Natural Sciences Chairs Council

January 4, 2021

1:00pm – 3:00pm, ZOOM

In Attendance: M. Chao, K. Cousins, D. Maynard, B. Haddock, M. Jetter, T. Burch,

J. Torner, L. Guzman, D. Rinebolt, R. Hernandez, S. McGill, S. Pantula

Presentation by Environmental Health Services – Michael DeSalvio

* Mr. DeSalvio gave a brief overview of EHS is doing now. They are planning safety training for employees and students. EHS will reach out to the department chairs to identify courses that will require training.
* Mr. DeSalvio emphasized that they want to make it automated and as easy as possible as to not overwhelm the faculty.
* EHS is also developing new hazard signs for the doors. This is so the signs are standardized across campus.

Announcements by Chairs

* Dr. Pantula asked the chairs to tell what was the highpoint of last year and what they are looking forward to in the upcoming year.

Announcements by Administration

* Dr. McGill reported that for hybrid classes for spring semester there will be no face-to-face meetings until February 1st.
* Dr. McGill shared a spreadsheet showing courses that students have tried to enroll in but are full. She asked the chairs to review it and respond to her suggestions for opening additional seats. We are currently at 87.3% of our target.
* Dr. McGill asked that chairs please have their faculty tell students who wish to have supervision classes to register for the class as soon as they can. Students may register up until census date, but it is helpful too if they register as soon as they know they will be doing supervised work.
* Dr. McGill reported that January 25th from 1 to 3 p.m. is the meeting for allocating large lecture rooms for the fall semester.
* Dr. McGill reported that fall semester build will begin on February 1st.
* Dr. McGill reported that there have been requests to convert a couple of the small classrooms. Geology has requested that BI 009 be converted to a computer lab for their department. They have acquired equipment in the last two years that requires processing with high-performance computers, which they will be acquiring as soon as they find a space to put the six new computers. Kinesiology has requested that HP 122 be converted into a research lab. Currently the equipment that is being used has to be moved from room to room as it is needed. There was discussion about the increasing need for small classrooms that chemistry is experiencing, but there was no objection to either proposal. Dr. Burch commented that the nursing department does not have very many small classes so small classroom availability is not a large concern but she is concerned about availability of classrooms overall. Dr. McGill will submit the conversion requests to Academic Affairs.
* Dr. McGill reported that CEGE has changed the approval process used by Open University students to get added to a class. Previously the form required the consent of the instructor and the student does not get to enroll in the class until the second week of classes. The current (temporary) process allows the student to enroll on the first day of class, if there is space, and does not require an instructor signature. Discussion ensued over the various issues involved in Open University students taking classes. For example, allowing OU students to enroll on the first day of class can interfere with department-managed waitlists for matriculated students. The chairs would also like to know: “Why not create an AdobeSign document to collect the instructor’s signature” “Is CEGE checking that the student has met the pre-requisites for the course?” It is important that regular students have first choice in classes. Changing the process to allow OU students to enroll before the second week of classes could potentially block access for regular students to enroll in the class. Creating a mechanism for electronic instructor and chair approval would allow instructors to check that a student has met the pre-requisite, and would give the chair the option of admitting an OU student on the first day of class, r postponing the decision until matriculated students o the department maintained waitlist have been added to the course. Dr. McGill/Dr. Pantula will convey the discussion to CEGE.
* Dr. Burch reported that there was wide spread cheating in the nursing department this past semester. There are sites on the internet where the students can go and find old exams. There is a site, Course Hero, which posted a link to old exams from CSUSB. Dr. Burch said this is quite a problem for the nursing program. It is a program where personal integrity is of very high importance. Dr. Burch inquired if it would be possible to bring students to campus to take exams. With an abundance of empty classrooms at this time, it may be worth considering this option for the nursing department, if approved at higher levels.. Dr. Jetter reported that the math department has this problem as well. Faculty believe this is a major problem. Another possible solution that was suggested is that exams be copyrighted. Then the chancellor’s office could go after these companies for posting copyrighted materials. Copyrighting may protect faculty against students posting the old exams on public websites. If students are required to come to campus for tests, these should get prior approval and students be informed through syllabus.
* Dr. Pantula spoke to the chairs about the external internship programs in the college. He asked if there were any issues that had come up that would need the attention of the risk management or career centers. Most departments do not have many internships. Health Science and Nursing departments have quite a few external internships. Information gathered from the chairs was shared with the Provost.
* Dr. Pantula reported that memos are expected to go out today to the CNS advisors informing them that they will begin reporting to the Undergraduate Studies in the next two weeks. The STEM center, which is funded by the A4US grant from DOE, will stay with the college and Guillermo Escalante will oversee the STEM Center. HPAC and PAC will be moving to UGS. Dr. Chao wanted it mentioned in the minutes of this meeting that he is totally against this move. He does not believe it is in the best interest of the college and the students to do this. Dr. Burch, Dr. Cousins and Dr. Torner added their displeasure with this decision as well.