

Minutes of the February 8, 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: **FCSM:** Vonnie Shields; **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:** Elizabeth Goode (Mathematics), Kelly Elkins (Chemistry); **Student Representatives:** Steve Blama (Graduate Student, Physics), Sarubi Harrison (Undergraduate Student, Computer Sciences)

Guests: Elisabeth White (Science Technology and Mathematics Librarian), Nancy Dufau, (Assistant Vice President of Sponsored Programs and Research), Howard Kaplon (FCSM), Angel Kumchev (FCSM)

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

1. Special Guest: Elisabeth White

Elisabeth White is the new Science Technology and Mathematics Librarian at Towson University. Elisabeth attended Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, where she earned a B.S in Biological Chemistry. As an undergraduate student, she studied the nucleic acids ratio in clams from southern Maine and the genetic drift spotted in salamanders. After graduation, Elisabeth worked as a laboratory technician at University of Minnesota, where she conducted literatures searches, supported research activities in the laboratory and was also involved in research related to gold nanoparticles. Elisabeth earned a Master's degree in Library and Information Sciences from St. Catherine University in Minnesota. Elisabeth started her position at Towson about a week ago. She plans to get involved in teaching starting next semester. Elisabeth is interested in meeting with faculty to learn about our research interests and what services from the library can best support the faculty. Elisabeth can be reached at ebwhite@towson.edu.

2. Approval of minutes from the December 14, 2018 FCSM College Council meeting

The minutes from the December 14, 2018 meeting were approved with 4 abstentions

3. Announcements and remarks from the Acting Dean

- 3.1.** If you have a handicapped student and a fire emergency occurs, the following procedure should be followed: bring the student to the stairway and close the fireproof doors; and go down (or send someone down) and inform the appropriate authority that there is someone upstairs who needs help.
- 3.2.** The Women in Science Forum will be on March 2, 2019 from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm. The speakers include Ming Ding ("What is an Actuary and Why Actuarial Science?", Actuarial Sciences, Towson University), Tori Johnson ("From Bird Behavior to Autoimmunity", Johns Hopkins University) and Jenny Buckley ("Engineering Change: Strategic Action to Achieve Diversity in Engineering", Mechanical Engineering, University of Delaware).

- 3.3. There is a proposal to reorganize the shared governance structure at TU by creating an Academic Senate in place of the current senate. The current senate is not in compliance with USM guidelines and needs better representation of faculty. Approval of the new academic senate requires a 2/3 majority vote. All full time faculty (tenured, tenure-track, lecturers and clinical faculty) should vote. The voting window will be from March 1 to March 8.
- 3.4. OTS visited the last Chairs Council meeting and requested immediate feedback regarding some technology-related items including furniture, white boards and podiums. There is a deadline to order these items. Department chairs will speak to faculty and get back to OTS. Faculty are encouraged to visit the demo room to see the technology that will be available in the new building.
- 3.5. In the last Provost and Deans Council, the President indicated that we are still on target with the Capital Campaign to fund the new science building. There will be a reorganization of the university budget committee with the aim to make budget decisions more broad. The new committee will include Ben Lowenthal, 3 vice presidents, the chairperson of RPAC, the provost and the Deans.
- 3.6. The university has added July 5th as an additional holiday for this year.
- 3.7. The results about the proposals to be funded by the Towson University Foundation have been announced. There were 4 successful grants, each funded at \$25,000
- 3.8. In November 2018, the Office of General Counsel (Sara Slaff, VP for Legal Affairs and General Counsel) rolled out an ethics hotline where TU members can report ethics and compliance violations. The hotline should make it easier to report issues and facilitate anonymity. TU members can call 877-SPEAKTU (877-773-2588)
- 3.9. The information session about the new Towson brand (branding camp) took place over the winter break. Guidelines about how to use the brand were organized into four concurrent sessions. Some suggestions from this event include that departments should use up the old stationary (there is not need to throw it out) and that there is a web-portal where faculty and staff can redo their email signatures.

4. Announcements from the Council Chairperson

- 4.1. We have a new undergraduate student representative: Saraubi Harrison is a senior Computer Sciences major
- 4.2. There is a Maryland Open Source and Textbook initiative, which is an effort from USM to address concerns from students about the rising cost of textbooks. USM can provide some mini-grants to faculty to support the adoption of open textbooks. Alex Storrs and Jennifer Scott recently used an open source book in their astronomy course. The textbook is a website but faculty are encourage to use tools (from Lumen Learning) that can let you tailor open source resources to your own content. These tools are free for now. Faculty present a description of their adoption in a forum and the mini-grant is a stipend for faculty time.
 - 4.2.1. Council members commented that some research indicates that use of electronic textbooks impairs learning.
 - 4.2.2. Student members of the council commented that they prefer physical textbooks, particularly for books they plan to keep such as upper level courses of their major. However, students also indicated that they like e-textbooks for their lower price.

- 4.3. When writing letters of recommendation, faculty are encouraged to pay attention to the language they use to describe students. Some terminology is often correlated with male or with female students. For example, words like “kind” and “helpful” are often associated with female students and words like “bright” and “gifted” are often associated with male students. There are some online tools that could help faculty eliminate this bias. In some websites you can upload the text of your letter and obtain an analysis of whether you are using language typically associated with male or female students.
- 4.4. A group of faculty recently visited the new Science, Engineering and Technology Building at Howard Community College. This is a nice building with really nice lab spaces. The building has white boards in the hallway, which are useful for talking to groups of students during office hours. The building also has spaces where students can plug their devices and display some content for studying in groups. Towson visitors also learned that Howard Community College gives credit to faculty for doing professional development, which could be a nice way to acknowledge faculty efforts.

5. Updates from FCSM Departments

- 5.1. **Biological Sciences:** Three faculty (Lynn Middleton, Scott Johnson and Erik Scully) are retiring, so the department expects to be conducting faculty searches in the near future. The department is undergoing their 7-year review and an external reviewer (Janet Morrison from The College of New Jersey) will visit their department soon. There will be a seminar about terrapins on Tuesday at 3:30 pm.
- 5.2. **Chemistry:** The department hired a new administrative assistant and two new faculty members (for Organic Chemistry and Forensic Chemistry). The department anticipates some faculty searches in the near future as three faculty are leaving. One faculty member (Katie Nesbitt) is leaving because she has a great opportunity to be a soccer referee in the women world cup. Jill Discordia, a senior lecturer, is retiring and the new Forensic Chemistry faculty (Sarah Stokes) was formerly a lecturer in the department. The department is currently considering the best option on how to go about these faculty searches.
- 5.3. **Computer and Information Sciences:** The department is conducting two faculty searches and expects to have six to eight interviews in the near future. The department welcomed more than 100 transfer students this semester. President Schatzel recognized the department and announced that the department will establish a Cybersecurity Education and Research Center.
- 5.4. **Mathematics:** The department is conducting one faculty search in Applied Mathematics; three candidates will come to campus starting next week. The department will host the undergraduate research conference in Mathematics on April 6.
- 5.5. **Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences:** The department hired Michelle Casey, a paleontologist/paleobiologist who will start in the fall. She studied mollusks in Long Island and is looking to expand her research to the Chesapeake Bay. An advertisement for a faculty search (in Biophysics) has been placed.

6. Special Guest: Nancy Dufau

Nancy Dufau is the Assistant Vice President of Sponsored Programs and Research and she has been at Towson for about one and one-half years. The Office of Sponsored Programs supports pre-award and post-award activities including compliance, conflicts of interest and they also serve as an entry point for issues related to intellectual property. Nancy commented on some OSPR programs and also clarified some programs in response to questions:

- 6.1.** The office is very faculty friendly. The office recognizes that writing a grant takes a lot of work and tries to make the process as seamless as possible. Some of the office staff involved in grant activities includes Kevin Smith (post-award), Ashley Dawson (IRB compliance), Lissa Rapkin (pre-award) and Anne Greene (pre-award).
- 6.2.** One of the office initiatives is to help faculty serve as peer-reviewers with federal grants. Reviewing grants helps faculty learn what a fundable grant looks like. The office provides a \$750 stipend and the federal agency may provide some funds as well.
- 6.3.** OSPR provides funds for faculty to travel to visit program officers in DC.
- 6.4.** OSPR provides funds for faculty to attend grant conferences (from NIH and NSF). The office pays for the registration. One NIH grant conference is coming to Baltimore soon.
- 6.5.** Some OSPR staff (Katherine Fusick) have started conducting funding searches for faculty. These searches use the same databases that faculty can access. Searches can be very specific so faculty are encouraged to provide feedback to OSPR staff if the initial search does not provide the expected results.
- 6.6.** The office is planning to hire a new staff member who would focus on proposal development. A job announcement describing this position has been recently posted.
- 6.7.** In response to a question, Nancy clarified that due to federal regulations, faculty can only get two months of summer salary from federal grants. Faculty cannot get a supplementary salary from federal grants when they are getting payment from their institution. However, grants can provide budget relief during the semester (about 25% of time in the semester). These funds go to the department and the university may have some sources of funding that can be directed to faculty. Grants from private corporations may not have these limits in summer salary.
- 6.8.** In response to a question, Nancy explained that grants from federal sources may have regulations that affect other expenses. For example, there may be implications related to students who are paid from grants and are also receiving financial aid. In addition, there may be USM policies that the university needs to follow. Nancy encouraged faculty to reach out to her with questions about allowable expenses. The office always tries to support faculty but they need to check if a problem is a bureaucratic issue or if it refers to guidelines that Towson University really needs to comply with.
- 6.9.** The university is required to do a once a year form for all faculty effort in a federal grant. The form can be very brief; it could be a summary of what was received in a federal year. This will start next fiscal year.

6.10. In response to a question, Nancy indicated that the current grant tracking system (Peoplesoft Financial) is unlikely to change in the near future. The university is looking at a new cloud-based software but even if this software is implemented, this will take several years. The current system is somewhat difficult but the Operations Managers from each department use it frequently and should be very familiar with it.

7. Old Business

7.1. Upcoming revisions to FCSM P&T document

Council members suggested and discussed parts of the current P&T document that could be considered in the upcoming revision:

- 7.1.1.** The language of the narrative sections could be streamlined as there are some duplications for what needs to be included in the binder.
- 7.1.2.** The provost binder should be a 2-inch binder since it requires a lot of materials
- 7.1.3.** Minority opinions and letters should be handled differently. Currently there are no guidelines about how minority letters should be handled and if they are submitted as signed letters, names are revealed, overriding confidentiality.
- 7.1.4.** The current document does not represent clinical faculty. Some departments have internal guidelines for clinical faculty and there are guidelines at the university level but not at the college level.
- 7.1.5.** There was some discussion about whether departments use the percentages in the AFWE to evaluate merit differently according to the percentage. Some departments are discussing categorizing workload according to different levels of percentage of work done in research, teaching and service

7.2. Transfer Students: There are some resources to help transfer students succeed. There is a transfer-advising center, which is just starting. This center is designed to help transfer students as soon as they arrive. There is an academic advisor in college (Denise McGill). Denise helps students who are at risk and she has office hours both in Smith Hall and in the 7800 York Road building. Council members also commented that this semester there were fewer transfer students that expected.

8. New Business

8.1. Educational technology in the New Science Complex: The council is planning to coordinate with our OTS representative to organize a field trip to visit the demo rooms in Smith Hall and in the 7800 York Building so that council members can look at the technology that will be available in the new building.

9. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ana Maria Soto
Recording secretary