Minutes of the September 13, 2019 FCSM College Council Meeting

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

Member Attendees: FCSM: David Vanko, Vonnie Shields; Biological Sciences: Mark Bulmer, Angela Cox; Chemistry Henderika van Huizen, Ana-Maria Soto; Computer and Information Sciences: Joyram Chakraborty, Scott Hilberg; Mathematics: Yunwei Cui, Melike Kara; Physics, Astronomy and Geosciences: Pamela Lottero-Perdue, Wendy Nelson; At large: Kelly Elkins (Chemistry), Elizabeth Goode (Mathematics); Undergraduate Student: Marella Schammel

Absent Miracle Davis (graduate student)

Guests Howard Kaplon (FCSM)

Chairperson Kelly Elkins called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Approval of minutes from the May 10, 2019 FCSM College Council meeting

The minutes of the May 10, 2019 meeting were approved with 3 abstentions.

2. Announcements and remarks from the Dean

2.1. Welcome back and welcome to new College Council members.

2.2. The FCSM welcomes 5 new tenure-track assistant professors, 1 new clinical assistant professor, 2 visiting assistant professors, and 7 new lecturers. Most of these are replacements, but the FCSM received 2 new faculty SAPs in FY19 (Forensic Chemistry and Biophysics) and 2 more this year, FY20 (Computer Science and Biology).

2.3. New administrators: The Acting Dean of Graduate Studies is Karen Eskow; the Acting VP of Student Affairs is Maggie Reitz (also Vice Provost). There will be searches for permanent replacements, and the Graduate position is transforming into the “Dean of Graduate Studies and Research,” to emphasize the close relationship between these two components.

2.4. Related to this, TU has been reclassified as a “Doctoral/Professional University” by the Carnegie classification. This is neither an R-1 (research high intensity) nor an R-2 (research moderate intensity), but a kind of R-3. This distinguishes us from, say, Salisbury and Frostburg.

2.5. The first Executive Director for Entrepreneurship at TU has left, and I am chairing the search to fill the position.

2.6. The Hill-Lopes Scholars program has begun with 10 new Hill-Lopes scholarship students. The program aims to enable the success of women in STEM.
2.7. Upcoming topics of interest

2.7.1. Provost’s task force to improve teaching evaluation procedures: The task force will look for ways to make our evaluation of teaching effectiveness more accurate and useful for promotion and tenure purposes. Expect less of an overreliance on student evaluations, and more reliance on peer evaluations and reflective teaching statements. These statements can explain what you have determined about your own teaching effectiveness, and what you have done to improve your students’ success.

2.7.2. President’s new strategic planning process: A consultant will help us develop a university strategic plan, which will be followed by college plans that are aligned. The College Council will be invited to play a significant role in this effort this year.

2.7.3. Middle States reaccreditation process: The self-study has begun and when a draft is ready, faculty will be invited to read it and provide feedback. The College Council will play a role in this process, too.

3. Announcement by the Associate Dean

3.1. The Fall 2019 Undergraduate Open House is scheduled on October 26th, November 9th, November 15th and November 16th in West Village Commons.

3.2. The Fall 2019 Graduate Open House is scheduled on October 5th in West Village Commons.

4. Announcements from the Council Chairperson

4.1. The FCSM Undergraduate Research Grants proposals are due by September 20th. Students applying for FCSM Undergraduate Research Funds should also apply for funding to the University Office of Undergraduate Research & Creative Inquiry.

4.2. A committee will be formed to update the FCSM strategic plan in alignment with the Towson University’s strategic plan.

4.3. The Towson University has appointed Vasu Bhatt as the Director for Management Advisory and Compliance Services, and Leticia Romo as the Director of Academic Assessment.

4.4. Reminder to Faculty to vote on the FCSM PTRM policy changes.

5. Updates from FCSM Departments

5.1. Biological Sciences: The department has an ongoing search for a tenure track assistant professor in computational and quantitative biology. A seminar is scheduled on September 24th in Smith Hall 264, starting at 3:30 p.m., by Emmanuel Mongodin, from the Department of Microbiology and Immunology University of Maryland School of Medicine. Title: Gut microbiota, inflammation, and host immunity: how the consequences of an immunological triumvirate determine organ transplant outcomes.

5.2. Chemistry: The department has hired two tenure track assistant professors, one visiting assistant professor, and a lecturer. The department is conducting a search for a clinical assistant professor.
5.3. **Computer and Information Sciences**: Several faculty searches are going on.

5.4. **Mathematics**: Three new faculty members joined the department. They are Opel Jones (clinical assistant professor with specialization in combinatorics), Na Zhang (tenure track assistant professor with specialization in probability), and Miriam Parnes (lecturer). Diana Cheng is going to give her sabbatical talk on September 19th from 4 to 5 p.m. in YR308. The department is preparing for the regional undergraduate mathematics research conference to be held on Saturday, November 2, 2019. The department has been assigned new classrooms and study spaces for students on the second floor of the 7800 York Road building.

5.5. **Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences**: The department will reform a search committee for a tenure track biophysics position and start the search. The new hire, Michelle Casey, has joined the geoscience group of the department.

6. **Old Business**

6.1. **Regents Awards**: These Regents Awards recognize distinguished performance in 1) Teaching, 2) Scholarship, Research, or Creative Activity, 3) Public Service, 4) Mentoring, and 5) Innovation on the part of faculty members. Each award carries a $2,000 prize provided by the institutions and the University System of Maryland Foundation. Potential candidates include those who previously received college awards. Council members are encouraged to reach out to those faculty members who hopefully will win the awards and convince them to accept the nomination. Self-nomination is also accepted. The Regent’s Award 5-page applications for Towson University’s selection process are due September 26th. Full applications for those selected to be submitted to the USM will be due on October 25th.

7. **New Business**

7.1. **Faculty Trainings**: The council is seeking faculty opinions about anything, in terms of faculty training or professional development, which is missing from campus offering by Towson University, so that FCSM can consider offering these opportunities.

7.2. **Invited Guest Speakers**: The council made a preliminary list of potential speakers, including:

- Melanie Perreault, Provost
- Patricia Westerman, Faculty Academic Center of Excellence
- Shaunna Payne Gold, Assistant Provost of Diversity and Inclusion
- John Desmone, TUNE
- The new hire for Executive Director for Entrepreneurship (Spring)
- Susan Willemin – Director of ADS (formerly DSS)
- Greg Reising, Director of the Counseling Center
- Natalie Scala, Chair of the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee
- Keeba Gardner, Coordinator of Inclusion and Resiliency skills
- Mollie Herman, Associate Director and Director of Training
- G Wei Ng, Diversity Coordinator
- Ethics Training from internal or outside speaker TBD
8. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Yunwei Cui
Recording Secretary