

## **Minutes of the August 30, 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 9:00AM via Zoom teleconference due to in-person meeting restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Members present were Department Chairs Becker, Chandlee, Mitkowski, Paton, Petersson, Roberts, Savage & Uchida; Associate Deans, Sartini, and Wilga; Faculty Secretary Rice and *ex-officio* members Palmer, Silvia and Wilson. Dean Kirby presided.

**Approval of Minutes:** *It was moved by Chandlee and seconded by Uchida to approve the April 19, 2021 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

### **Announcements:**

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

1. Today begins New Faculty Orientation. There are about 40 new faculty members joining the University.
2. Covid vaccination rates among students is reported to be at 93%, with some 260 requesting a formal exemption.
3. University and CELS enrollments appear to be keeping pace with past years.
4. Lisa Townson has accepted the offer to be Associate Director and Associate Dean for Extension. She is expected to arrive November 28.
5. CMB Department Chair Joel Chandlee was commended for excellence in coordination of the Celebration of Life Ceremonies held for Prof. Paul Cohen. Prof. Cohen will be fondly remembered.
6. Both sabbatical and promotion & tenure requests will be due soon.
7. There has been mostly staff concern about Covid exposure in offices. The dean is approving up to 50% release for remote work arrangements. This underscores a general problem of space shortages associated with offices within CELS. However there have been no actual reported Covid outbreaks in CELS.
8. Van policy is under review. It would be best to modify minimum driver age to 22 to allow Graduate Students as drivers. There is a search for a CDL-licensed individual to drive the CELS bus.
9. 9. There have been some teaching format change requests being denied because they do not comply with Faculty Senate definitions of hybrid or on-line. Faculty are requested to familiarize themselves with the appropriate sections of the University Manual.

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

1. The Covid Statement for syllabi has been released by the Provost's Office. All faculty are encouraged to include the statement in their syllabi.
2. Brightspace course shells are now available for Fall 2021.
3. Academic Events for the Fall Semester are now posted.
4. There is an Academic Advising training meeting for faculty and Advising Staff in CBL 10 at 10am on Wednesday September 1.

5. Fall Open House Admissions Information sessions will be held September 25 and October 17. Departments and programs are encouraged to participate and showcase their offerings.
6. Commencement for the URI Class of 2020 will be held October 1 at the Ryan Center. The CELS Commencement Committee is working on details. The event is concurrent with the Alumni & Family Weekend.

***Associate Dean Wilga***

1. The Space Committee asks advice on assigning individual desks to grad students. There is a distinction drawn between room space for graduate students and the actual assigned desk space. It was decided that it should be left up to individual faculty members supervising their individual grad students to decide.
2. Remember Covid protocols for labs now that students are back and the buildings will be more crowded.

***Meredith Silvia***

1. There is the beginning of a search for an additional CELS staffperson to assist with both pre-award and post-award grant management..

***Judith Palmer***

1. Nothing to report.

**Old Business:**

There was no old business

**New Business:**

There was no new business

**Adjournment:** *It was moved & seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40am.*

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael A. Rice, Faculty Secretary