

Minutes of the March 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 Paton and seconded by Dalton to approve the February 22, 2020 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby

1. The plans for the May 2021 Commencement was a major topic in the Council of Deans. Commencement ceremonies are to be held over a three days. Multiple sessions of commencement will be held around campus, choreographed with the college commencements. There will be more details as the semester progresses.
2. The anti-racism agenda for campus is likely to culminate in cluster hires of faculty fellows. Departments are urged to evaluate faculty hire needs in order to be prepared for any program that emerges.
3. Enrollment numbers for the fall look very strong and the “spring melt” of students attending was smaller than anticipated due to good efforts by the faculty to focus on students.
4. The COVID-19 Relief Bill is moving through US Congress having just passed the major hurdles in the Senate, and there is considerable relief to Higher Education included. This may be good news for the projected budget in the next fiscal year. Hopefully the state budget will not include cuts for the next fiscal year.
5. Dean Kirby gave his annual budget presentation to the Provost, Council of Deans members and the Faculty Senate leadership.

Associate Dean Sartini

1. “Academics in April” is the theme for spring welcome days this year. Departments are asked to have web links for faculty meet-up pages to her by March 12. A new Welcome Day Website is in development and students are eager to see potential sessions they’d like to attend. There is flexibility in timing the sessions but late afternoon or evening are most likely the best to fit student daily schedules.
2. All faculty should have their workload plans for FY 2021-22 filled out by March 12.

Associate Dean Sheely

1. The large soil piles at East Farm resulting from the Engineering Building construction are being removed. The goal is meadow restoration on the grounds.

Associate Dean Wilga

1. There was discussion the Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP) of new developments with the new 'Info-Ed' platform that is replacing the Cayuse Grant Management System. There is a major

effort to input (or draw data from existing databases) in major categories such as salary and fringe rates so that forms will automatically self-populate with the proper values.

2. There are two new Grant Specialists in OSP that are assigned to CELS, Carol Ward and Holly Celico. These appointments are helpful but a goal of “Cradle to Grave” grant management support from OSP remains as an aspirational goal.
3. Nominees for the CELS Research, Staff & and Extension Excellence Awards are solicited for this year to be awarded at the annual All-CELS meeting at the end of the Semester.

Old Business:

There was no old business

New Business:

1. In response to a query by Chairperson Paton, There was a general discussion of the nature of blended courses. Up to 75% on-line is considered blended, and the on-line portion is considered asynchronous. This does not preclude faculty from broadcasting their lectures in-person during the scheduled class time and recording them for students to watch any time of their choosing.
2. Faculty Secretary Rice mentioned that election season is coming up soon and we will need to consider Senate and potential CELS Committee member replacements. A list of expiring seats will be sent to chairs soon.

Adjournment: *Without objection Dean Kirby declared adjournment at 1:30pm*

Respectfully submitted:
Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary