Natural Sciences Chairs Council

December 6, 2017

1:00pm – 3:00pm, BI-104

In Attendance: P. Williams, M. Chao, S. McGill, P. Dixon, D. Smith, C. Stanton, B. Haddock, D. Maynard, H. Qiao, K. Cousins, D. Tamalis, T. Burch, L. Davidson-Boyd, R. Smith. C. Hood

1. **Approval of minutes** for November 22, 2017

* Approved as amended

1. **Informational Items**:
   1. Announcements by Chairs

* Dr. Stanton gave an update on plans for Coyote First Step math programs for summer 2018. A six-week session will be offered for students in Group 4 (approximately at the Math 75-level, for whom the Chancellor’s Office mandates Early Start intervention). No summer program is currently planned for students in Group 3 (approximately at the Math 80-90 level, for whom the Chancellor’s Office recommends Early Start intervention, especially for students who intend to be STEM majors). If there is a strong urge to require Early Start on our campus for Group 3 students, that should be communicated to Dr. Stanton immediately.
  1. Announcements from administration
* Dr. Williams reminded chairs that December commencement will be this Saturday, December 9. Participating faculty should report to the Dance Studio/Old Gym at 8:00 am that day. Platform party should report to the Founders Room in Cousoulis Arena. There will be a commencement rehearsal at 11:00 this Friday, December 8, in the Arena, for those whom Tiffany Bookman has invited.
* Dr. Willliams asked chairs to allow their staff time to attend the CNS staff party, December 14, from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm, in CS-141.
* Dr. Williams announced that the next monthly report from CNS on progress on our 2017-18 strategic plan priorities will be due to the Provost on January 12. Chairs should please submit any pertinent activities in their departments to Dr. Williams and Dr. McGill by January 5. Dr. McGill will circulate the monthly report for October, as well as a copy with a blank column to which chairs can add their department’s activities.
* Open Fora for the two finalists for the position of TRC coordinator are scheduled for December 7 (Davida Fischman) and December 8 (Jo Anna Grant).

1. **Discussion Items**:
   1. Q2S update
   * Drs. Smith and Hood informed the chairs of some common errors on C-forms which should be avoided on future submissions, and demonstrated how to see where a course or program is in the approval process. They also urged that, when an existing course is being transformed or converted for semesters, departments to should start with the C-form for the existing course and edit that, rather than creating as C-form for a new course. This preserves the course ecology.
   * With assistance from Drs. Hood and Smith, Dr. McGill presented some issues related to supervision courses in graduate programs on which the CNS curriculum committee would like input from the chairs.
     + The first issue involves C-forms for graduate courses with CS#s that provide faculty workload credit of more than 0.5 WTU per student. The chairs agreed that registration of students in these courses should be justified by the faculty member and approved by the chair and by the dean’s office. A statement noting this should be included in the course justification on the C-form, and a statement such as “consent of department chair and dean” should be listed as a pre-requisite in the course description.
     + It was also agreed that when a supervision course with a CS# that provides >0.5 WTU per student is used in a program, there should also be other supervision courses available that satisfy the same requirement and have CS#s that provide a more standard number of WTU per student, such as 0.33 or 0.5 WTU. This will allow faculty who are supervising students to advise the student to register for the course that has the most appropriate CS# for the work that will be undertaken.
     + Some related issues are the total number of supervision courses required for a program, and whether students can repeat supervision courses for credit. The chairs agreed to leave these issues to the discretion of each department.
     + The final issue was whether departments can afford to offer programs with large numbers of supervision courses, even if the workload in those courses is justified. The chairs agreed to also leave this to the discretion of each department, with the clear understanding that no new resources will be available on semesters, so departments should only propose programs that they can afford to offer.
   1. Scheduling update (Sally McGill)
   * The college is currently at 101% of target.
   * The University is currently at 96% of target.
   * A “course is full” spreadsheet was emailed to chairs on December 5, indicating courses for which opening additional sections might be warranted.
   * Summer schedule build starts December 18. Materials will be circulated by the end of this week. Rooms are restricted to within the college until 9:59 am on January 16, and then will be unrestricted until February 2. All rooms for courses should be booked by Feb. 2, because after that, other groups on campus (Coyote First Step, Early Start, SOAR, Special Events, Guest Services) will have their own restricted access periods. More details will be available with the schedule building materials.
   * The deadline for updates to department overviews in the 2018-2020 Bulletin of Courses is March 2, 2018. Look for an email from Kim Nicholl on November 11 for the link to your department’s overview and instructions on how to edit it. Academic Personnel is supposed to take care of updating the listing of faculty in the Bulletin, but if you see things that need to be updated in that section, please email both Academic Personnel and Kim Nicholl.
   1. Development Update (none)
   2. Web page update (David Maynard)

* The December 5, 2017 Compliance Sheriff report on website accessibility indicates that websites that have migrated to Drupal received high compliance scores.  Dr. Maynard contacted by email those departments that failed the Compliance Sheriff audit and encouraged them complete their conversion to Drupal.   Dr. Maynard or Michael Cassadonte are available to assist the Drupal migration and training process if needed.
  1. Budget
* Dr. Williams distributed handouts detailing different budget scenarios for O&E. Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of the different scenarios. Dr. McGill suggested modifying the “Sheet6” model to distribute new funds via the Provost’s O&E formula. Dr. Maynard added that the 2.5% backfill fund should be added to the Sheet 6 models. Dr. Qiao suggested distributing funds based on department need. Renee Smith noted that the Provost’s formula does not take into account the different types of expenses in different departments.
* The chairs voted to centralize the lottery funds for equipment ($117,577).
* There was discussion of the possibility of centralizing CERF funds, or of allowing departments with unspendable CERF funds to contribute them to a central fund (perhaps the equipment fund) to be used by departments that could spend those funds.

1. Other:

* Dr. Williams announced that departmental requests to the College’s equipment fund will be due during the 3rd week of January. Renee Smith will circulate the spreadsheet template for requests. In addition to information requested previously for each item (Priority, Item Description, Quantity, Cost, Tax 8.25%, Shipping, Total Cost, and Justification [uses for teaching in department and/or college]), requests should also indicate whether the equipment would be eligible to be purchased with CERF funds.
* Departments are also strongly encouraged to request equipment funds from any other applicable sources (e.g., VETI funds and approaching Sam Sudahkar with requests for instructional computers).