

Minutes of the February 21, 2022 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 in CBL 435. Members present were Department Chairs Chandlee, Mitkowski, Petersson, Roberts, Sheridan & Uchida; Associate Deans, Sartini and Wilga; Faculty Secretary Rice and *ex-officio* member Palmer. Associate Dean Townsend was absent; *ex-officio* members Silvia and Wilson were absent; Department Chairs Becker, Paton and Savage were absent; Professor Fastovsky represented GEO and Prof. Forrester represented NRS. Dean Kirby presided.

Approval of Minutes: *It was moved by Chandlee and seconded by Fastovsky to approve the February 7, 2022 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby

1. With the decline of the Covid-19 omicron variant, there may be a loosening of mask restrictions on the horizon. There is no change in policy from the University right now, but if there is a change there will be a series of communications from the Provost's Office.
2. Places where students reside in a group setting (dorms & fraternities) tend to be areas that are the most at risk for Covid-19 transmission.
3. There has been about 25,000 applications for incoming freshmen; about 16,000 female & 9,000 male
4. The search for a new provost is underway. A committee is formed with a target of September 2022 for the hire.
5. The Promotion & Tenure evaluation process will be particularly intense this upcoming academic year as the assistant professors faculty hiring boom of the mid-2010s are now coming up for mandatory P&T decisions.
6. Word from URI President Parlange is that there will be potential major change in how the URI budget is formulated and funds are distributed to the colleges and other academic units with a goal of decentralizing allocations and providing greater budgetary authority to colleges. Considerable work is needed to develop the details of the plan.

Associate Dean Sartini

1. Departments are asked for their TA request surveys to be filled out so that there is input for the TA allocation process.
2. There will be some upcoming training sessions for TAs in evidence-based pedagogy in cooperation with the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. If individual departments wish to explore further at the department level, chairs are asked to designate a departmental point person.
3. The workload planning process for 2022-23 academic year is in process with faculty workload plans due on March 7. Judy Palmer will be setting up workload planning meetings between chairs and the deans.

Associate Dean Wilga

1. Nothing to report

Old Business:

1. There was no old business.

New Business:

1. Chairperson Roberts noted that the new university form (checklist) on the legalities of purchases is confusing and may require legal knowledge beyond the scope of most faculty members engaged in

purchasing decisions. Discussions ensued, with the conclusion reached that questions should be directed to the Purchasing Office.

2. Chairperson Uchida noted that Pre-Award and Post-Award grant support from the URI Research Office remains as a major issue and is acting to limit faculty grant productivity. Discussion ensued. CELS is hiring support staff to assist CELS-based investigators.

Adjournment: *It was moved & seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 1:40pm.*

Respectfully Submitted:
Michael A. Rice, CELS Faculty Secretary