Minutes of the March 9, 2018 FCSM College Council Meeting.

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

Member Attendees: FCSM: David Vanko, Vonnie Shields Biological Sciences: Jacqueline Doyle, Elizabeth O’Hare, Chemistry: Shuhua Ma, Ana Maria Soto, Shannon Stitzel; Computer and Information Sciences: Josh Dehlinger, Michael McGuire; Physics, Astronomy, & Geosciences: Wendy Nelson, Jennifer Scott; Mathematics: Sergiy Borodachov, Yunwei Cui; Student Representatives: Claire Glenn (Undergraduate Student, Computer and Information Sciences).

Absentees: Dawn Myers (Graduate Student, Mathematics)

Chairperson Michael McGuire called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes
   The minutes of the February 9, 2018 meeting were approved unanimously with 2 abstentions.

2. Announcements from the Dean.
   2.1. Sad news about Dr. Jerome Cohen (Mathematics). Dr. Jerome Cohen passed shortly after our February Council Meeting. Dr. Cohen was an adjunct faculty member in the Mathematics department after a full career with Baltimore County schools.
   2.2. USM Regents’ Faculty Awards: Dean Vanko invited Chairperson Mike McGuire to announce the USM Regents’ awards from the Fisher College. Mike explained that of the 16 total awards given by the University System of Maryland, Towson University faculty received 5 of the awards. Faculty from the FCSM received 4 out of the 5 awards: Vera Smolyaninova was awarded a Regents Award for Scholarship, Research or Creative Activity, Sidd Kaza was awarded a Regents Award for Teaching, Pam Lottero-Perdue was also awarded a Regents Award for Teaching, and Clare Muho was awarded a Regents award for Public Service. All four of the nominees encouraged and submitted by the FCSM College Council earned awards. Although the College cannot officially publicize the awards until they are announced at the Regents’ Meeting in April, the VP for Marketing is looking into ways to announce the awards before April.
   2.3. Actuarial Science & Risk Management 2nd Annual Alumni Event was held on March 2, 2018.
   2.4. Women in Science Forum: The forum will be tomorrow, March 10, 2018. Registration and breakfast start at 8:30 am, followed by three talks from 9:00 – 12:00 and a networking lunch at 12:00 noon. This year, all three speakers are present or former Towson affiliates.
   2.5. Dreyfus Lecture: A lecture on gold nanoparticles will take place on March 14, 2018 at 4:00 pm. This event is organized by Mary Devadas and Keith Reber, who were awarded funds from the Dreyfus Foundation to sponsor this event.
   2.6. Elana Ehrlich’s Fisher Chair Lecture will be on March 16 at 3:30 pm in SM 356. A reception will follow at 5:15 pm at the Auburn House
   2.7. Ocean Discovery Lecture: Mark Reagan from University of Iowa will present a lecture on March 30, 2018. This lecture will focus on the initiation of the Izu-Bonin-Mariana Subduction System, as revealed by deep sea drilling.
   2.8. School of Emerging Technologies Public Health and Healthcare Informatics Showcase, April 4 at 7:45 am, Minnegan Room

3. Remarks from the Dean.
   3.1. Remember – FCSM’s Top Three Focus areas: Student Success and Assessment

       Richmond Hall was designated in 2013 as a STEM residential learning community (RLC). The results from the first cohort (which included 75 students) have been released and are contrasted with a comparison cohort of 150 students with similar profiles as the RLC students.
Future analyses will include the 6-year graduation rate, which is the number reported to federal agencies (Towson University’s 6-year graduation rate is about 70%).

STEM Residential Learning Community results for Fall 2013 cohort:

STEM RLC, of the 75 students, the 4-year graduation rate was 47%
Comparison cohort, of the 152 students, the 4-year graduation rate was 39%
The TU overall 4-year graduation rate was 47%

STEM RLC, the 4-year graduation rate with a STEM degree = 33%
Comparison cohort, the 4-year graduation rate with a STEM degree = 22%

FCSM Research and Scholarship
YTD Grant Submissions: $11.4M / 65 faculty. (Same date last year: $20.2M / 61 faculty)
YTD Grants announced: $7.8M / 33 faculty. (Same date last year: $3.3M / 23 faculty)

Diversity and Inclusion
Dean Vanko emphasized a suggestion for the PAGS Department to invite Dr. Louis Strolger, from Space Telescope Science Institute to give a talk at Towson University. PAGS will coordinate with Associate Dean Vonnie Shields to organize this event.

3.2. New Science building update: We continue to be on budget and it looks like we will be able to afford most of the features we wanted to include in the building. The affordability of the spiral staircase is still unknown since this is an expensive item (about $750,000). Dump trucks have finished removing dirt and are no longer present in the construction area (earlier we had about 200 dump truck visits per day with the record being 279 trucks in one day).

3.3. Obafemi Awolowo University visit to TU two weeks ago: a delegation of four, including their Vice Chancellor (President), met President Schatzel and Provost Chandler, and spent a lot of time with faculty primarily in CIS.

Some of the future goals of Obafemi Awolowo University include hosting and organizing an IEEE meeting and seeking ABET accreditation, despite the challenges they face due to the travel warnings to Nigeria. Towson University hopes to help Obafemi Awolowo University achieve their goals to strengthen their university profile.

3.4. FCSM Career Community – a new pilot at TU, where two Career Center employees will serve solely STEM/FCSM majors. One will be inward-focused (counseling, advising, personal and group activities with students) and one outward-focused (employers, internships, alumni, etc.)
Depending on this pilot, all other colleges could begin Career Communities.

4. Remarks from the Council Chairperson.
4.1. Shannon Stitzel is the new Corresponding Secretary for the remainder of the year.
4.2. We will discuss nominees for the Regents Award next meeting. We hope to finish the process in May so that we can notify nominees in May.
4.3. Harald Beck was an at large College Council Representative. Mike consulted with Darush Davani about filling Harald’s council position. Darush recommended that we should include this position in the next election, along with the other University-wide positions.
4.4. Mike reminded council members about the new University Constitution. All full time faculty members are eligible to vote. More than 50% of the faculty need to vote and 2/3 of the votes need to be in favor of the new constitution for it to be approved. The proposed new constitution includes an academic senate.
5. **Updates from FCSM Departments**

Members from each FCSM department updated the Council on departmental news and activities. Many departments reported on ongoing faculty searches and Dean Vanko noted that while many of these searches are replacement searches, the college has grown and two positions are new SAPs (one in Integrated Biology and one in Data Science). For the 2019 academic year, the Fisher College has requested 2 new faculty SAPs, 2 new staff SAPs and funds for our faculty salary pool to help some adjuncts become lecturers.

5.1. **Biology:** There are two Clinical Assistant Professor (CAP) searches underway. The department is also working on more explicit tracks for tenured and tenure track faculty (service/research balance). These changes stem from the new workload procedure that the department has recently adopted.

5.2. **Chemistry:** There is a tenure-track search for a physical chemistry faculty underway. The committee received 68 applications and has selected 10 applicants for phone interviews. Several faculty and students from the department plan to attend the upcoming ACS meeting in New Orleans.

5.3. **Computer & Information Sciences:** There are 3 searches underway: two are for Clinical Assistant Professors and one is for a tenure-track data science faculty. The first data science candidate campus visit occurred yesterday and there will be two more visits next week. The other two searches have just started. The department is also working on their 7-year program review and they are planning to have their first meeting on March 30th. This review previously required strategic plans for each program but it now requires one 7-year strategic plan for the entire department. Gary Levy has suggested that this model may be more efficient because it will present a profile of the entire department, including course offerings and how programs relate to each other. Thus, the outside reviewer will be looking at the overall department operation instead of getting into curriculum details.

5.4. **Mathematics:** One search for a Pure Mathematics Faculty is still underway, with two more faculty candidates still coming for interviews. The 2018 Undergraduate Mathematics Research Conference will be held at Towson University. This conference was sponsored by NSF for two years with the plan of becoming sustainable after that. This year’s conference is sponsored by the Fisher College and the Department of Mathematics. The department’s combined BS/MSc program was approved.

5.5. **Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences:** There are two lecturer searches underway: one is for a temporary position and one is for a long term position. Harald Beck visited the department to talk about the proposed academic senate, which stimulated considerable discussion.

6. **Old business.**

The council examined the results from the online survey about the Fisher Endowment Fund priorities. The results are summarized in the graphs included below.

Dean Vanko plans to release a RFP for authentic research experiences. In the graphs, authentic research experiences are ranked as a high priority, along with other areas. The focus on undergraduate research is because undergraduate research has been shown to help students succeed in a major. However, it is difficult to make full use of this advantage if you can only reach a small number of students. Some examples of successful ways we have had in our college to get more students involved in research experiences include: Authentic Research Laboratory courses (such as the ones in Molecular Biology and the CURE courses), the Algebraic Geometry Study Research Group (a year-long study where students met regularly to develop small research projects in algebraic geometry), and some investments in the field station.

Dean Vanko clarified the type of expenditures included in the marketing category and emphasized the importance of maintaining the positive reputation of Fisher College. Expenses in this category utilize only a small portion of the budget ($20,000). Some examples of the expenses in this category include sponsoring science fairs, buying ads in the Greater Baltimore Committee, sending students to conferences such as the Grace Hopper conference, and sponsoring small meetings.
Dean Vanko also explained that his preference has been to spread the funds over many areas rather than focusing on one area. Putting all the resources in one area could have a transformational effect for that area but the Dean has preferred to spread the funds evenly, promoting all programs and supporting well the programs we already have.

One suggestion that arose during the discussion was to fund open access fees for faculty publications. Several faculty explained that many reputable journals have an optional open access fee. If the optional fee is paid, the article is available to the public free of cost, which could have a great impact on the visibility of faculty research.

Dean Vanko hopes that faculty know that their voices are important in this process. He indicated that the survey results and suggestions would be helpful for him in deciding funding priorities.

7. **Additional Business.**

7.1. **Proposed changes to university senate:** Jennifer Scott voiced some concerns from the PAGS department about the proposed changes, particularly about the Steering Committee. Since the Committee is not formed yet, its role is not clear. It is not clear whether the Steering Committee would help weight all voices (students, staff and faculty) equally, if it would serve a similar role as the current Senate Executive Committee, or if it would simply help communication between the 3 bodies. Currently, the University Senate has a stronger voice from faculty but if voices are weighted equally, this may dilute faculty voices. Other concerns that arose during the discussion included that this division may result in conflicted decisions, that students could pass motions without any real debate and that the role of graduate students is unclear. It was pointed out that these bodies are only advisory voices but the concern remained that faculty advisory commentary should carry the most weight as faculty are in the university for longer terms. It was also noted that most big universities have a Faculty Senate. It was determined that some clarifications are necessary. The Corresponding Secretary will contact the Senate President to inquire whether each body would be in direct communication to the president or to the steering committee and other issues.

7.2. **Tiger travel:** Various faculty reported problems related to Tiger Travel, particularly related to student travel. Howard Kaplon, who sees most of the Tiger Travel forms from our college, clarified that the system is an improvement over paper and that only a minority of the applications get kicked back 2 or 3 times. Generally speaking, the reported problems were not related to the technology but rather to the travel office. One suggestion would be to have a person in the travel office specialized in student travel.

7.3. Dean Vanko corresponded with Gary Levy about evaluations for lecture/lab courses (which are combined in one evaluation even though the components are taught by different faculty). Changing survey questions would require UPTRM approval but one suggestion is to use the appropriate section in the annual report to reflect on student evaluations and clarify the evaluation questions/comments that refer to the other portion of the course. However, faculty were concerned about lab instructors reading evaluations for other faculty, particularly because often lab instructors are lecturers, adjunct faculty or even student instructors. Dean Vanko will invite Tim Bibo to discuss this in one of our future meetings.

8. **Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ana Maria Soto
Recording Secretary