

Minutes of the October 7, 2016 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 9:00 am at the CBL 435 conference room. Members present were Department Chairs Fastovsky, Gold, Gomez-Chiarri, Opaluch, Preisser, and Sun; Associate Deans Veeger, and Sheely, Faculty Secretary Rice and *ex-officio* members Morreira, Palmer, and Silvia. Associate Dean Thornber, Department Chairs Dalton and Mitkowski, and *ex-officio* member Van Buren were absent. Professor Burroughs represented MAF and Professor Brown represented PLE. Dean Kirby presided.

Approval of Minutes: *It was moved by Opaluch and seconded by Fastovsky to approve the minutes of September 19, 2016 and they were approved unanimously.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby:

1. All are invited to visit Maker Space at the Carothers Library located next to the Active Learning Classroom – there are 3-D printers and all kinds of resources but it can only accommodate 50 students. There will be a 90 student active learning classroom coming up in the new Engineering Building (still some time away).
2. Faculty and academic staff are asked to provide a list of international activities from each department – will go to a global map maintained by the Provost's International Programs Office. A similar request will be forthcoming by the URI 125th Anniversary Committee who will be interested in highlighting recent international initiatives.
3. The Provost now needs at least a week to evaluate any proposed MOUs before they will sign-off. If there is no official MOU yet, just start sending info ahead of time so they can provide proper legal review.
4. Ryan Institute for Neuroscience Cluster Hire – Jodi Camberg is in the committee. Seven candidates coming to interview soon, with one at the full professor level.
5. Graduation rates at URI have been improving (from around 50% to 60%), but still behind New England peer institutions. We are about 20% behind UConn (they are about 80%). With the state's interest in performance-based funding, there may be a push to facilitate graduation – streamline the curriculum, broaden times in which classes are often. This will necessitate some future planning effort.

Associate Dean Veeger:

1. There is a clarification on Grand Challenge courses: they are an overlay on top other General Education course (that has to have the required target outcomes). They don't need to be team taught to provide the interdisciplinary perspective. Courses must be approved before Feb 27th for Fall 2017. All departments should plan for Grand Challenge/Integrative courses to be developed by our new hires. All new courses developed by new faculty must have a broad audience or a relatively large enrollment (to fulfill requirements in their job offer letter; not just 15 students). Associate Dean Veeger can provide copies of successful proposals for Grand Challenges.
2. All faculty teaching courses should verify e-Campus offerings for Spring to make sure it is correct; registration for seniors starts next week. Check also the CELS calendar if you are using a CELS classroom, the CELS classroom calendar and the URI Class Schedule must match time and place of meeting room or there could be a surprise on the first day of class! Department chairs are asked to be the point person to contact Enrollment Services for any schedule revisions.
3. The Starfish advising system is now up. Incoming freshmen have been the priority for initiating the new advising software. It may be confusing for students currently in the

advising pipeline, but they have the option to be included within Starfish. The incoming CELS professional student advisors should be trained on the system soon.

4. The new two 2 professional advisors for CELS start about October 14. Early on, there should be conversations among faculty on how each major would like to use the professional advisors. Two areas of general use for the advisors could be general education advising and university-wide curriculum requirements, and degree audits at the end; faculty could focus on career advice and which courses may be a better fit for their future careers. To aid advising, departments could start pre-populating gen-ed advising sheets with courses that also satisfy program requirements, and perhaps, once the advisors arrive, there might be a meeting/training to aid them in helping out with advising on major-specific requirements. Degree audits will remain in the eCampus system, not Starfish.
5. Dean Kirby interjected that there is a request for more summer courses to engage undergraduates (with a research component, such as Brad Wetherbee shark tagging course). This could be a good summer activity for teaching faculty or perhaps lecturers.

Associate Dean Sheely:

1. The Federal Fiscal year began on October 1 and there is an effort to better plan for expenditures. Funds will be allocated soon, but before allocation she will be asking leaders in CE programs on how they would spend those funds prior to their availability.
2. Strategic planning for CE remains top priority. Soon, academic units will be involved to start aligning the CE Strategic plan with the university-wide academic plan. All involved with CE projects are asked to look for items to highlight for a fundraising campaign.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

There was no new business.

Adjournment: *It was moved & seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00am.*

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary