Natural Sciences Chairs Council

June 21, 2021

1:00pm – 3:00pm, ZOOM

In Attendance: M. Chao, K. Cousins, B. Haddock, M. Jetter, T. Burch, G. Escalante, D. Rinebolt, T. Valencia, S. McGill, S. Pantula

Approval of Minutes – Minutes of the June 7th meeting were approved.

Announcements by Chairs

* Dr. Jetter reported that she had been speaking with Rachael Loverock in the registrar’s office about the calculus bridge courses. It is turning out to be a bigger problem than they anticipated. In the future, the registrar’s office will reach out to the department chairs seeking their approval of calculus classes for their major.
* Dr. Cousins reported that she has been busy with trying to fill the ITS 2 position for the Chemistry Department.
* Dr. Chao reported that the Biology Department has started the planning of an NIH T32 training grant for bridging MS students to a PhD program. They have been speaking to several PhD programs with which they have some connection.
* Dr. Maynard reported that the new CSE IT consultant has started working today.
* Dr. Maynard reported the Geology Department has been busy preparing BI009 for the drones. The remodeling is moving along very slowly as they have experienced several setbacks with issues in the building.
* Dr. Haddock reported that the Kinesiology Department has experienced an under enrollment in their classes for the fall semester. He has been busy trying to figure out how it will all work out. A lot of the classes under enrolled are scheduled to be taught by tenure track faculty and a lot of changes will need to be made.
* Dr. Burch inquired of the other chairs if they have postbacs and if so, how do they handle them. There are no PAWs reports for postbacs and that makes advising them quite an issue. Only biology and kinesiology have experienced postbac students and there have been very few of them as CSUSB usually does not admit them.
* Dr. McGill reported that the Health Science Department has submitted the paperwork to begin their new search for a department chair.

Announcements by Administration

* Ms. Valencia reported that she will be busy working with the ASCs and their department’s class accounts. She also asked the chairs to remind their faculty that moving expense reimbursement requests need to be submitted by September 30th.
* Ms. Valencia informed the chairs that new position numbers will not be available until after July 1st. The ASCs have been given temporary position numbers but will need to be updated after July 1st.
* Dr. Escalante reported that the STEM Center is requesting a no cost extension on the current grant. He also gave an overview of the Science Success Center and the Science Buddy Program. He reported on changes that are taking place in the advising process within the program. They want to provide early advising for transfer students and first-time freshman to help them make good decisions.
* Dr. McGill reported that she has been busy working on the feasibility study for iSLAB, the new science building.
* Dr. McGill reported that she had received responses to her survey that she sent out concerning the outstanding student program for CNS. Option 2 received the most votes. Option 2 said that each department can nominate 1 undergrad and 1 grad student in their program. Additionally each interdisciplinary program can nominate 1 student.
* Dr. McGill reported that July 6th mass enrollment of first-time freshmen will take place. She also asked the chairs to check their Fall classes for low or over enrolled classes.
* Dr. McGill reported that the spring 2022 schedule build will begin in mid-August. She will send out a doodle poll to inquire about setting a date for the classroom allocation meeting.
* Dr. McGill asked the chairs for their thoughts on online classes. Should we develop guidelines for online classes? Programs for which 50% or more of instruction occurs online will need to submit a substantive change request to WSCUC to be classified as an online program, but are we ok with programs offering 49% of instruction online?
  + Dr. Burch commented that she believed most faculty were not well prepared to go to online teaching.
  + Dr. Cousins shared the FAM’s policy
  + Dr. Pantula inquired if the chairs are getting request for teaching online from faculty. Dr. Cousins and Dr. Chao reported they have not experienced that. Dr. Jetter reported that she had some requests. Dr. McGill said that HSCI had quite a few requests. Dr. Pantula told the chairs if they are having issues with faculty to please reach out to him.
* Dr. Pantula spoke about repopulation of the campus. He inquired if the offices for new faculty are ready.
  + Dr. Burch reported that she is just confused about what the repopulation is supposed to look like. She reported some concerns from her faculty/staff.
  + Dr. Cousins asked if there has been a policy established concerning vaccinations. Is there a policy around large gatherings? Dr. Pantula responded that gatherings below 5,000 will be permitted on campus and that the current policy about vaccinations is available on COVID-19 page. Changes are happening daily, and waiting for lifting of the emergency use of vaccinations.
  + Dr. Burch reported that she has spoken with her ASC and allowing her to work from home. She asked about fairness – it would seem that the staff on campus would have a heavier workload than someone working from home.
  + Dr. Chao remarked that for the past 15 months working from home has worked for the staff. He wanted to know what we would have to do to make it happen.
  + Dr. Haddock said he wants his staff to be on campus. The need is for them to be present for kinesiology.
  + Dr. Maynard stated that he agreed with Dr. Haddock. He has had to do quite of bit of staff work with his staff not being present. He stated that if students will be on campus and faculty will be on campus, then staff should be on campus.
* Dr. Pantula spoke about welcome back ideas. He would like to have a staff/leadership luncheon on July 29th. He said he would also like to see Open Houses in the departments the week of August 16th.
* Dr. Pantula asked for chairs to share any ideas for the CNS convocation event and the leadership retreat this year.