

## Minutes of the October 23, 2019 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 12:05 pm at the CBL 435 conference room. Members present were Department Chairs Chandlee, Gomez-Chiarri, Mitkowski, Roberts, Savage, and Uchida; Associate Deans, Sartini, Sheely, and Thornber; *ex-officio* members Palmer, and Silvia; and Faculty Secretary Rice. Department Chairs Dalton, and Gold; and *ex officio* member Wilson were absent. Professor Stolt represented NRS. Dean Kirby presided.

**Approval of the Minutes:** *A motion was made by Gomez-Chiarri and seconded by Uchida to approve the September 11, 2019 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

### **Announcements:**

#### ***Dean Kirby:***

- 1) A goal of CELS over the next year will be to increase student retention. Target retention rate for CELS is 90%. Currently the rate is 86%. This means a retention of 18-20 students in the college, or 1-2 students per department. Gateway courses are seen as major stumbling block toward achieving retention goals. There is a need to think this through and not sacrifice academic quality.
- 2) Michelle Fontes Barros has been promoted to serve as Assistant Dean for Diversity and Retention, and is charged with helping to implement policies put in place to aid retention.
- 3) Dean Kirby arrived last week from a 10 day trip to Indonesia. It is expected that 40+ Indonesian students will be availing of our on-line programs. Additionally, 12 grad students from the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Affairs are expected to be coming in January for MESM, OCG and MAF degrees.

#### ***Associate Dean Sartini:***

- 1) The provost has released a report on student retention rates (See Supplemental Report. CELS sits at 86%, with an overall 82% for the university as a whole. Growth on retention rated occurred between 2010 and 2014 from 62% to 76%, with near no change over the last 5 years.
- 2) There is an increasing trend in recruitment and retention of students from underrepresented populations with these students making up 25% of the student population.
- 3) Faculty are reminded to flag students in danger of failing using the advisor tools in Starfish. This will provide basis for interventions and perhaps aid retention rates
- 4) Michelle Fontes Barros is collecting textbooks for various courses to be held in her office for use by students of modest means so they are not forced to purchase their own.

#### ***Associate Dean Thornber:***

- 1) Connie Heird has developed a "Green Lab Program" aimed at reducing the amount of waste plastic being generated by labs and sent to the landfill. Collection points for plasticware waste such as used petri plates (without infectious agents) will be set up in CBL 435 and possibly CELS for periodic pickup for plastic recycling.

2) The number of grant proposals from CELS has been going up, so it is now very important that PIs upload materials into Cayuse no later than 5 days before the agency deadline date so that proper budget review and approval can be made.

***Judith Palmer:***

- 1) CELS will be holding seminars sponsored by the URI Inclusion Project on December 4
- 2) Scheduling Executive Council meetings for the Spring Semester is being done soon. Executive Council members are asked to share their calendars with Judy.
- 3) The CELS Hall of Fame Dinner for Marcia Morreira will be held November 7 at the Higgins Welcome Center. Tickets are still available.

***Meredith Silvia:***

- 1) Class registrations for Spring 2020 are underway soon.

***Faculty Secretary Rice:***

- 1) On Wednesday October 23 and Wednesday October 30, the URI-AAUP will be hosting a social for new faculty at local microbreweries. Contact the URI-AAUP Office for details.

**Old Business:**

There was no Old Business.

**New Business:**

There was no New Business.

**Adjournment:** *It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 12:30 pm*

Respectfully submitted:

Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary