Natural Sciences Chairs Council

August 17, 2020

1:00pm – 3:00pm, ZOOM

In Attendance: S. Pantula, S. McGill, M. Chao, K. Cousins, T. Burch, B. Haddock, M. Jetter,

J. Torner, L. Mian, D. Maynard, L. Mian, L. Guzman, D. Rinebolt, R. Hernandez

Approval of Minutes –

Minutes of the June 1, June 3, June 15, August 3, August 7 meetings were approved.

Announcements by Chairs

* Dr. Torner reported the Physics department is doing okay and are ready for the fall semester to begin.
* Dr. Mian reported that so far his time as interim chair is going smoothly. He said he has been very busy attending a multitude of meetings. He reported that August 19th the department will hold their first department meeting of the new school year.
* Ms. Valencia reminded the chairs that staff can only teach 3.75 WTUs for the semester. She also reminded the chairs to use class codes for purchasing anything with start-up funds.
* Dr. Cousins reported that chemistry and biochemistry students were not pre-enrolled in classes so initially she did not realize how many students the department was going to have. She is thrilled to find out there are so many students they have starting in the fall. Dr. Cousins also reported the faculty of the department are overwhelmed with the planning of the 13 virtual labs they will have in fall semester.
* Dr. Cousins was also happy to announce that $350,000 in funding was received from the National Science Foundation for the purchase of a NMR (nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer).
* Dr. Jetter reported that a mathematics alumni, Leonard Lamp received Irvine Valley College’s 2020 Professor of the Year award.
* Dr. Burch reported that the Nursing Department is dealing with all kinds of constantly changing situations. Clinical sites continue to be a major issue. She reported that she has been extremely grateful for the work done by Cheryl Brandt, Angie Fangonil-Gagalang and their new faculty member, Anna Lama. They have gone above and beyond in dealing with the never ending challenges the Nursing Department has faced the last few months.
* Dr. Maynard reported the Geological Sciences Department has been working hard and is ready for classes to begin next Monday.
* Dr. Maynard reported he is very busy dealing with issues in the Computer Science & Engineering. One of the new hires has been unable to get his visa situation worked out and will not be able to join us until January. Meanwhile Dr. Maynard must now try to arrange faculty to teach those classes.
* Dr. Chao reported the Biology Department is ready to begin the semester. He also reported that phase 2 research began this summer.
* Dr. Guzman reported international orientation will be held August 18 and 19.
* Dr. Haddock reported that the majority of their part-time instructors are facing reduced work or not teaching at all. This is significantly impacting morale in the department.

Announcements by Administration

* Mr. Hernandez reported he recently held a screening for the advising center of the film, Unlikely. It is the story of problems students can face in their attempts to attend and succeed in college.
* Mr. Hernandez reported that the college week sessions have ended.
* Mr. Hernandez announced the new faculty orientation will be held tomorrow. There will be a breakout session for the college. Discussion ensued on whether or not 30 minutes would be enough time to have all the departments meet in one break out session or whether it should be done by department. Consensus was it would be better to have it by department so there would be more quality time for department interests.
* Dr. McGill informed chairs that she had sent out a spreadsheet right before the meeting concerning enrollment totals for fall. She asked chairs to please review the spreadsheet and see whether or not more sections need to be added. Right now the college is at 90% of target.
* Dr. McGill reported that beginning tomorrow any vacant classrooms that were assigned to other departments within CNS for Spring 2021 will become available for use if needed. She reminded chairs to please remember to use the standard time blocks. The optimizer will run Monday, August 24th.
* Dr. Pantula commented that most CSU science deans are doing parallel planning for face-to-face and virtual modes of instruction since we don’t know yet which mode we will be using for spring semester
* Dr. Pantula spoke to the chairs about the upcoming year’s budget. The college has still not received its budget other than for operating expenses. Dr. Pantula shared a spreadsheet with 3 different scenarios for the upcoming year’s budget. He spoke about the needs of the college and the need to be considering how we will manage in the next two years.
* Dr. Pantula also spoke with the chairs about ways to assist our students. He inquired if the addition of a dean’s fellow would be something to consider since Dr. Maynard is busy right now serving as interim chair for two departments. He reported that he had recently received an email from the Department of Education inquiring if there was a need CSUSB had that $100,000 could assist with. Dr. Guzman suggested perhaps another counselor would be a valuable asset.
* Dr. Pantula asked the chairs if they were satisfied with the methods of communication presently being used. Dr. Chao and Dr. Cousins reported their departments had started using Slack and were very pleased with it. They reported there were able to disseminate information more quickly and it significantly reduced the email overload. Mr. Hernandez reported that he has been using Microsoft Teams and believes it to be a better option. Discussion ensued.
* Dr. Pantula reminded the chairs that anyone planning on going to campus must let him know so that he can notify the police department as well as and Dr. Yildirim.