

## **Minutes of the February 8, 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 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 Chandlee and seconded by Roberts to approve the January 25, 2020 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

### **Announcements:**

#### ***Dean Kirby***

1. Dean Kirby made note that there is considerable aid to higher education in the current COVID-19 relief bill that is under consideration by Congress. Hope was expressed at the Council of Deans that the input of federal dollars be not met by cuts in state appropriations.
2. Enrollments were surprisingly robust for the spring semester despite some poor leading indicators in the fall. Both graduate and undergraduate enrollments are up. Dean Kirby thanked the faculty for being diligent in recruiting and putting students at ease.
3. There are still many uncertainties about the upcoming fall semester. The steady and the recent roll-out of the first Covid-19 vaccines bodes well for a near 'normal' fall semester. However there are many roadblocks that need to be negotiated, and there are lots of 'moving parts', so there will be more news as time progresses.
4. Social distancing protocols may be stretching into the summer. Researchers are urged to make appropriate plans for grad student and undergraduate researchers. Summer housing protocols are in discussion to accommodate summer researchers.
5. Annual reviews and promotion packages are moving along in the process.
6. VP Ryder mentioned to Dean Kirby that some members of the CELS community have an unwieldy number of salary charges to many different chart field strings. It may be indicative of URI's very Byzantine accounting structure. Efforts are underway to perhaps cooperatively begin untangling the mess.

#### ***Associate Dean Sartini***

1. Chairs are asked to submit to Associate Dean Sartini lists of courses and lab fee assessment requests for the Fall semester by Feb 24.
2. Effort is underway to connect with accepted students. Virtual campus Welcome Days will be held Sun April 11th and April 24th.
3. Workload guidance documents for the next fiscal year will be due mid- to late-March

#### ***Associate Dean Sheely***

Nothing to report.

***Associate Dean Wilga***

1. Cayuse is going offline soon, so all new grant proposals need to be submitted through the new 'Info-Ed' platform. The Research Office is requesting 5-day lead time for submissions prior to granting agency deadlines.
2. There are issues in the Research Office regarding delivery of adequate assistance in formulating of budgets within grant proposal documents.

***Meredith Silvia***

1. Effort Certification Reports will be sent out soon.

**Old Business:**

There was no old business

**New Business:**

FAVS Chair Petersson expressed a desire to institute a gift fund for deceased graduate student Agus Setiyawan as a gesture to help out the family with funeral expenses in Indonesia. Skip Wilson offered to assist using the URI foundation tools to help.

**Adjournment:** *Without objection Dean Kirby declared adjournment at 1:40pm*

Respectfully submitted:  
Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary