

Minutes of the February 11, 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 Dalton, Gold, Gomez-Chiarri, Mitkowski, Roberts, Savage, and Uchida; Associate Deans, Sartini, Sheely, and; *ex-officio* members Palmer, and Wilson; and Faculty Secretary Rice. Department Chair Chandlee, Associate Dean Thornber, and *ex officio* member Silvia were absent. Dean Kirby presided. CMB was represented by Professor Camberg.

Approval of the Minutes: *A motion was made by Roberts and seconded by Gomez-Chiarri to approve the January 28, 2020 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously after a date correction.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby:

- 1) Dean Kirby announced news about the URI Capital Campaign. There will be a ‘soft launch’ of the campaign on April 17, followed by a day of giving on April 23. October 23 is reserved for a ‘hard launch’ with ceremony and media releases. At present \$164 million has been pledged or raised on a goal of \$250 million.
- 2) Enrollment at universities across the nation are down (and many liberal arts institutions are going under). But URI has been still growing up about 1000 applications in the last round. However, there is a need for strategic thinking about the next strategies for CELS & URI. The mechanisms of growth and student retention improvement are reaching their upper limits. Low enrollment programs are likely to become more vulnerable. What could the “next big thing” be for CELS?
- 3) Assessment of low enrollment classes is beginning in earnest for the whole University. Some 300-500 courses have been identified as chronically under-enrolled using 5-6 years of data. There will be greater efforts to identify specific under-enrolled classes and use the workload planning process to assure that habitually under-enrolled classes are managed.
- 4) Math placement and achievement is seen as problematic across campus. Dean Kirby has joined a committee organized by the provost’s office to investigate and seek solutions.
- 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 Sartini:

- 1) According to the Graduate TA Contract, TA evaluations are due to be submitted to the Grad School on April 15. There will be a survey of students and direct observations of TA performance. Stated purpose of procedures is to provide feedback to improve TA performance.
- 2) Faculty on workload statements for the 2020-21 AY are due Feb 18.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

There was no new business

Adjournment: *It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 2:05 pm*

Respectfully submitted:

Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary