

Minutes of the December 14, 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, Silvia and Wilson; and Faculty Secretary Rice. Dean Kirby presided.

Approval of the Minutes: *A motion was made by Gold and seconded by Dalton to approve the November 30, 2020 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby

1. Dean Kirby noted that the campus and electronic communication is very quiet. No noise is a good sign of things going well.
2. Enrollments are holding steady and the recent roll-out of the first Covid-19 vaccines bodes well for a near 'normal' fall semester.
3. The Council of Deans urges all to participate in the Annual Academic Summit in January facing on racial and gender equity issues. The summit will be Thursday Jan 21st 9 AM to 3 PM. Registration is encouraged:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSerlizkw21GIMRiukP_hORIXsBNdVM51odUE5jpUOLRC6AmfQ/viewform
4. The next fiscal year is expected to be a normal budget request year, so departments should discuss their needs, and those with faculty hire requests should consult with the dean.
5. Annual reviews and promotion packages are moving long in the process.

Associate Dean Sartini

1. The second grade option was approved by the Faculty Senate in November. This allows UG and G students that earn a C- or lower in a course during the F20 or S21 to retake that course during the following two semester and have that grade replace the original grade. This adoption of the by the Senate has helped in spring retention as course enrollments are keeping up with levels in previous years.
2. Faculty that are teaching virtually this coming semester are encouraged to take advantage of the online and hybrid pedagogy online trainings being offered by ATL over the break. See the recent email from Brightspace Teams.

Associate Dean Wilga

1. Associate Dean Wilga has been visiting the research farm facilities to assess space and usage patterns.
2. Associate Dean Wilga is working with several entities across campus on a National Science Foundation Advance Grant focusing on "Organizational Change for Gender Equity in STEM Academic Professions." If there is interest in assisting the effort, contact Associate Dean Wilga.
3. Decisions about the allocation of Research Assistantships is coming up soon.

Associate Dean Sheely

1. Associate Dean Sheely is offering a webinar today (Dec 14) at 1 and again on Thursday (Dec 17) at 10 AM to discuss Land Grant program reporting. Those to which this applies should have received emails regarding this from Associate Dean Sheely.
2. The search for a clinical assistant professor with a split between teaching and CE engagement is wrapping up. Candidate interviews have concluded.

Meredith Silvia

1. Information about Covid19-related teaching expenses (e.g. webcams, microphones and other curriculum delivery needs) should be relayed by department chairs so a request can be forwarded to the Provost's Office.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

1. Chairperson Roberts inquired about implications of the announced retirement of Dean Jayne Richmond at University College. Discussion ensued. It was noted that in addition to University College that the search for a new dean of Engineering is also underway as Dean Wright is also retiring.
2. Chairperson Gold inquired about the status of the initiative of the LAR department rejoining CELS after several years in Arts and Sciences. Petition has been made to the Faculty senate and it is in process. Discussion focused upon integrating LAR as a participant in graduate programs in environmental design as partners with MAF, NRS & PLS.

Adjournment: *Without objection Dean Kirby declared adjournment at 9:30am*

Respectfully submitted:
Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary