

Minutes of the September 16, 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, Gomez-Chiarri, Mitkowski, Opaluch, Preisser, and Sun; Faculty Secretary Rice; Associate Deans Sheely, Thornber and Veeger; and *ex-officio* members Palmer, Silvia, and Van Buren. Department Chairs Dalton and Gold, and *ex-officio* member Morreira were absent. Professor Forrester represented NRS. Dean Kirby presided.

Approval of Minutes: *It was moved by Fastovsky and seconded by Opaluch to approve the minutes of June 29th, 2016 and they were approved unanimously.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby:

1. Discussions are in place about having the 2017 commencement again in the Ryan Center
2. On all new faculty searches, teaching will be an important criterion for new hires and post hire evaluation. Funds for many of the new hires is being sourced by elimination of many per-course instructors. Workload planning may become an important potential tool for ensuring this throughout the university. Workload equity is responsibility of deans and chairs.
3. There is a new initiative out of the Board of Education to identify low enrollment programs. Low enrollment is defined as graduating less than 11 students more than once in the last three years.
4. URI is close to cap in number of undergrads it can admit due to limitations of facilities. How will the University grow to help work within fixed budget constraints? Are more professional certification or credential (1-year) programs an answer? greater online presence? Other innovative ideas? Barring a radical change in how the state views funding of the university more discussions of this sort will be happening in the Deans' Council.

Associate Dean Veeger:

1. There is a shortage of grand challenge and integrative courses for the new general education program. Faculty are encouraged to develop and teach more of these types of courses.
2. In general, transfer students from outside URI will be part of the new gen-ed program, most internal change of majors would be grandfathered into the old program, if they started in the old program.
3. Work is underway to provide guidelines and standards for faculty review of lecturers. Goal of review is for improvement of their craft. Review information and meaningful files maintained as a result of the review process and in the lecturer's portfolio will aid the process and help in a successful promotion.
4. This upcoming spring semester, URI will be partnering with Cambridge Education in a program to admit highly qualified foreign students that have somewhat weak TOEFL scores. The idea is to develop dedicated course sections or lab section for these students and they would study the course material as a cohort while simultaneously be working on their English language skills. A few CELS courses may have some of these students.

Associate Dean Thornber:

1. Cayuse usage is mandatory for grant submission. Upload documents onto Cayuse a week *before* the agency deadline date or there will be no guarantees that the proposal will be processed and authorized by the University for submission.
2. The CELS Research Committee is being reconstituted and members will be contacted soon to meet, and faculty will be approached to stand for election to fill two vacant seats. Departments not represented on the Research Committee are BIO, GEO, and PLE.

3. The Space Committee is meeting later in the day on 16 Sept 2016. The space crunch due to the new faculty hires is significant. The committee aims to be as fair and transparent as possible in its recommendations to the Dean.

Associate Dean Sheely:

1. The end of federal fiscal year is coming up soon on October 31. Those receiving any federal funds through AES or CE should submit reports to Associate Dean Sheely soon so that end of year reporting to NIFA-USDA can occur in a timely manner.
2. Strategic Planning for RI-CE remains her #1 priority.

Meredith Silvia:

1. Federal law is now requiring a minimum of \$47,000 to be paid to post-doctoral fellows. All researchers should be aware of this and no new proposals will be going out with less than this amount in budget requests.
2. Administrative Unit 3 is now down to one staff person and search is underway to find additional staff support. Efforts will be made to assure that business is conducted smoothly and in a timely fashion during this transition period.

Kari Van Buren:

1. The CELS Advisory Council will be meeting on October 21. Some Council members have asked to meet some students and faculty as part of the meeting. Ms. Van Buren will be in touch with chairs and faculty about this.
2. The Distinguished Alumni Banquet is coming up soon. Kenneth Ayars, the Chief of the DEM Division of Agriculture will be receiving the CELS Distinguished Alumni Award. Ken has three degrees from CELS which include undergrad degrees in botany and zoology as well as a master's degree in plant sciences.

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 9:40am.*

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary