

Minutes of the November 30, 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, Mitkowski, Petersson, Roberts, Savage and Uchida; Associate Deans Sartini, Sheely and Wilga; *ex-officio* members Palmer, Silvia and Wilson; and Faculty Secretary Rice. Dean Kirby presided. Prof. Peter Paton of NRS attended as new acting department chair replacing outgoing Chairperson Arthur Gold.

Approval of the Minutes: *A motion was made by Roberts and seconded by Uchida to approve the November 16, 2020 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby

1. The Council of Deans in their last meeting continued focusing on means to assure greater Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in hiring and programming. There are several fields within the university that remain extremely short on faculty members from underrepresented populations. There will be a call for positions soon to replace a number of retiring faculty. There may be opportunities in a renewed Multicultural Fellows initiative.
2. Dean Kirby stated that overall the university did well with managing the Covid-19 pandemic. He offered thanks and congratulations to all for getting this far with relatively little incident. He urged members of the community to relax and recuperate after grades are posted and prior to the beginning of the Spring Semester.
3. We are still looking forward to the budget for the 2021 fiscal year. Enrollment numbers are critical, and there is optimism that near expected enrollments will greatly reduce potential fiscal challenges.

Associate Dean Sartini

1. The fall course schedule 2021 is now due December 1.

Associate Dean Wilga

1. The Safety Office has begun a process of chemical inventories in labs.
2. Dr. Dina Proestou has purchased an explosion-proof freezer in CBLS and is willing to share space within it if there is a need.
3. The Aquarium facilities at NBC-GSO will be switching over to being a cost-center in January. Fees will be modest and used to fund technical support staff salaries, so principal investigators should budget this in grant proposals.
4. Associate Dean Wilga is requesting stories about research accomplishments to be used by the URI Foundation and others for promoting the university.

Associate Dean Sheely

1. Jane Vieira will be sending out reminders to recipients of Hatch funds to provide information to be compiled for the annual report to NIFA.

2. The search for a clinical assistant professor with a split between teaching and CE engagement remains active. Candidate Tolani Olagundoye is scheduled to give a seminar this upcoming Friday December 4.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

1. Prof. Peter Paton was introduced as the acting chair of NRS as Prof. Gold has announced entering the university's phased retirement program.
2. Chairperson Roberts requested that a list of recipients of Hatch Funds be provided to the chairs. Associate Dean Sheely responded that she would oblige.
3. There was a general reminder to chairs that their reviews for promotion and annual reviews is due in Interfolio on December 1.

Adjournment: *Without objection Dean Kirby declared adjournment at 9:20am*

Respectfully submitted:
Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary