

Minutes of the November 21, 2013 Meeting of the CELS Executive Council

Call to Order: A meeting of the College of the Environment and Life Sciences Executive Council was held at 12:30pm in CBL5 435. Members present were Associate Dean Rhodes; Department Chairs Bengtson, Fastovsky, Green, Greene, Gold, Mitkowski, Roberts, and Sun; CE Representative Morreira, Faculty Secretary Rice, and *ex-officio* members Curtin-Miller, Messier, and Porter. Members absent were Department Chairs Opaluch and Thompson; Associate Dean Veeger, and *ex-officio* member Anderson. Dean Kirby presided.

Approval of Minutes: *A motion to approve minutes of the October 21, 2013 meeting of the Executive Council was made by Bengtson and seconded by Fastovsky. Minutes were unanimously approved as written.*

Announcements:

Most announcements consisted of university-wide news announced at the most recent Council of Deans meeting:

1. The URI Indian Student Association will be holding its Diwali Celebration event Sat Nov 23 at 6pm in the Memorial Union Ballroom.
2. Per charge in the University Manual, the Provost's office will be undertaking an assessment of courses with lab fees to determine if fee rates are charged appropriately. Excessive surpluses in course/lab fee accounts are not desirable.
3. Dean Kirby shared considerable data about undergraduate and graduate student enrollments. From 2002 to 2012, the enrollment of undergraduates steadily rose from about 10,400 to about 13,100. Grad student enrollments declined considerably from 2002 to 2004 from about 2045 down to 1900, but since 2004 there has been a climb in grad enrollment back to about 2045 again university-wide. Collectively CELS has a growing number of grad students. Data about graduate enrollments per program were shared as were data as to enrollment numbers of freshmen per department over the last five years. Data as to tuition dollars generated per department divided by department expenditures was presented. Data were presented about 4-year and 6-year graduation rates and there is concern about the low rates. Data are available from Dean Kirby.
4. In the next few weeks, CELS will be obtaining a 28-passenger bus to supplement the van fleet. The bus is expected to allow for greater flexibility for class field trips. Faculty and Staff using the bus, however, will be required to obtain a Commercial Drivers License (CDL). The dean's office offered to pick up the expense of the CDL if there is a need.
5. Faculty and grant PIs need to be aware that the Affordable Care Act has implications for part-time IP-1 hiring on grant or other sources. PIs are encouraged to speak with Catherine Curtin-Miller to find out about health care implications in relation to employee hours.
6. Mr. Michael Feeley will be joining the CELS Staff as the new Peckham Farm manager.

New Business:

1. There was a discussion about boosting number of non-thesis graduate students by way of offering certificate programs in specific skills and non-traditional master's level enrichment programs with corporate partners.
2. There was a discussion of institute a joint Masters in Public Administration (MPA) program with the Political Science Department and LAR.
3. There was a discussion about a university-wide reassessment of the allocation of graduate assistantships to colleges and departments. Dean Kirby noted that the current allocation scheme dates back four or five decades.
4. There is a need to staff several of the committees authorized by the bylaws including the Commencement Committee and the Bylaws and Review Committee. Departments are asked to submit names to Cyndi Messier soon in order to facilitate an election at the upcoming December 10 CELS Faculty and Professional Staff Meeting.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

Adjournment: *It was moved & seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 1:15pm*

Respectfully Submitted:
Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary