Minutes of the February 10, 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 1:00 pm at the CBLS 435 conference room. Members present were Department Chairs, English, Fastovsky, Gold, Goldsmith, Gomez-Chiarri, Sun, and Thompson; Associate Deans Rhodes, Sheely and Veeger; and Faculty Secretary Rice and *ex-officio* members Morreira, Palmer, Silvia, and Van Buren. Department Chairs Mitkowski, and Opaluch were absent; Dean Kirby presided.

Approval of Minutes: It was moved by English and seconded by Gold to approve the minutes of January 27, 2016 and they were unanimously approved after discussion.

Chairperson Gold inquired about the need to assign faculty members to University College advising during the Fall Semester as newly hired professional UC advisors are being trained and gain experience. The advice from Dean Kirby was that it may be a good idea to have faculty backup during the transition period.

Announcements:

Dean Kirby:

1) The search for a second academic advisor to be based in the CELS Student Affairs Offices is now advertised and underway. The new person should be onboard in a couple of months.

2) Academic Program Review. There is a renewed effort to engage in full review of the University Academic Programs in preparation for the upcoming NEASC Self-Study. Information documents from the Provost's Office are provided as Appendix 1.

3) Four CELS Faculty are participating in the Online Faculty Fellows Program: Professors Boving, Cardace and Pradhanang from GEO, and Professor Sullivan from PLS.

4) Freshman Admissions into the College is strong. Data released by the Provost (Appendix 2) show that in most measures of faculty productivity based upon student numbers and teaching remain high. Student:Faculty ratio in the college has been growing, and well above institutional target of 17:1.

5) Governor Raimondo's budget has been released. There is a proposed freeze in tuition offset by a \$11 million increase in state appropriations, including \$5.5 million in the Capital Improvement fund (RICAP).

Other Announcements:

1) Associate Dean Rhodes announced that Agcore Technologies LLC, Cranston received a \$50,000 from the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation to partner with the Prof. Terry Bradley University of Rhode Island Department of Fisheries, Animal & Veterinary Science in the field of algae farming for fish feed additives and biofuel products.

2) Meredith Silvia announced the T-card system is being implemented now. .

3) Kari Van Buren is eager to hear from faculty about accomplishments of CELS Alums so that they can be featured in our recruiting communications.

4) Faculty Secretary Rice announced that Rep. Eileen Naughton and Senator Susan Sosnowski have now filed bills (2016H-7234 and 2016S-2194) to provide dedicated state funds within the state higher education budget to match on a 1:1 basis the federal funds provided annually to fund the Land Grant and Sea Grant programs. Support of the clientele communities is requested.

5) Associate Dean Veeger mentioned to department chairs that course scheduling and staffing at CCE needs continuing attention. There was a case of CCE listing some old courses but no instructors were assigned. Staffing of courses at CCE is the responsibility of the Departments.

- Workload planning statements for faculty will be coming up soon.

- Due to the transition of the Chemistry Department from Pastore Hall to the new Chemistry Building, there will be a severe shortage of seats in chemistry labs. Students need to be advised accordingly.

6) Associate Dean Sheely announced that a year-long effort to develop a strategic plan for Rhode Island Cooperative Extension is now underway. The URI Cooperative Extension Strategic Planning Committee Consists of the following individuals: Kenneth Ayars, Shannon Brawley, Ammala Douangsavanh, Arthur Gold, Deborah Imondi, Daniel Levinson, Ellen Lynch, Alyson McCann, Christopher Modisette, Marcia Morreira, Kenneth Payne, Andrew Radin, Michael Rice, Linda Sepelia, Deborah Sheely, Dinalyn Spears, and Kate Venturini. The first meeting of the group would be held at 3pm on February 10.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

Chairperson Gomez-Chiarri showed the trophy awarded for the first place finish by CELS AVS students at the recent 2016 livestock judging competitions Northeast Student Affiliate (NESA) of the of the American Dairy Science Association (ADSA).

Chairperson Gold made and Chairperson Thompson seconded a motion to offer the congratulations of the Executive Council to the victorious AVS student livestock judging team for their well-deserved accomplishment.

Adjournment: It was moved & seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 1:55pm

Respectfully Submitted: Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary

APPENDIX 1

University of Rhode Island Academic Program Review Committee (APRC)

Academic Program Review Self-Study Guidelines

General introduction

The third element of academic program review is the formal self-study that will be subject to external review, most commonly through evaluation by a reviewer(s) from the same discipline at peer universities. Using the products of the first two elements of program review (the Central Data Report provided by URI's Institutional Research Office annually in December and the Chairs' Survey produced by each Department every two years in March), the self-study provides a narrative that identifies strengths and weaknesses in the academic program, research/scholarly activities, and public engagement activities, how the program's activities support the mission and strategic planning goals of the college and university, and it outlines a plan for the future.

The self-study is both a retrospective and a prospective activity. The self-study summarizes the current state-of-affairs, analyzes trends since the last program review, compares the academic program's activities with that of similar benchmark academic programs, and outlines an assessment process for evaluating the efficacy and value of these programs and activities. This retrospective analysis allows programs to explain how their past activities support their program's strategic plan and the University mission, and to use the data provided through the Central Data Reports and biennial Chairs' Surveys over the last six years to document progress on their performance goals and benchmarks. The self-study also presents a plan for the future that includes ways to ensure improvement in the quality of academic programs and its services to the college, university, and community. This prospective analysis allows academic programs to articulate response strategies to the opportunities and challenges of their field, and to establish forward-looking goals and benchmarks to be pursued during the next planning cycle.

The audience for the self-study includes the Provost, the external reviewer(s), and the faculty, staff, and administrators within the college and throughout the university community.

Level of organizational evaluation and the review cycle

The Provost in consultation with each Dean decides which level of organization (e.g., Department, College) is evaluated with the self-study. Typically, the department or school is the basic unit of academic program review and for this reason hereafter we use "Department" instead of "academic program". The Academic Program Review Committee in consultation with the Provost shall determine the review cycle for self-study. In general, this self-study review cycle will be conducted every six years. Normally, all or most departments within an academic unit are reviewed simultaneously. For departments with specialized accreditation, self-study reviews should be well coordinated to avoid duplication of effort and these departments may be reviewed independently of others within their academic unit.

1

General procedure and timeline*

1.	Notification of the review	Feb-March	
2.	Program review orientation by APRC attended by Dept Chairs	March	
3.	Formation of the Self-Study Committee (formed by Chair)	April-June	
4.	Determine process and schedule for External Review	Oct	
5.	Preparation and submission of self-study to Dean	January	
	Site visit and review by External Reviewer(s)	Feb/March	
7.	Receipt of the External Reviewer(s)' report by Dean and Chair	April	
	Department creation of written proposed Action Plan	April/May	
9.	Submission of written proposed Action Plan to Dean for approval	May/June	
10	10. Self-Study, External Reviewer Report, Proposed Action Plan submitted to Provost		
11	Chair, Dean and Provost meet to Discuss Findings & Proposed Action Plan	Aug/Sept	
	Action Plan finalized; Follow-up and on-going evaluation	continuous	

*Departments with accredited programs should provide their proposed Action Plan within 6 months following the receipt of the external reviewer preliminary report.

Producing the Self-Study

Suggested Outline for Self-Study Reports

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Brief history of Department (includes mission statement)
- III. Brief summary of prior program review and actions
- IV. Brief description and summary of current state of degree programs (graduate, professional and undergraduate as appropriate)
- V. Brief description and summary of current research programs
- VI. Brief description and summary of current service and public engagement programs
- VII. Institutional Effectiveness
- VIII. Future plans
- IX. Appendices (faculty vitae, learning assessment plans and reports, Annual Central Data Reports, Biennial Chairs' Survey Reports, Department strategic plan, etc)

NOTE: Units that have a mix of accredited and non-accredited programs are only required in their Self-Study to address the areas not covered within their accreditation report. The Provost receives both the accreditation report and the self-study. The proposed Action Plan covers all programs/activities within the unit.

Guidelines for Completion of Self-Study Report

1) The self-study report should be an honest evaluation, providing feasible mechanisms for advancing quality.

2) The self-study report should be comprehensive but succinct, focusing on key issues, with each section being descriptive and evaluative. The report should be well-organized and as brief as possible (typically no longer than 20 pages), using appendices effectively.

3) The self-study report shall reflect the views of the faculty under review.

4) Two main criteria should structure the academic program review, in general, and the selfstudy, in particular -1) Quality/Effectiveness and 2) Efficiency.

<u>Program quality/effectiveness</u> addresses how well the Department does what it sets out to do. For example, how do the goals and objectives of the Department in terms of teaching, research, and public engagement compare to other benchmark programs, and how well are these achieved? Does it effectively serve the mission and strategic goals of the University? Is the Department innovative and of high quality?

<u>Program efficiency</u> addresses the costs effectiveness of offerings of the Department. For example, what are the costs associated with its teaching, research, and public engagement activities? How effective is the Department in generating resources through attracting students, teaching and generating external funding in comparison to the level of institutional investment? Is it productive? Does it use its resources efficiently?

Components of Self-Study

Executive Summary

The Academic Unit

Include history, mission statement of the Department and provide a summary of characteristics including degree programs administered, FTEs etc.

Prior Program Review and Actions

Include major elements of the most recent Department reviews as well as actions taken.

Academic Degree Programs

Describe all degree programs provided by the Department (graduate, professional and undergraduate as applicable) with regards to rigor, breadth and contemporary nature. Include student learning outcomes and assessment plans. Identify how degree programs and expected outcomes of student learning provide value and relate to College and University strategic goals and Academic Plan. Describe how the academic degree programs contribute to the local and regional community.

Summarize the current state of the degree programs including metrics, analysis of trends and comparison with benchmark programs. Describe the overall teaching effectiveness of faculty as quantitatively assessed in aggregate. Include the accomplishments of students in the degree program (e.g., academic records, academic and research awards, scholarly, research and creative efforts, graduation with honors, post-graduation career paths and achievements).

Research/Scholarship Programs

Summarize the current state of the research and scholarship programs within the Department including metrics, analysis of trends and comparison with benchmark programs. Consider the quantitative/qualitative accomplishments of faculty in research, scholarship and creative efforts and external grant funding (where appropriate) for the program as a whole. Identify how these provide value, support College and University strategic goals and the Academic Plan as well as contribute to the local/regional community. Describe the Department's evaluation process for assessing how well these research and scholarship programs achieve their goals. Identify what the Department has done to strengthen its research, scholarship and creative efforts.

Service and Public Engagement

Summarize the current state of the service and public engagement programs including overall goals, metrics of the professional, institutional and public service accomplishments of the Department's faculty, analysis of trends and comparison with benchmark programs. Identify how these public engagement and service activities relate to College and University strategic goals and the Academic Plan as well as contribute to the local and regional community. Describe in aggregate, academic faculty service contributions at the College, University and professional level. Describe the Department's evaluation process for assessing how well these outreach and service activities are achieving their goals. Identify what the Department has done to strengthen its public engagement and service efforts.

Institutional Effectiveness

Describe the operations of the Department, specifying examples of how it operates in costeffective ways and how resources are used to achieve the mission and goals of the department. Identify significant changes in faculty, support staff, library resources, and other expense budgets.

Future plans

In light of the findings of the self-study, summarize future strategic plans given existing resources as well as programmatic initiatives the Department would like to pursue that would require additional resources.

Appendices

Student learning outcomes Evaluation plan for outcomes assessment

1) Student learning outcomes assessment

2) Programmatic outcomes assessment

Summary of Annual Central Data Report with trends

Summary of Department's Biennial Chairs' Survey Report with trends Benchmark Evaluations

Report of the External Reviewer(s) with response of the Department

Obtaining an External Perspective

The importance of an External Review

The formal Department self-study will be subject to external review, most commonly through evaluation by a visiting reviewer(s) from the same discipline at peer universities. The purpose of the external review is to provide an unbiased perspective that is not available from within the program or university. An external reviewer can assess whether the research, scholarship, creative, and artistic activity and public engagement benchmarks of the Department are consistent with norms and expectations for the field, and whether the Department has, or has the potential for, regional, national or international prominence in its field or subfield. Similarly, the external reviewer(s) can assess whether the Department's plans for the future are realistic given the direction of the field, the Department 's current activities, and market conditions for faculty and graduates, can advise on whether the learning outcomes set by the Department are reasonable and current for the field, and can determine whether the assessment method itself is appropriate. See the separate APRC document: "Academic Program Review: Obtaining an External Perspective"

In most cases, Departments undergoing accreditation site visits will be able to use these in substitution of the external review for the self-study.

Producing an Action Plan

The Action Plan

After Department faculty review and discuss the external review of the self-study, the Department chair collaborates with the faculty to develop a draft Action Plan that is submitted to the Dean. The Dean meets with the Department chair (and the self-study chair, if a different person) and they develop a mutually agreeable written proposed Action Plan that is submitted to the Provost along with the Self-Study and the External Reviewer Report. The Department chair, the Dean, the Provost and representatives from the Provost's office meet to discuss the Action Plan for the Department. The written Action Plan is finalized following this discussion.

The Action Plan outlines the strategic plan of the Department for the next six years including biennial benchmarks used to assess progress. The plan addresses major issues raised in the self-study and by the external reviewer(s), and relates these to the strategic plan of the Department. The plan also includes specific goals, their rationale, and estimates of resources required. The approved Action Plan represents an agreement between the Department, the college Dean, and the Provost for actions to be taken over time, benchmarks used to assess progress, and a plan for allocation of resources.

4/10/2012; revised by APRC for clarity 11/5/2012; revised by APRC for clarity 2/1/2016

Self-study guidelines APRC external perspective_1_17_2014_final.doc

Academic Program Review Obtaining an External Perspective

Selection of the External Reviewer

- 1. The chair will identify qualified individuals from peer institutions (e.g., public institutions of comparable size and collection of degrees within the department) for selection to serve as the External Reviewer, avoiding potential conflicts of interest (e.g., close personal relationship with reviewer). Candidates with an identified conflict will be eliminated from further consideration. The chair will discuss possible candidates with the dean, providing biographical sketches and a decision will be made by agreement of the dean and the chair.
- 2. The External Reviewer will be contacted to discuss the expected outcomes of the review as well as set a schedule for the site visit. The schedule will also include a date for the receipt of the External Reviewer's final written report by the dean and chair. It is the Department chair's responsibility to ensure that the dean is able to meet with the External Reviewer on the date of the site visit.
- 3. Prior to the site visit, the chair will provide the External Reviewer with access to the Department's self-study including appendices, the College's strategic plan, the University's guidelines on academic program review, the University Academic Plan, a cover letter from the dean or chair, rubric for evaluation, and a draft itinerary for the site visit.

Suggested qualifications for External Reviewer:

Expertise in the areas of specialization of the department under review Experience with a similar department Prior experience in program reviews Academic administrative experience (*e.g.* dean, department chair, program director)

External Reviewer Report:

The final written report from the External Reviewer should begin with an overall review of the Department and conclude with specific recommendations. The reviewer shall provide a synthesis of information contained in the Department's self-study and the information gathered during the site visit. Recommendations that are achievable within the limits of the current budget are important. Recommendations that require additional resources can be balanced by recommendations that reallocate resources away from underperforming areas within the department in one or more additional years. Targeted questions are included below to provide guidance to the External Reviewer in shaping his or her final written report. Self-study guidelines APRC external perspective 1 17 2014 final.doc

Questions to be addressed in External Reviewer report

Teaching Program

- a. Does the curriculum ensure that students have access to a high-quality, wellintegrated and current knowledge of the field? Do students have appropriate mentorship/advising?
- b. Are the learning outcome assessments appropriate for the field and are they used effectively to improve the curriculum? Do students and faculty have appropriate opportunity to provide recommendations for improvement of the curricula?
- c. Do the degree program(s) provide value (program quality/effectiveness and program efficiency, page 3 of self-study guidelines) and do they relate to College goals and the University Academic Plan and its strategic goals?
- d. Is the faculty teaching workload appropriately balanced across faculty and consistent with research and outreach expectations?
- e. Are the Department's academic programs sustainable considering the offered degree programs, numbers of students served, faculty and facilities?

Research and Scholarship

- a. Are the scholarly contributions (publications, performances etc.) of the faculty consistent with the strategic goals of the Department?
- b. Do scholarly contributions of the Department provide value (program quality/effectiveness and program efficiency, page 3 of self-study guidelines) and do they relate to College goals and the University Academic Plan and its strategic goals?
- c. Do the scholarly activities of faculty provide appropriate support for student (eg, graduate, undergraduate and professional) scholarship and creative work?
- d. How effectively does the institutional support for research at the College and University level (eg, faculty start-up and resource requests, facilities, library, staff support, sponsored research office) provide the faculty the opportunity to conduct research in a manner consistent with the strategic goals of the Department, College, and University?

Service and Public Engagement

- a. Do the faculty services to the professional community (eg, editorial positions, review panels, leadership in professional societies) support Department, College and University strategic goals?
- b. Do the outreach programs engage the local and regional community in a significant and meaningful manner that is consistent with the strategic goals of the Department, College, and University?

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Example itinerary for External Reviewer (note: programs will vary in scheduling based upon size, complexity and mission of the unit)

University of Rhode Island Academic Program Review External Reviewer Site Visit Itinerary

DAY 1

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Breakfast (w/ dean or chair)
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Meet with dean
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Meet with department faculty
11:00 AM – Noon	Tour of facilities
Noon – 1:30 PM	Lunch (w/ dean or chair)
1:45 PM – 2:15 PM	Meet with undergraduate students (if applicable)
2:15 PM – 2:45 PM	Meet with graduate students (if applicable)
3:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Meet with student organization leaders (if applicable)
3:45 PM - 4:15 PM	Meet with advisory boards (if applicable)
4:30 PM - 5:30 PM	Report preparation time
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM	Dinner with
<u>DAY 2</u> 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Deviewer werden en to 0
	Reviewer works on draft report
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM	Open Forum for faculty, staff and students
10:30 AM – Noon	Meet with department chair and/or program coordinator
Noon – 1:30 PM	Lunch with
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Exit meeting with dean
2:45 PM – 3:45 PM	Wrap up with dean and department chair

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

The primary purpose of academic program review is to assess both the academic quality and the financial aspects of a program leading to improved program focus and quality. In addition, program review is intended to help the University improve efficiency and effectiveness in the relevance, organization, and delivery of the academic program. The Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) is a joint committee of the Faculty Senate and the President charged with coordinating the administration of academic program review, overseeing the collection of data, and compiling and disseminating information resulting from the review. It also is responsible for continuing to modify previous instrument versions or develop new instruments to accommodate the changing needs of the faculty and administration. (Appendix I, University Manual, Section 5.86.10, The Academic Program Review Committee, http://www.uri.edu/facsen/CHAPTER_509.html).

Overview of the URI Academic Program Review Plan

The APRC anticipates supporting program improvement resulting from programlevel actions and strategic planning consistent with the Academic Plan. Communication between Deans and faculty within departments regarding program review outcomes play a much needed and essential role in guiding college-level planning and strategic investment decisions so that unique departmental strengths are linked to college- and University-wide goals.

Academic Program Review is at the Departmental level and is comprised of three parts. The first two elements, defined by the APRC, consist of an annual Central Data Report produced by Institutional Research and a biennial program data report (Chairs Survey) generated by individual departments. These data reports help programs to track progress against their goals and benchmarks. These data also assist Deans to engage in more effective management, helping departments with internal improvements, allocating college resources, and advocating for resources at higher levels on an ongoing basis.

The third and cornerstone activity of program review is the Self-Study that is subject to external review through evaluation by a peer reviewer from the same disciplines at another university and/or benchmarking of data from peer institutions. The Self-Study is conducted every six years and provides a narrative explaining how the program's activities in research, teaching, and public engagement support the Mission and Academic Plan of the University, integrating longitudinal trends from the annual Central Data Reports and biennial Chairs Survey.

The Academic Program Review process has been vetted and approved through the University processes. The following sections describe in detail the plan for each element of the program review process.

Annual Central Data Report

The Annual Central Data Report provides detailed information, including student credit hours, faculty measures, and grant proposal and award activity, collected and maintained by central administration through Institutional Research. The annual reports give departments a dynamic picture of their standing on key metrics for monitoring progress toward strategic goals. An important element being developed for the Annual Central Data Report is program-level external benchmarking of key indicators, available through participation in the Delaware Study (http://www.udel.edu/IR/cost/).

Biennial Program Data Report (Chair Survey)

The Chair Survey solicits information that is available only at the program level and provides programs with a uniform mechanism for monitoring progress on these metrics. Many of the data elements in this report are consistent with those solicited by the prior AIIM survey including productivity and quality of research, scholarship and creative activity; curricular and teaching quality and innovation; the extent and nature of public engagement; and existing data on placement and alumni satisfaction (currently collected by only a few accredited programs). In some cases these indicators address aspects of quality that may directly relate to program-level strategic plans as well as demonstrate contributions to University-wide goals. The qualitative information in this report will also provide the University with important information that can be used in promoting the institution and its programs broadly.

The biennial timeframe for the report is intended to strike a balance between the work required on the part of Department Chairs to assemble and report the data, and the reliability of data and benefits of frequent tracking, including progress on research output and public engagement benchmarks. The Chair Survey is administered electronically and programs use the reported data in conjunction with those in the Central Data Report. Deans will play a key role in tracking the performance of their departments and using the data for effective management and planning, including prioritizing resource needs and requests at the college level to be incorporated into the Academic Affairs budget process. The first Chair Survey was completed in Spring 2012. The next scheduled Survey is Spring 2014.

Six-year Self-Study and External Perspective

While the Annual Central Data Report and Biennial Program Data Report are designed to help programs track progress against strategic planning goals and benchmarks on a timely basis, the six-year self-study is more in-depth, and supports strategic plan alignment across levels of the institution. The self-study is therefore both a retrospective and a prospective activity. Retrospectively, it allows programs to examine how their past activities support their strategic plan and the University Mission, and to use the information provided through the central and program data reports over the previous six years to document progress on performance goals and benchmarks. Prospectively, it allows programs to articulate response strategies to the opportunities and challenges of their field, and to establish forward-looking goals and benchmarks to be pursued during the next planning cycle. Demonstrating success against past benchmarks is critical for establishing the credibility of programs' prospective goals and making their case for additional resources through the college planning and prioritization process.

The APRC has deemed the self-study essential to successful program review because contributions of faculty are complex and vary widely across disciplines. Departments must be able to fully explain how their range of activities contributes to the University Mission. Additionally, the University's new budgeting process places significant burden on the colleges, including the Deans and the faculty, to articulate and defend excellence within the norms of their programs/departments' fields. This is particularly true for colleges with heterogeneous disciplines. A narrative process will assist in translating the goals and benchmarks for outputs and quality appropriate to each discipline to the broader goals for the college and University.

An external perspective is sought through use of a site visit of a faculty member from a peer institution with similar programs and/or external benchmarking of peer institutions. Departments with accredited programs will obtain external perspective through their pre-determined accreditation teams.

Once the self-study is produced and following external review, the Department Chair will meet with the Dean to develop a set of response actions and refine benchmarks to accomplish identified goals. Needs of programs will also be discussed. The Dean will prepare a letter to the Department Chair articulating performance goals and areas of strength and improvement for the department. The Dean and the Chair will meet with the Provost to discuss future directions of the program. Resource-related issues that may emerge will be incorporated into college-level planning and prioritization activities involving the Deans, Chairs, and faculty of each College.

All Academic departments, free-standing programs, and Colleges 1) without departments or 2) with significantly overlapping degree programs, undertake the Self-Study in six-year cycles so that approximately one sixth are reviewed in any given year.



APPENDIX 2