

Minutes of the February 22, 2021 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 1:00pm via Webex Teleconference due to in-person meeting restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Members present were Department Chairs Chandlee, Dalton, Mitkowski, Paton, Petersson, Roberts, Savage and Uchida; Associate Deans Sheely and Wilga; *ex-officio* members Palmer, Silvia and Wilson; and Faculty Secretary Rice. Associate Dean Sartini was absent. Dean Kirby presided.

Approval of the Minutes: *A motion was made by Roberts and seconded by Paton to approve the February 8, 2020 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby

1. Dean Kirby announced that Prof. Paul Cohen of CMB had past away in the last week. The entire CELS Community is saddened by the loss.
2. There was a general meeting of department chairs across the university hosted by Provost DeHayes. The key topic under discussion was the 'reopening' of the university as the COVID-19 pandemic subsides. There is optimism about the ongoing vaccination programs. There was discussion of splitting up large classes into more and smaller sections, There was discussion about how 'large' is defined, if classroom size is a factor, if there is funding for more sections, issue of hybrid class delivery being far more work, and URI investment in proper technologies to credibly deliver hybrid or permanent online classes in a manner consistent with our goals of excellence. Discussions are ongoing.
3. The COVID-19 Relief Bill is moving through US Congress and there may be considerable relief to Higher Education included. This may be good news for the projected budget in the next fiscal year.

Associate Dean Wilga

1. There was discussion the new 'Info-Ed' platform that is replacing the Cayuse Grant Management System. There is a steep learning curve and support for investigators in their learning seems inadequate.
2. Chairperson Paton mentioned that the amount of help on grant management coming from the Research Office is rather lackluster, but with a few experienced members of their staff making heroic efforts to keep operations moving along.
3. These issues with the Division of Research will be pursued by the CELS Research Committee and Dean's office, and there is hope for amicable resolution.

Meredith Silvia

1. Effort Certification Reports are being sent out soon.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

There was no new business

Adjournment: *Without objection Dean Kirby declared adjournment at 1:20pm*

Respectfully submitted:

Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary

