Learning Centers.

College of Science and Society

The College of Science and Society emphasizes imagination, research, and discovery in a social context. Students explore the power of creativity to transform the modern environment in which we live. Students are given opportunities to visit laboratories at Stony Brook and the broader community where cutting-edge research is carried out. The College focuses on developing a well-rounded student who is intellectually prepared to meet the challenges of today's complex and changing world.

The College of Science and Society is home to the Environmental Studies Center.

College of Leadership and Service

The College of Leadership and Service fosters awareness and a commitment to work in the public interest regardless of the career a student chooses to pursue. Students from diverse backgrounds and majors work in teams to meet challenges that bring about personal and social change. Students learn about the work of business, government, and non-profit organizations and take part in internships to gain professional experience and test career choices.

The College of Leadership and Service is home to the Service Learning Living Learning Center.

College of Human Development

The College of Human Development is devoted to the exploration of what it means to be human, in all its dimensions; physical, social, and cultural. Students in the College will be exposed to the perspectives on humanness in a variety of disciplines and professions. Students will learn about the wide range of careers that center on human development, from education to psychology to the health professions.

The College of Human Development is home to the Human Sexual and Gender Development and Health and Wellness Living Learning Centers.

College of Global Studies

The Global Studies College focuses on the ways in which the modern world has become a single global community and the implications of this fundamental shift. Students will explore contemporary global culture, issues, debates and solutions. Students in the College of Global Studies will gain a greater level of understanding from political, scientific, economic, business, environmental, social, and technological perspectives. Global Studies is designed to examine the modern world system and the greater connection and interdependence among people.

The College of Global Studies is home to the International Studies Living Learning Center.