

Minutes of the October 5, 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 9:00am via Webex Teleconference due to in-person meeting restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Members present were Department Chairs Chandlee, Dalton, Gold, Mitkowski, Petersson, Roberts, Savage and Uchida; Associate Deans, Sartini, Sheely, and Wilga; *ex-officio* members Palmer and Wilson; and Faculty Secretary Rice. *Ex-officio* member Silvia was absent. Dean Kirby presided

Approval of the Minutes: *A motion was made by Gold and seconded by Chandlee to approve the September 21, 2020 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby

1. Dean Kirby congratulated everybody for making it this far through the semester safely.
2. Room 252 in CBLIS is under repair due to some window leaking issues.
3. According to news from the Council of Deans, the presidential search is underway. There is a search committee composed of Board of Trustees members and an Assessment Committee made up of URI Community members. CELS has two representatives. The Search firm of Isaacson & Miller has been engaged to conduct the search. A key I&M firm member working on the URI project is an AVS graduate from our college.
4. With the cooperation of the CELS Diversity Committee, there will be a process developed to guide diversity hires into the college. To date, efforts have been rather *ad-hoc*.
5. Sabbatical requests have been received and are now under review, as are all annual review packets of faculty members.

Associate Dean Sartini

1. There is an effort with Chandu to develop a CELS web-based database for tracking graduate student progress. Centralization of data is seen as being important and will aid decision making, including decisions about TA allocations.

Associate Dean Wilga

1. There has been discussion about submitting a new NSF Advance Grant, to build ethnicity, race and gender equity in CELS. NSF Advance Grants are seen as advantageous because they make possible release time from heavy teaching so that new faculty can establish their labs and research portfolio in building careers. Discussion ensued about strategy for applying for the grant, including discussions with Barbara Silver & Bethany Jenkins. The NSF Advance Grants focus more on pathways to build research capabilities, whereas the similar Multicultural Fellows Program out of the Provost's Office primarily has building diversity within the teaching mission of the university. There was an urging by the department chairs to be very specific in letter of hire about expectations. Not everybody is appointed to do the same thing.
2. The Cayuse grant management system will be replaced within the next year with a more robust system that will save time for PIs. However, as with all online powerful data management systems of this type, there will be a steep learning curve at the beginning.
3. There is ongoing COVID-19 testing at the Memorial Union for non-symptomatic members of the URI community.

4. Fogarty Hall is slated for renovations. There is a big issue across campus about a shortage of research animal care facilities and the Fogarty renovation will add further stress. Discussions are underway about how to best resolve the issue.

Associate Dean Sheely

1. Associate Dean Sheely stated that the Annual URI Foundation Day of Giving on October 1 was very successful in CELS.

Skip Wilson

1. The URI Foundation Day of Giving was held October 1 and \$1.17M was raised that day. CELS was the college with the highest number of gifts with 124 gifts totalling \$35K for various funds managed by the college.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

There was no new business

Adjournment: *It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 9:30am*

Respectfully submitted:

Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary