Minutes of the May 11, 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: Vonnie Shields, David Vanko; At large: Shuhua Ma; Biological Sciences: Jacqueline Doyle; Chemistry: Ana Maria Soto, Shannon Stitzel; Computer and Information Sciences: Michael McGuire, Josh Dehlinger; Physics, Astronomy, & Geosciences: Wendy Nelson, Jennifer Scott; Mathematics: Sergiy Borodachov; Student Representatives: Claire Glenn (Undergraduate Student, Computer and Information Sciences), Dawn Myers (Graduate Student, Mathematics).

**Elected Members Attendees:** Scott Hilberg (Computer and Information Sciences)

**Special Guests:** Laura Gough (Chairperson, Department of Biological Sciences)

**Absentees:** Elizabeth O'Hare (Biological Sciences), Yunwei Cui (Mathematics)

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

1. **Preliminary Results from Faculty Workload and Rewards Project (Special Guest: Laura Gough)**

The biology department at Towson University participated in a study funded by an NSF Advance grant. Advance grants are devoted to increase the representation of women in STEM careers. The initial plan for this study was to include 42 natural sciences, math, engineering and social sciences departments (21 experimental and 21 control groups) from 3 different states (Maryland, North Carolina and Massachusetts). The actual study ended up including 18 experimental groups, one of which was the Department of Biological Sciences at Towson University. The study lasted 18 months and it ended in January 2018. One of the goals of the study was to create a dashboard that would increase the transparency of workloads among faculty and to develop a department equity action plan (DEAP) to distribute workloads fairly.

As a first step, full time faculty completed a survey (91% participation), which found that although 70% of faculty were satisfied with their job, only 32% were satisfied with the amount of time they spent on research or learning. In addition, 8% felt recognized for their work, 50% felt a commitment from the department to distribute loads fairly, 33% felt that workloads were distributed transparently and 74% felt workloads were distributed fairly.

In the next step, they used the information from the Fall of 2015 Annual Reports to create a dashboard. They defined 4 components in the workload (advising, teaching, scholarship and service) and described rewards as merit, compensation for particular roles (e.g. course buyouts) and financial compensation. In order to analyze service loads, committees were ranked as low, medium and high effort based on the frequency of their meetings and the amount of outside work (homework) required. The results are presented as aggregated graphs rather than raw data to protect confidentiality.

Analysis of the dashboard data revealed some disparities, including disparities in the number of advisees per faculty member, disparities in the number of undergraduate and graduate research students mentored, large increases in the amount of service when advancing from assistant to associate professor and disparities in an amount of service of male and female faculty. Developing the dashboard increased transparency and it allowed for some changes. For example, advisees are now distributed among various concentrations instead of being assigned to specific concentrations based on their career plans (e.g. premed students are distributed among all faculty now). The department is also discussing differentiated workloads and the creation of paths (research intensive, service intensive and teaching orientated) that would make it feasible for faculty to achieve different workloads.
The department found the study very informative. The study ended in January but they plan to continue updating the dashboard yearly and reviewing their workload assignment procedures. They plan to develop a governance document, establish appropriate rotations, consider class size and number of course preparations in workloads, streamline merit evaluation and make expectations clear. The expectation is that distributing workloads more efficiently should free up time that faculty could use for other activities.

2. Approval of Minutes
   There was a correction to the minutes of the April 13, 2018 meeting: Ms. Amber Lee’s name was corrected (originally written incorrectly as Amber Hall). The corrected minutes were approved with 2 abstentions.

3. Announcements from the Dean.
   3.1. Staffing changes in the dean’s office: Dean Vanko has agreed to serve as Interim Provost and Associate Dean Vonnie Shields has agreed to serve as Acting Dean Vonnie Shields (after July 1st). An acting associate dean will be appointed in the near future. A national search for a new provost is underway with the hope that a new provost will start in January or February of 2019.
   3.2. FCSM Dean’s Office welcomes Amanda Charles, our new Executive Administrative Assistant. Amanda has a lot of experience in higher education, mainly from Alfred College and more recently from Loyola College. Amanda started at the Dean’s office on Wednesday a week ago.
   3.3. Board of Regents Education Policy Committee meeting to approve the proposed MS in Actuarial Science and Predictive Analytics program – May 15th. Mike O’Leary, Min Deng and Dean Vanko will attend the meeting.
   3.4. RFP for FCSM General Endowment funding was released. Proposals due June 1st. One of the main goals is for these funds to increase student (primarily undergraduate) research opportunities and to help students be involved in research at a deeper level. Research has shown that Authentic Research Experiences early and often help students succeed in in STEM majors.
   3.5. Requests for applications for the Fisher Endowed Chair in the Biological and Physical Sciences, and the Fisher Endowed Chair in the Mathematical and Computing Sciences, were released. Applications due June 1st.

4. Remarks from the Dean.
   4.1. Research and Scholarship
      
      YTD Grant Submissions: $13.4M / 74 faculty. (Same date last year: $21.9M / 65 faculty)

      YTD Grants announced: $7.9M / 36 faculty. (Same date last year: $3.4M / 25 faculty)

   4.2. New Science building update: The ceremonial groundbreaking was April 17th, with invited guests including State and local government officials, donors, and USM leaders. The ceremony took place on the roof of the Glen parking garage, which overlooks the construction.

5. Remarks from the Council Chairperson.
   5.1. Michael McGuire is rotating out of council. He enjoyed serving in the council for the last three years and wishes every one well as the council moves forward.
   5.2. During the last Senate Meeting on May 7th, Harald Beck’s motion for a Faculty & Staff Wellness Program passed unanimously. A senate motion means that there is a recommendation for the university to look into this program.
6. **Updates from FCSM Departments**

6.1. **Biology**: The department is discussing a potential sequence for introductory courses. They are also discussing the possibility of placing limits in the major by including a DF cutoff, similar to the chemistry department (where students cannot continue with the chemistry major if they get more than three D/Fs in required courses). The chemistry department representatives offered the feedback that some students are too far into their major to be asked to leave the major and that it is difficult to monitor students as people soft does not keep track of this information. Dean Vanko suggested that the chemistry department should keep track of the demographics of students impacted by this policy over the last two or three years.

6.2. **Chemistry**: The department is currently discussing hiring priorities for a future faculty position.

6.3. **Computer and Information Sciences**: The department hired Adam Conover, a current lecturer, as a Clinical Assistant Professor. The department is currently completing a program review. Each program director is conducting a self-study to later look at the department as a unit. An external reviewer would later look at the overall program offerings from the department.

6.4. **Mathematics**: Students in the Senior Seminar Capstone class will present their projects to the Mathematics Faculty. A group of faculty from Mathematics and Computer and Information Sciences wrote a grant and were funded to develop combined Math and Computer Sciences Post Baccalaureate Certificates and Masters Programs in Data Science and Computational Mathematics.

6.5. **Physics, Astronomy and Geosciences**: The department hired two one-year sabbatical replacements. The department’s Sigma Pi Sigma event is tonight. The event will include a public lecture by Catherine Asaro, followed by a dinner and Honor Society Inductions. One faculty from Geology acquired a new instrument that allows for faster and safer analysis of elements in rocks.

7. **Old Business**

7.1. **Student Evaluations**: Following last council meeting, Tim Bibo sent the custom questions that are used in the student evaluations of the various FCSM departments. The custom questions show that it is possible to include questions for each instructor. It was pointed out that the confidentiality issue arising from the mixing of comments about both instructors in the open-ended course questions still remains.

The student members of the council described the student evaluations as containing four pages: the first page has questions about the student (expected grade, reasons for taking the course, etc.), the second page contains the course questions, the third page contains open-ended questions (would you recommend this class, what did you like about this class, what could be improved, etc.), and the fourth page contains questions about the instructor. One of the students opened her account and showed that there was one link for each class. Upon clicking the link, students can answer the first page of questions and click next to move to the next page. The students did not recall getting two sets of instructor questions but Tim Bibo indicated last meeting that whether two sets of questions would appear depends on how the course is entered in PeopleSoft.

7.2. **Regents Awards**: The council is still hoping to identify potential nominees before next semester so that they can have enough time to prepare the necessary materials. Suggestions for potential nominees include Fall Forum Award recipients as well as other award recipients, whose names can be seen in the plaques in the Dean’s office. It was also clarified that faculty don’t need to be nominated by the college council and that any faculty can nominate a colleague. Nominations go to an internal Towson Committee that decides who is going to be invited to submit a nomination to the Board of Regents.
8. **Additional Business**

8.1. There are two members rotating out of the council (Michael McGuire and Shuhua Ma), the Dean thanked them for their service and presented them with a pen as a token of his appreciation.

8.2. **Council Officers:** The council elected new officers. The officers include the chairperson, the vice-chair, the corresponding secretary and the recording secretary. These officers are part of the Executive Committee, which meets once a month.

   Some of the responsibilities of the chairperson include running the meeting, preparing the agenda, going over the minutes, submitting nominations for the Regents Awards, corresponding with department chairs to make sure that vacancies in subcommittees are filled, and finding student representatives for the college council. The vice chair runs the meeting if the chair is not available and helps with the agenda. The recording secretary prepares the minutes of the meeting and the corresponding secretary communicates with other bodies.

   Chairperson: Jennifer Scott was elected unanimously by all voting members
   Vice Chair: Shannon Stitzel was elected unanimously by all voting members
   Recording Secretary: Ana Maria Soto was elected unanimously by all voting members
   Corresponding Secretary: Josh Dehlinger was elected unanimously by all voting members

8.3. **FCSM Student Research Awards:** Jennifer Scott conveyed a request from the PAGS department to obtain historical data about the success rate on FCSM student research awards by department. They would like clarifications on the rubric used for evaluations and the way the Undergraduate Research Committee evaluates student research proposals. They also indicated that it is difficult for new students to understand both the big picture and the details of their project. Hence, they suggest that future proposals could include a small executive summary, written by the faculty sponsor to explain the big picture of the research project.

9. **Adjournment.**

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Ana Maria Soto
Recording Secretary