

Minutes of the January 28, 2020 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 1:30 pm at the CBLS 435 conference room. Members present were Department Chairs Chandlee, Dalton, Gold, Gomez-Chiarri, Mitkowski, Roberts, Savage, and Uchida; Associate Deans, Sartini, Sheely, and Thornber; *ex-officio* members Palmer, Silvia, and Wilson; and Faculty Secretary Rice. Dean Kirby presided.

Approval of the Minutes: *A motion was made by Gold and seconded by Sartini to approve the December 4, 2019 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously after a notation that Dean Kirby subsequently changed the due date of requests for new faculty hires.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby:

- 1) Dean Kirby announced that the problem of double or triple-booked classrooms was not a problem this semester, and he credited the better diligence to the procedures for booking CELS-controlled meeting rooms both in the CELS system and on E-Campus.
- 2) Nominations are open for CELS Distinguished Alumnus Award later this Spring
- 3) Heather Johnson of the Writing Across URI Program has offered to meet with CELS departments about how they can assist in improving our undergraduate student writing performance.
- 4) At the most recent Council of Deans meeting, Provost DeHayes encouraged colleges to be mindful of budget and revenues; more and better online grad programs may be an answer; development of professional (certificate) programs may be a partial answer but need to be incented.
- 5) Departments are asked to evaluate course offerings in Providence. Are they cost effective? Is there a reason at present to hold courses in Providence? A coherent institutional goal for the URI Providence campus is needed. Perhaps this is a good first task for the new Board of Trustees.

Associate Dean Thornber:

- 1) There is a working group of Associate Deans Thornber and Sartini, and the CELS graduate program chairs to establish an equitable system for TA allocation among incoming graduate students.

Skip Wilson:

- 1) There exists a Prof. Spiros Constantinides endowment fund that is rarely accessed. The purpose of the fund is to defray costs for students and faculty engaging with faculty at academic institutions in Greece.

Associate Dean Sartini:

- 1) The provost's course fee memo was just released. Applications for charging course fees for the next academic year is on February 18.
- 2) Memos to faculty on workload statements for the 2020-21 AY will be coming out soon.

- 3) The Brightspace course management system is moving toward implementation. There will be basic trainings for faculty members beginning February 3. There will be a specialized course or online pedagogy on February 10. Michelle Peach is the CELS pilot representative for Brightline testing and roll out. It came apparent in discussion among the Council that there is considerable conflicting information about the compatibility of Brightspace with the contents of Sakai and how the migration of files would work. Dean Sartini said she would look into it and report.
- 4) There is a need for a faculty supervisor for the Friday BES Seminar Series.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

- 1) Chairperson Uchida brought up a question about travel regulations concerning “Basic Economy Airfare.” He stated that many of the new ultra economy fare have no amenities attached and can cost more in the long run if even luggage is involved and fees are incurred. Meredith Silvia said she would look into this and report.
- 2) Chairperson Gomez-Chiarri announced that there will be a series of seminars given by candidates for the “Food Innovation” faculty position beginning on February 3. All are welcome.

Adjournment: *It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 2:00 pm*

Respectfully submitted:
Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary