Minutes of the April 12, 2019 FCSM College Council Meeting.

The FCSM College Council met in Smith Hall, Room 306 at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Jennifer Scott, Chairperson, presiding.

Member Attendees: Biological Sciences: Mark Bulmer, Angela Cox; Chemistry: Ana Maria Soto, Shannon Stitzel; Computer and Information Sciences: Josh Dehlinger, Scott Hilberg; Physics, Astronomy, & Geosciences: Wendy Nelson, Jennifer Scott; Mathematics: Sergiy Borodachov, Yunwei Cui; At large: Kelly Elkins (Chemistry); Student Representatives: Steve Blama (Graduate Student, Physics), Saraubi Harrison (Undergraduate Student, Computer Sciences)

Absent: Elizabeth Goode (At large, Mathematics); David Vanko (Dean, FCSM)

Guests: Sara Slaff (Vice President of Legal Affairs and General Counsel), Ashley Hoover (Associate General Counsel), Vonnie Shields (FCSM)

Chairperson Jennifer Scott called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Special Guests: Sara Slaff and Ashley Hoover
The Office of General Counsel addresses all legal concerns in the university, including faculty issues. The office staff includes and paralegal and three full time lawyers. Sarah Slaff and Ashley Hoover, two of the three full time lawyers, visited the council and answered faculty questions. The discussion included:

1.1. Faculty are concerned about protecting the materials they generate for their courses. Faculty generate and make available to students study materials and some of these materials are being posted by students in commercial study websites. Sara and Ashley indicated that these materials belong to the faculty but how to protect them may be more of a student conduct issue. Materials don’t need to be labeled for them to be copyrighted. Faculty own the copyrights of their materials by the existence of these materials but to enforce a copyright infringement, it is required that materials are registered. Sara and Ashley are not aware of any university intentions to have a policy regarding these issues.

1.2. Faculty are also concerned about students posting comments about classes in social media. Sara and Ashley indicated that professors cannot call out students by name in these media because we have to adhere to the FERPA law.

1.3. Faculty had many questions about who owns materials developed by faculty (are materials owned by the university or by the faculty member?). This depends on the material but the university owns some of these materials because they were generated using university resources. If a faculty member wants to commercialize materials, they need to submit a form to OSPR, which is then routed to the university lawyers. A licensing agreement is then created, designating percentages allocated to the faculty and the university.

1.4. The current Towson University Intellectual Property policy is from 2002 and it is not very useful because it is difficult to read. The University System of Maryland is working on updating their Intellectual Property policy. The Office of General Counsel plans to update the university policy as well.
1.5. An ethics and compliance hotline was rolled out in November of 2019. This hotline is designed to be used by employees and it allows employees to anonymously report ethics and compliance violations (the hotline is not designed for students to complain). There have not been any complaints received in the hotline so far. Information about the hotline can be found in the General Counsels website.

1.6. Some faculty had questions about the university’s liability if something happens to students in lab. Departments have safety guidelines for students but it would be helpful to have some policy from the Office of General Counsel.

1.7. The Office of General Counsel would like to be a resource for faculty. Most questions they receive come from deans and department chairs but faculty are welcome to reach out. The office represents the university (so this is probably not the right resource to contest tenure cases for example) but there are many places where the office could be a good resource for faculty. It is helpful for the office to know about issues so that they can address them. Inquiries are also helpful for communicating policies; sometimes there are existing policies that faculty may not be aware of.

2. Approval of minutes from the March 8, 2019 FCSM College Council meeting

The minutes of the March 8, 2019 meeting were approved with one abstention

3. Announcements and Remarks from the Associate Dean

3.1. Associate Dean Shields thanks everyone who participated in the TU4U events for the efforts. The events were very successful although some minor issues need to be resolved (e.g. parking issues, better tour coordination between campus wide tours and departmental tours to avoid overlaps, and better directions to avoid families being in the wrong side of campus for informational panels).

3.2. The Student Honors Convocation will be on April 28, 2019 at 1:00 pm in the West Village Commons

3.3. The Student Research and Creative Inquiry Forum (Research Expo) will be on Wednesday, April 17, 2019 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm in the West Village Commons.

4. Announcements from the Council Chairperson

4.1. We will hold council officer elections next meeting. Please consider serving because many members are rotating out after this semester. New Council members will be invited to our next meeting

4.2. The faculty salary review committee presented their report to the senate. This is an interesting committee and Jennifer encourages everybody to consider serving on it.

4.3. The university is putting together working groups for its reaccreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. In order to be re-accredited, the university must meet 7 standards, which are listed and explained in the website of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The standards are related to (1) Mission and Goals; (2) Ethics and Integrity; (3) Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience; (4) Support of the Student Experience; (5) Educational Effectiveness Assessment; (6) Planning, Resources and Institutional Improvement; and (7) Governance, Leadership and Administration.
5. Updates from FCSM Departments

5.1. Biological Sciences: The department completed their seven-year review and this led them put together a strategic plan for the next seven years. A department committee is working on workload policy to streamline merit and to better distribute service. The department plans to hire three temporary faculty because they don’t want to make a permanent hire during this time when we are moving to a new building. There are two upcoming interesting seminars on April 16 (about the ecophysiology of terrapin turtles) and a sabbatical talk from Barry Margulies on May 14 (about drug delivery using subcutaneous biodegradable implants)

5.2. Chemistry: There is an upcoming seminar from a student recipient of the Raspet Fellowship. The department plans to hire an Organic Chemistry Lecturer, a Clinical Assistant Professor to fulfill roles in the General Chemistry Coordination and a Visiting Assistant Professor.

5.3. Computer and Information Sciences: The department completed one search to hire a tenure-track faculty who will join the department in the Fall of 2019. The department is designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education and it is currently undergoing a review to be re-designated.

5.4. Mathematics: The department held an Undergraduate Research Conference. Diana Cheng published a paper on Figure Skating and Mathematics. The Math Club organized a student competition on Integration and they plan to organize a competition on Differentiation in the future. There is an upcoming lecture on diversity on April 29 (on how to help underrepresented minority students in the classroom).

5.5. Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences: The department plans to bring candidates for the biophysics tenure track faculty position starting next week. The department is also conducting a search for a machinist for the college. There were not many applications but one applicant looks promising. The first seminar in Fall will be about the first black hole picture that was released on April 10, 2019.

6. New Business

6.1. Regents Award nominees for 2019: Council members are requested to propose potential nominees for the Regents Awards. The Regents Awards recognize outstanding faculty in the categories of Teaching, Scholarship, Public Service, Mentoring and Innovation. Nominations are first made to a Towson University committee and the committee selects candidates to submit complete nomination packages to the University System of Maryland. The first round is not a lot of work but faculty who are selected to go forward need to prepare extensive packages.

7. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ana Maria Soto
Recording Secretary