Natural Sciences Chairs Council

November 7, 2022

1:00pm – 3:00pm

In Attendance: M. Chao, K. Cousins, K. Dajani, C. Todd, N. Dabbs, M. Jetter, J. Yu, D. Rinebolt, S. Pantula, T. Valencia, S. McGill, G. Escalante, D. Maynard

Approval of Minutes – Minutes of the October 17th meeting were approved

Announcements by Chairs

* Dr. Chao reported that the STEM Cell Symposium which was held by the Biology Department last week was a great success.
* Dr. Jetter reported the Math Department is busy working on interviews with candidates for their faculty search.
* Dr. Cousins inquired if the staff position for the Chemistry Department was listed yet.
* Dr. Cousins reported that Airgas errors in billing are ongoing with a record number of non-existent cylinders being charged to Chemistry & Biochemistry in October. There are suggestions to move to a different vendor for gasses to eliminate the overbilling, but the chemistry department is concerned that other vendors may not be able to provide timely shipments of liquid helium, which is needed quarterly to prevent an expensive NMR magnet quench.
* Dr. Dajani reported that he was excited about the recent collaboration with the USAF.
* Dr. Dajani reported the search for an ASC has concluded and the paperwork submitted to HR.
* Dr. Dajani reported the School of Engineering and Computer Science is also working on doing Zoom interviews for their candidates in their search for additional faculty.
* Dr. Todd reported the Geology Department is participating in the Giving Tuesday campaign to support students traveling to conferences.
* Dr. Todd also announced that the Geology Department is beginning a series of small seminars where they will bring employers in to talk with students about their internships.
* Dr. Yu reported that the Nursing Department has received approval for their full time lecturer position.
* Dr. Yu reported that the approval to search for an ASC for the department has been received.
* Dr. Dabbs reported the Kinesiology Department will have an external reviewer coming in February and they are preparing for that.
* Dr. Dabbs also reported the department is busy working on completing the finalist list of applicants for their tenure track position. They are also looking to hire a part-time equipment manager and that position just recently posted.
* Dr. Dabbs reported the department recently had their new RPT guidelines approved by the Faculty Senate.
* Dr. Dabbs reported the work is continuing on repairing/replacing items and rooms damaged by the flood in September. She also reported the work on the tennis courts has been delayed once again.
* Dr. Torner announced that the Physics Department is changing its name to the Department of Physics and Astronomy. He also shared that the department has received a new telescope to be placed in one of the domes.
* Dr. Torner reported that the Physics Department is also involved in a faculty search. This necessitates a review of available space for the department’s future needs.

Announcements by Administrators

* Dean Pantula spoke about the Funding Future Faculty Program. He encouraged chairs to develop a pool of places that are developing diverse PhD candidates. He also encouraged chairs to keep diversity at the forefront of their current searches.
* Dr. Escalante reported that the STEM center has lost another counselor, but they have hired a new counselor, Kaitlyn Thomas who has begun working.
* Dr. Escalante reported the department is busy recruiting new students for the Science Success Center.
* Ms. Valencia reported that she will be working with the department ASCs on the budget allocations in the next few weeks.
* Dean Pantula spoke about the faculty class accounts and the importance of using the funds in a timely fashion. The 25% cut on carry over is on the total amount including class accounts.
* Dr. Maynard reported that he and several advisers went to NACADA conference. He reported that other universities face the same issues we do (Pre-Nursing majors, burnt out advisors)
* Dr. Maynard reported that he will visit four local community colleges this week and next. He will talk about roadmaps that start at community colleges and finished at CSUSB.
* Dr. Maynard asked chairs to let him know who their department representative will be for the upcoming transfer orientation.
* Dean Pantula reminded chairs of the upcoming graduation in December and asked them to encourage their faculty to attend and their staff to volunteer to serve.
* Dean Pantula informed the chairs that the college is thinking about holding an all-day event for the staff and asked the chairs for their thoughts about this. Consensus was the departments could function without staff for a day. Dr. Dajani suggested that the college have chairs travel out to PDC to help the faculty and staff out there feel more connected.
* Dean Pantula reported that the Student Success Center is getting new furniture and once that is installed we will hold an Open House. We are also thinking about hiring a professional photographer to come and take photos of our students – something they could use for their resumes, grad applications, LinkedIn acct, etc.
* Dr. McGill spoke about the possibility of using the alcoves in the CS building as potential faculty offices. She reported that Dr. Nickerson suggested it could be as simple as putting up a wall and the space is large enough it could accommodate at least two part-time lecturers. Dr. Jetter spoke about the difficulty they have experienced in Jack Brown with attempting modifications and warned it may not be that simple. Dr. Todd spoke about the problems with the FO building. In the summer it is just too hot in that building. Birdy has told her that she will not install research computers or equipment in those rooms as it gets too hot and she worries about damage taking place.
* Dr. McGill shared a spreadsheet with the chairs showing classes that are already full for Spring 2023 and asked chairs to consider what they can do to help these students get into these classes.
  + Dean Pantula spoke with the chairs about ways the college could invest in student success. He went back and looked at his notes from the retreat in September and reminded chairs of what was suggested:
    - Train and award faculty for advising
    - Have senior students come to your class and share tips and techniques for being successful in the course.
    - Avoid scheduling conflicts. Quite a few of the classes held between 9 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. conflict with each other. Chairs should talk to each other to avoid conflicts. Make sure that scheduling is not hurting student unit loads.
    - Pre-building MyCAPS
  + Dean Pantula reported that he has met with several of the new faculty. Some of them expressed a desire for mentoring within their departments. They expressed a desire to have senior faculty share their course materials and syllabi with them.
  + Dean Pantula reported that GI 2025 report just came out. He has sent each department’s data to the chairs. He asked chairs to see what they can do to help students graduate in a timely fashion.
  + Dean Pantula reported that he had attended the Education Leadership Summit and there were 4 points that were shared that prevent people from going to college:
    - Finances (and lack of advising)
    - Transportation
    - They don’t see a clear career path
    - They are afraid of failing