

Minutes of the March 7, 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 Becker, Chandlee, Mitkowski, Petersson, Sheridan & Uchida; Associate Deans, Townsend and Wilga; Faculty Secretary Rice and *ex-officio* members Palmer, Silvia and Wilson. Associate Dean Sartini was absent; Department Chair Roberts was absent; Professor Preisser represented BIO. Dean Kirby presided.

Approval of Minutes: *It was moved by Paton and seconded by Preisser to approve the February 21, 2022 Minutes of the Executive Council. The minutes were approved unanimously.*

Announcements:

Dean Kirby

1. The University has lifted some Covid-19 restrictions in the last few days, but masks are still required for classrooms and laboratory and conference rooms where several people congregate.
2. There still are no requirements *per se* for Covid-19 vaccination similar to the required MMR & polio vaccines. There may be in the future.
3. The individual college budget presentations for FY 2022-23 for the various colleges will be held Wednesday March 9.
4. The search for a new provost is underway. A committee is formed with a target of September 2022 for the hire.
5. There will be potential major change in how the URI budget is formulated and funds are distributed to the colleges and other academic units. Considerable work is needed to develop the details of the plan.
6. Faculty should be aware that classes in the fall will be taught as advertised. Presently there is no expectation of any fluidity in the modality of teaching.
7. There is a big question as to the number of opening faculty lines over the next year, but the numbers are expected to be high, and there is no expectation that all vacating faculty lines will be filled completely.

Associate Dean Wilga

1. There were 14 diversity graduate awards requested and 3 were funded by URI. Dean Kirby will fund the remaining 11 awards. There were an additional 2 Presidential Graduate Assistant awards for next academic year. The split of Graduate assistantships (GAs) between Teaching (TAs) and Research Assistantships (RAs) will be determined in the upcoming weeks.
2. Dean Kirby inquired of the chairs about what specific actions could be undertaken by the Dean's Office to hire more diverse faculty. The spirit appears to be willing but implementation is slow. Discussion ensued. There appears to be intermittent conflicts between procedural instructions from the offices of Affirmative Action and Human Resources. There was a suggestion of more robust written policy guidelines would go along way to resolve real or perceived conflict.

Associate Dean Townsend

1. Workload planning is due soon. Discussion ensued about the accessibility to the workload planning site from off-campus locations. There is a procedure for accessing the virtual private network (VPN) from off campus, it is possible, but there are extra steps. It is easier to access from on-campus computers. It was decided that there are enough people confused about the workload system that there will be a refresher course developed to get everybody comfortable with the system.
2. Report from Hatch funded projects are due April 1.

Old Business:

1. There was no old business.

New Business:

1. Professor Preisser mentioned that President Parlange has been visiting department meetings across campus. He mentioned that the President's visit to BIO was informative and fruitful.

Adjournment: *It was moved & seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30pm.*

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael A. Rice, CELS Faculty Secretary