Minutes of the October 8, 2021 FCSM College Council Meeting

The FCSM College Council met in the Science Complex, Room 4230 at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Pamela Lotero-Perdue, Chairperson, presiding. An option to Zoom into the meeting was made available; two participants attended via Zoom.

Member Attendees: FCSM: David Vanko, Vonnie Shields; Biological Sciences: Angela Cox, Anne Estes; Chemistry: Stephen Hancock, Henderika van Huizen; Computer & Information Sciences: Joyram Chakraborty, Yeong-Tae Song; Mathematics: Min Ji, Melike Kara; Physics, Astronomy, & Geosciences: Michelle Casey, Raj Kolagani; At Large: Faith Weeks (Biology), Pamela Lotero-Perdue (PAGS); Students: Kyle Hurley (Graduate), Alexandra Reifer (Undergraduate)

Chairperson Pamela Lotero-Perdue called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Member introductions
2. Minutes of the September 10, 2021, FCSM Council meeting were approved:
   in favor (16), opposed (0), abstain (0)
3. Announcements and remarks from the Dean and Associate Dean
   3.1. There will be an FCSM Faculty/Staff Town Hall meeting with Provost Melanie Perreault, Friday, November 5th, at 3:00 pm in the Science Commons.
   3.2. FCSM Faculty/Staff award nominations due Friday, October 29, 2021, at 4:00 pm.
       3.2.1. Some of the procedures for nomination have changed slightly. Be aware of these when submitting
   3.3. FCSM Fall Forum is Friday, December 3, 2021, at 2:00 pm.
   3.4. FCSM Endowment Proposals/Grants: Awarding $166,761 to 9 projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty proponents</th>
<th>Topic / Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borodachov, Kolesnikov &amp; McNew</td>
<td>10th Regional UG Math Research Conference at TU</td>
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<td>S. Chakraborty, Dehlinger &amp; Deng</td>
<td>Authentic UG Res Experiences in Software Engineering and Machine Learning</td>
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<td>Cheng, Corum, Frank &amp; Spitzer</td>
<td>Math4SocialJustice Project</td>
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<td>Gluck &amp; Dehlinger</td>
<td>Crowd Flow Dynamics - Community Engagement Student Research</td>
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<td>Nelson &amp; Hawkins</td>
<td>Earth to Mars - UG research</td>
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<td>Nganguia</td>
<td>Math Enhances Teamwork in STEM</td>
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<td>Overduin</td>
<td>Summer Research in Physics &amp; Astronomy</td>
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<td>R. Wang, Liao &amp; Feng</td>
<td>Distributed AI systems</td>
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<td>Shields</td>
<td>Pest management research</td>
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3.5. Concern: potential significant increase in student DFW

3.5.1. Dean Vanko advised of the potential loss of students and indicated that efforts to engage at-risk students are paramount.

3.6. The path to R2 – the deans have begun meeting weekly to develop a plan that will be presented to the President by mid-November.

3.6.1. Dean Vanko advised that President Schatzel recognizes observable change may not be apparent for several years but supports the actions that are being taken.

4. Announcements from Associate Dean Shields

4.1. The college is evaluating how we attract students. Although college enrollment appears to be only slightly down, changes to the College open house format have been proposed.

4.1.1. The council discussed the possibility of offering more department level tours.

4.2. The college is working with Amy Moffett (Assistant Vice President for University Admissions) to better understand and improve our level of outreach to potential students.

4.2.1. The council discussed the need for evidence-based department and college level mechanisms for outreach and discussed engaging more effectively in high school fairs, improving recruitment documents that are distributed, pre-recording recruitment videos (college, department, and individual faculty level), and holding events for high school guidance counsellors and teachers at the university.

4.2.2. Associate Dean Shields noted that there are various constraints regarding what materials are approved to appear on University associated webpages.

4.3. More and shorter sessions will be held at future open houses and departments should prepare handouts that can be given to potential students.

5. Announcements from the Council Chairperson

5.1. TU health services has submitted responses to FCSM council questions regarding COVID See responses below (Appendix A).

5.2. Council Chairperson Lottero-Perdue spoke about item #2 see “Appendix A – responses from TU COVID team”

5.2.1. Council Chairperson Lottero-Perdue shared a personal experience wherein a student in a cohort of 20 tested positive. It was noted that peers in a cohort will not be contacted by student health unless the testimony of the infected student dictates that it is necessary despite additional information (i.e., testimony from professors). It was advised that TU health services can only handle so much data and they are mostly reliant on the student’s account. It was also noted that students may withhold accurate testimony to minimize the disturbance of peer operations.

5.2.2. It was noted by the council that there is little accountability for the students to stay away from campus following possible exposure and that professors are not apprised of who is contacted and advised to isolate.
5.2.3. The council discussed that faculty can determine whether a student has a legit COVID related absence by asking the student to forward the email from health services.

5.2.4. Council Chairperson Lottero-Perdue expressed that we are still unsure about how students communicate that they are part of a contact trace and suggested that we may be able to get an email from the health services.

5.3. Topics to be discussed for future meetings.

5.3.1. Shelter in place and active shooter/disaster preparedness

5.3.1.1. Council Chairperson Lottero-Perdue discussed the text alert system and encouraged the council to remind colleagues to ensure that they are in the system – text message alerts expire every two years.

5.3.1.2. The council discussed the protocols for sheltering in place while on campus but outside, i.e., not in range of the alert/warning system.

5.3.1.3. The council discussed the variability in getting alerts and the need for clear instructions for sheltering within the building. Additionally, the council discussed the mechanism for finding doors that lock from the inside.

5.3.1.4. Dean Vanko announced that he and Josh Wilhide (SC building manager) will have a meeting with the chief of police within the week.

5.3.1.5. The council discussed the need to communicate available training opportunities for instructors regarding emergency preparedness and for clear guidelines on protocol.

5.3.2. Receiving packages and correct temperature storage.

6. Guest Speaker: Joshua Wilhide, Building Manager for the Science Complex (~2:30)

6.1. Mr. Wilhide introduced himself and briefly summarized his background and training.

6.1.1. Mr. Wilhide described his vast experience with upkeep/maintenance/and management of numerous instruments.

6.1.2. Mr. Wilhide discussed his intimate interactions with building operations at his previous institution which informs his understanding of the unique requirements of a building manager for FCSM as it relates to the needs of the faculty.

6.2. Mr. Wilhide provided an update on recent progresses in the building as it becomes occupied.

6.2.1. Mr. Wilhide communicated that the first phase of occupying the building is based on gathering data and analyzing how and whether to make changes.

6.2.2. Mr. Wilhide spoke about the importance of communication and patience as we identify and rectify new logistic issues with Science Complex (SC).

6.3. Mr. Wilhide briefly discussed his current roles and responsibilities as SC building manager.

6.3.1. Mr. Wilhide suggested that his role will change as the building becomes occupied and that there are new challenges associated with each phase of the transition.
6.3.2. Mr. Wilhide suggested that, in general, his role is to support faculty, staff, and students regarding building-related issues and to increase the efficiency with which we conduct teaching, research, and learning.

6.3.3. Mr. Wilhide discussed how he coordinates with FCSM operational team and how information transmitted to faculty.

6.3.4. Mr. Wilhide also identified his role as a liaison to various offices and institutions (Chartwells, ABM, facilities).

6.4. Mr. Wilhide opened the floor to the FCSM council for questions and general discussion.

6.4.1. The Council addressed mechanisms for reserving rooms for meetings with smaller groups of students or lab personnel. It was suggested that department offices could facilitate room reservations. Conference room reservation is handled by Amanda Charles in the Dean’s office.

6.4.2. The council discussed student use of the large video board in the science commons. Use of this resource requires approval by the university space committee.

6.4.3. The council discussed how to identify suitable rooms with desired occupancy and asked if there were central calendar or database with this information. While there is no central database/calendar, inquiries can be sent to department admins who can advise on appropriate space. It was noted that there is a centralized calendar for third floor conference room and huddle spaces.

6.4.4. The Council discussed provisioning public spaces for student groups. 25 live was discussed as the preferred mechanism for approving space for student groups.

6.4.5. The Council discussed room access for instructors who teach after normal business hours and the schedule access. Mr. Wilhide discussed the flux associated with locking and unlocking rooms and that a more permanent solution was forthcoming.

6.4.6. The council discussed that the main entrances open at 7 a.m. and close at 9 p.m. This may be the same for the lecture halls.

7. Highlights from FCSM Departments

7.1. Biological Sciences

7.1.1. Faculty Searches

7.1.1.1. Tuesday & Thursday afternoons from 3:30-4:30 p.m. for candidate seminars from November 9\textsuperscript{th} through November 30\textsuperscript{th}.

7.1.1.2. Search committee will bring recommendation to December faculty meeting.

7.1.1.3. Tuesday & Thursday afternoons from 3:30-4:30 p.m. for candidate seminars from February 2 through February 24, 2022.

7.1.1.4. Search committee will bring recommendation to the March faculty meeting

7.1.2. TU nominees for Board of Regents faculty awards this year: Dr. Peko Tsuji was nominated for Mentoring and Dr. Brian Fath was nominated for Research, Scholarship or Creative Activity.
7.1.3. Mandatory Advising Preparation and Resources
    7.1.3.1. Advising Prep Checklist and Talking Points
    7.1.3.2. Advising Resources
    7.1.3.3. Advising Guide

7.1.4. Curriculm proposal
    7.1.4.1. Overall plan: Three Core levels followed by Concentration Electives Concentration revision: We propose the following 4 concentrations in Biology.
        7.1.4.1.1. Integrative Biology (INTB) - New.
        7.1.4.1.2. Cellular, Molecular and Organismal Physiology (CMOP) – New (derived from combination of previous FBA and CMB).
        7.1.4.1.4. Science Education (SCED).

7.1.5. Discussion of student grades/learning so far this semester.

7.1.6. Sabbatical proposals
    7.1.6.1. Brian Fath - coordinating completion of an international research project measuring the urban metabolism and resilience to climate risks of four cities: Vienna, Beijing, Shanghai, and Malmö. This multi-year project includes partners in Austria, China, and Sweden and uses novel network analysis methods to assess the resource flows of these cities under current and future climate scenarios.
    7.1.6.2. Sarah Haines - Working in collaboration with Project WET, which is planning to implement a project titled "New Technologies to Improve STEM Education and Assess Watershed Health in the Chesapeake Bay Region". Project WET publishes water resource education materials that are appropriate for many different age groups and cultures and offer comprehensive coverage of the broad topic of water. Additionally, they provide training workshops to educators at all levels, formal and non-formal, on diverse water topics so that those educators can reach children with objective, experiential, science-based water education. Sabbatical will be an ITEST project assessing the effect of Project WET on interest in STEM careers in the K-12 participants, as well as knowledge in the areas of watershed science and conservation.


7.2. Chemistry
    7.2.1. Forensic BS and MS programs had their FEPAC (Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation) reaccreditation site visit a few weeks ago and the initial response from the evaluators was very positive. We expect a final report in a few weeks.
    7.2.2. We submitted a report for ACS (American Chemical Society) recertification of the Chemistry program over the summer and are currently working on our 7-year USM Department review (that covers all three programs: BS CHEM, BS FCHM, MS FRSC). Coupled with moving into the new building, this is a good opportunity for our department to reflect on past accomplishments, current challenges, and plan for future goals.
7.3. Computer and Information Sciences

7.3.1. Welcome new faculty: Mona Alnahari is stepping up to full-time.

7.3.2. Reminder about retirements: Gaby Meiselwitz and Alfreda Dudley are retired full-time faculty and will teach a few courses as adjuncts across AIT and CIS.

7.3.3. Reminder about upcoming retirements: Darush Davani and Bob Hammell will retire after this fall.

7.3.4. We celebrated Sam Houston’s service as Computer Resources Director as he enters retirement September 1st.

7.3.5. CIS articulation with Cecil CC.

7.3.6. CIS and Cyber articulation with Harford CC.

7.4. Mathematics

7.4.1. No updates from the Department of Mathematics.

7.5. Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences

7.5.1. Dr. Rachel Burks-Rea has announced that she will retire from Towson University at the end of this year. This fall will be her last semester teaching and she will fully retire after the spring semester after over 30 years of service to Towson University. She has chosen to forgo an in-person retirement celebration, so feel free to give her your congratulations individually.

8. Old Business:

8.1. Update on Faculty submitting Regent Awards: see 7.1.2 above.

8.2. Responses from TU Health Center to our questions: See Appendix A for responses.

8.3. Additional individuals to invite to future meetings or discussion topics.

8.3.1. The council discussed inviting representatives from FACET to discuss the role of, and resources provided.

8.3.2. Honors college representative: The council notes a lack of involvement by FCSM in HC goings on and wants to investigate how we can better integrate STEM in the honors college curriculum.

8.3.3. Law enforcement liaison.

8.3.4. The council discussed inviting a representative who can communicate the resolutions from the meetings between Law enforcement and Mr. Wilhide and Dean Vanko regarding active shooter and shelter in place policies and training.

9. New Business

9.1. FCSM Strategic Action Plan

9.1.1. Dean Vanko discussed the strategic action items that would benefit our move to R2 and asked the council to think about additions and prioritization. See excel document in the shared College Council drive for more details.

9.1.2. Create doctoral fellowships - Five new incoming doctoral fellowship stipends per year, for two years. $30,000 the first year and $60,000 per year thereafter. These should include improved health insurance coverage.
9.1.3. New doctoral program or increase the numbers of doctorates we serve. This could include converting DSC in IT to PhD and creating a PhD in sustainability and environmental studies.

9.1.4. Increase the stipend value of Department-funded Graduate Research Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants by $3,000 – current graduate student stipends would be supplemented as well. The Council discussed the cost of living and the ability of graduate students to acquire a living wage as well as the availability of graduate housing.

9.1.5. Implement changes to the FCSM faculty workload guidelines. Updated guidelines enhance opportunities for research; faculty can adopt a variety of different workload profiles; faculty see an equitable policy and are more satisfied.

9.1.6. Formalize the faculty position as postdoctoral fellow. This could increase faculty size and diversity.

9.1.6.1. Dean Vanko discussed a program in which post-doctoral fellows would come to FCSM to establish themselves as an independent person that will transition straight into the Tenure Track.

9.1.6.2. The council discussed the availability or mechanisms for providing teaching postdoc positions.

9.1.6.3. The council also discussed formalizing the Research scientist position

9.1.7. Launching the Cyber Security Center.

9.1.8. Establish FCSM Grant and Foundation Accounts Support.

9.1.9. Provide each Department Chairperson/Director one Postdoctoral Fellow.

9.1.10. Increased support for interdisciplinary research funding.

9.1.11. Establish 9 mo. Faculty contracts so that Research-active faculty become more competitive nationally and fairly rewarded – faculty recruitment will be improved.

9.1.12. Establish mechanisms for evaluation of intellectual property developed by faculty; deciding which IP to patent; etc.

9.1.13. Support successful undergraduate research mentoring by rewarding faculty. Dean Vanko emphasized that Undergraduate research remains a core characteristic of the TU experience.

9.1.14. Dean Vanko opened the floor for suggested additions to the list of strategic action items.

9.1.14.1. The council discussed FCSM/University support for instrumentation service contracts and instrument repair.

9.1.14.2. The council discussed access to pots of money reserved to support research for faculty who are in between grant submissions \( \rightarrow \) transition money.

9.1.14.3. The council discussed the alignment between the students we train and the productivity expectations. Dean Vanko reiterated that FCSM will continue to be dedicated to serving our students.

9.2. COVID-related updates

9.3. Active shooter training (starting a discussion):

9.3.1. The council asked that we gauge interest in initial training or refresher.
9.3.2. The council urged members to consider updating their training.

9.3.3. The council was asked to think topics of discussion during a possible visit from TUPD (tentatively - November meeting) to discuss specific issues related to the Science Complex.

9.4. Items from the floor?

9.4.1. The council asked if there was still time to provide input for the strategic action items. Dean Vanko said that he will be presenting the list to the Provost’s Office in November.

9.4.2. The council discussed the possibility of an umbrella degree in applied sciences as an addition to the strategic plan.

10. Adjournment: Council member Kyle Hurley moved for adjournment and Dr. Estes seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Hancock
Recording Secretary
Appendix A

Responses from TUs COVID medical team RE: COVID reporting and isolation procedures.

1. Is there a point at which TU will start sentinel testing for all students to catch breakthrough cases? What would that be?
   
   1.1. Response: this is a decision the leadership and medical team will make if the need arises.

2. How does the TU Health Center determine if a student - or faculty member - should stay home if they have been exposed to someone who has or may have COVID?

   2.1. Response: If a person has COVID they are instructed to isolate for 10 days but maybe longer if they continue to have symptoms and are not improving or continue to have fever. If with exposure but asymptomatic and vaccinated (no need to quarantine but need testing from day 3 to 5 and needs masking for 14 days/or while test is pending). If with exposure but asymptomatic and unvaccinated - quarantine for 10 days, test on day 3 to 5, test on day 9 to 10.

3. In the case of a possible exposure of a student, is there any documentation that the student or TU Health Center could provide to a faculty member formally indicating that they have been asked to stay home in this circumstance? (This would enable faculty to formally excuse the absence.)

   3.1. Response: Students may share their campus health email with professors for accommodations. On the email is the date to return to campus and dates of testing required. Clearance tool should generally reflect this. The only exception is if the campus COVID response team clears the student, but their medical provider does not and extends the quarantine.

4. Could professors be automatically informed if a student on their class roster has a change in their campus clearance status? This might avoid instances in which students are not cleared to be on campus but come to class anyway.

   4.1. Response: Campus clearance is the only mechanism.