Natural Sciences Chairs Council

June 3, 2020

1:00pm – 3:00pm, ZOOM

In Attendance: S. Pantula, S. McGill, M. Chao, K. Cousins, H. Qiao, T. Burch, B. Haddock, J. Hughes, D. Maynard, J. Torner, T. Valencia, D. Rinebolt, R. Hernandez

Surprise Presentation of Outstanding Professor Award

* A few minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting everyone met in Zoom and then Dr. Pantula permitted Dr. Cousins to join the meeting and we were able to surprise her and inform her that she had been voted as the Outstanding Professor for 2019-20.

Announcements by Administration

* Dr. Pantula inquired if the chairs had any plans to write a congratulatory note to your students. Dr. Cousins reported that she had sent an email to her students. Dr. Chao reported that he too had sent an email to his students. Dr. Haddock reported the Kinesiology Department did a video to send to graduates. Dr. Torner reported that some faculty had sent emails to their students and they also had created a video to send to students. Dr Burch reported that she is working on something. She said she has been in close contact with her graduates as they are really stressing right now. Dr. Qiao reported that she had done nothing yet. Dr. Hughes reported that the Health Science Department held a virtual program for the MSHSA and MPH students.
* Dr. Pantula reported that the list of Fall 2020 classes (mostly nursing and chemistry) with labs which of necessity require face-to-face meetings will be sent to the chancellor’s office next week. Dr. Chao commented that the PDC class registrations are low and inquired if we should encourage main campus students to enroll in PDC classes. Dr, Pantula reiterated that enrollments are down everywhere. Our campus has received 28% less deposits for students entering in the fall.

Q&A with IT (Sam Sudhakar, Gerald Au)

* Dr. Sudhakar informed the chairs that IT is available to help with technology needs. He inquired what, if any, gaps have they seen. He will send out a PowerPoint presentation that he presented earlier today to the chairs at the conclusion of the meeting. He reported that 550 laptop computers have been given out to assist faculty and staff with the transition to working from home.
* Dr. Sudhakar reported on some of the issues that have become a problem with using Zoom for meetings. He spoke about Microsoft Teams as a possible alternative. He said that IT would be willing to assist in making the transition should the departments wish to use Microsoft Teams. Dr. Chao expressed concern about switching to Teams. He wanted to know if Teams is more difficult to use. Dr. Sudhakar replied that Teams is better as it is a little more difficult to sign on and thus more difficult to be hacked into.
* Dr. Sudhakar reported that Docusign is being phased out and AdobeSign will be used going forward.

Presentation by Shannon Wiltsey Stirman

* Dr. Stirman talked to the chairs about Covid-19 and racial difficulties facing our country right now. She warned of the dangers of isolation and encouraged the chairs to get outside periodically, touch base with others regularly, and to stay away from their computer screen right before bed. She also encouraged them to model self-care for their faculty and staff.