

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE FACULTY MEETING
April 26TH 2017 EXPLORATORY HALL RM 3301**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:05pm by COS Faculty Chair Tim Leslie

II. Approval of Minutes of October 27th 2016: The minutes were approved.

III. Announcements from the Dean

Dean Agouris welcomed those in attendance and those attending by video link from the Science and Technology Campus.

Growth:

The Dean spoke about the progress that the college is making and how she would like to expand her open communication policy (See Attached Slides). The dean stated that her office is becoming more comfortable with the current budget and that COS is growing despite our limited resources. She reported that growth overall was in the 2-3 percentile however, there have been some areas of tremendous growth such as a 20% increase in the PhD student population during academic year 2016-2017, despite an overall university wide decline. The Dean then spoke about how the college could grow in the future without stressing our system by expanding certain categories of students, in particular work force ready categories e.g., MS students. She would also like to expand our out-of-state student population by expanding our state and global outreach efforts.

She spoke of the publication of the first COS Annual Report, which gives an overview of the progress and growth of the college in addition to in depth articles about activities in the college. This publication will be expanded and include both hard copy and an online presence next year.

The Dean also stated that she would soon be announcing the new Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, filling the job that has been vacant since January.

Communications

The Dean then spoke about how open communication between faculty and members of her administration, as well as herself is critical to the success of the college. However this has not been as easy to accomplish as she had hoped primarily due to lack of faculty participation. She is optimistic that more faculty will get involved in the future. To that end she has implemented:

1. Twice a month open-door hours – which has brought a lot of faculty to the office and seems to be working well.
2. She also recruited the First Dean's Fellow (Maria Emelianenko (Math)). This 1.5 year appointment is not exactly defined however she hopes that one element will involve increased communication between faculty and the dean's administration. Communication via the Dean Fellow may represent a more comfortable initial approach. The intent is to encourage complete disclosure – and an easy comfortable connection.
3. A number of committees have been implemented also.
 - a. The Budget and Planning Committee – previously discussed. A transparent process for college funding decisions.

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- b. The Space Committee whose goal is to communicate and address all space related issues and needs. This committee will also interface with other entities outside the college and the VPR's office in an effort to address space allocation based on academic and research needs – to prepare us for the future.
4. The Dean mentioned a number of other lines of communication that are in place such as newsletters etc. In addition, there is a new anonymous platform for comments and feedback for faculty and staff and all are encouraged to participate with ideas, comments, kudos, complaints, etc. This is available on the college website (in the faculty and staff resource section).
5. There are also once a semester retreats – with the Department Chairs. These meetings address ongoing activities at the university, college initiatives, future plans for growth, and are an opportunity for feedback, etc. Information shared with chairs at the monthly meetings and retreats are intended to be information which flows directly to the faculty throughout the college; however she is aware that there are occasions when faculty want to talk directly to her, hence the above mentioned opportunities for communication have been implemented.
6. The Dean stressed that she wants to hear about all and any issues or concerns within the college so that steps can be taken before issues become more serious situations.

Research

The topic of fostering research was addressed in the context of what the College of Science's contribution is, and will be in Mason's broader efforts. The Dean went on to define College efforts as follows:

1. The Research Exchange: an open opportunity for faculty to interact and exchange ideas etc. (Ali Andalibi leads these)
2. The Research Grant Development Forum – an open exchange of ideas which has new junior faculty particularly in mind (Ali Andalabi and Joel Schnur).
3. Research Centers of which the college has more than 20. There is an initiative to review and better organize these centers in order to minimize their numbers and to add strength to those remaining. (Ali Andalabi)
4. The Dean also noted that COS is Mason's top earner of research dollars and our research represents one third of Mason's entire research portfolio. However the money is not the most important element. She stated that this external funding improves our reputation and allows us to competitively recruit more and support better qualified faculty, staff and graduate students. Successful funding adds validation to our work and competitive edge.
 - a. The Dean next addressed the college's commitment to research and stated that the college spends millions dollars in support of research. She stated that the college's indirect share of the overall research-generated COS funds was 945K last year, a year in which the college's research grew by 20%. The Dean re-emphasized that we do not do research for the money- we do research for the reasons stated above.

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- i. Question from the Audience: Why do we get so little of the indirect?
 - Answer: In general, the University breaks down indirects associated with grants as follows: 65% - university overhead. 35% shared among PI/Co-PIs, department, center and college. The College of Science gets 17.5%, however this 17.5% is often reduced and shared with research centers, etc. In addition some research fund categories generate no indirect – however they are worth doing for the reasons stated above
 - Question: – Is it justified then?
 - a. Answer: Yes! For the reasons given above, and many more. Despite the lack of profitability in research, it is critical for the College to move forward in this area on many levels.
- ii. Question – Is the reason that we get so little because we shared our indirects with other entities e.g. Volgeneau?
 - Answer: Not that many grants are shared. The college does share with centers, depts., etc. Also, not every dollar is the same – and it depends on where the grant came from and what is intended to do with the funding - support of graduate students, etc. We want to maintain our R1 rating and while all grants are good - sometimes smaller more prestigious are better or as good as some large ones. The college will always spend money on research and all are encouraged to participate and pursue research funding.
- iii. Question: Where does the difference come from?
 - Answer: The college's E & G budget which is based on enrollment dollars. Without good student numbers we will not have the funds to do research.
- iv. Comment by Ali Andalibi:
 - There was a request to inventory equipment available across the university and the person to contact regarding that equipment. Ali (Andilabi) has asked Department Chairs to share their equipment list so that an online resource can be put in place for access and for the purpose of grant writing (Equipment & Facilities).
- v. Comment by Tracy Mason:
 - There was a call for all to use 25live so that everyone in the college could be aware of what is going on across the college. The intent of this is to generate a weekly and month ahead event outline. Using this resource also prevents cross scheduling over someone else's event. There was a request for Teri Fede to share the link to this. <https://events.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Requesting-Events-in-25Live-v24.pdf>

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Also it was pointed out that new monitors are going up so these events can be shared across the college and if the event is public (if given enough time) can be shared via the board on Braddock Rd. Questions regarding this should be addressed to Tracy Mason tmason11@gmu.edu

- vi. Question: The institutes discussed by Mason – what will be the structure? Will people report to someone new or their current Deans?
 - The current centers will remain within their own colleges, and then there will be university centers and institutes that will sit between colleges – to the best of the Deans knowledge. A call for proposals for new university centers will be announced. The following areas of research focus are currently proposed.
 - a. IBI - Institute for Biomedical Innovation – currently under development
 - b. Cyber and Informatics
 - c. Resilience and Sustainability - all tentative
 - vii. Question – submitted online – Who is a department’s liaison re space, budget etc.
 - Answer: Your Chair is the point person for these issues.
- b. Dean left the meeting.

Timothy Leslie – House keeping

- a. Change in the Bylaws for COS – To add a formal process to the bylaws for placing a faculty representative on the undergrad council. Timothy Leslie read the Motion was moved for approval and seconded by second Suzanne Slayden. All voted in favor.
- b. Committee Nominations.

i. Faculty Senate

Stanley ZOLTEK CDS
Catherine SAUSVILLE MATH
Erdal YIĞIT PHYSICS

ii. Graduate Council

Kylene KEHN-HALL SSB
Mark UHEN AOES

iii. College of Science Faculty Chair

Timothy LESLIE GGS
Barney BISHOP CHEM & BIOCHEM

iv. College of Science Faculty Chair Pro Tem

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Paul HOUSER GGS
John SCHREIFELS CHEM & BIOCHEM

- v. **College of Science Secretary**
Rebecca JONES CHEM & BIOCHEM

- vi. **Executive Council at-large**
Qing TIAN CDS
BISHOP CHEM & BIOCHEM

- vii. **Grievance Committee**
Indu SATIJA PHYSICS
Ingrid VISSEREN-HAMAKERS ESP

- viii. **Promotion & Tenure Committee at-large**
Flavia COLONNA MATH

- ix. **Nominations Committee**
Matthew HOLZER MATH
LUCHINI SSB

Announcements

Question: Mark (?) A question regarding the recording of data regarding graduate student teaching assistants and instructor – all TAs MUST have 18 credits under completed before they can teach and that they must be supervised to ensure we are able to report to SACCS correctly.

Qualtrax™ Software is now available (Tracy Mason?) –This is a powerful research tool (surveys) now available. For info email Tracy Mason at tmason@gmu.edu.

Dr Rockwood brought up the Library cutting back on electronic access and wanted to make everyone aware so that they could take action to the list of journals being dropped. There was a suggestion that we drive up student use to keep journals that are not represented in the consortium.

Maria Emelianenko: (Deans Fellow) asked the people share information on events management and any issues that you may have encountered on any level so it can be addressed.

Ali Andalibi: Announced that “Science Fridays” will have a new name – just not yet but that it will be coming back. Galileo café on the SciTech campus is also returning..

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Ali mentioned that a lot of good ideas and collaborations across departments are coming out of the research forum/meetings that he organized and he suggests that if you have an idea and want to find people to talk about it with, that you come to the research events.

Joel Schnur highlighted an issue that he has encountered regarding the sharing of graduate students across departments and disciplines, in addition to the overhead is an issue. This point was confirmed by another member of the audience who mentioned that it was difficult to train students in a multidiscipline manner when the norm is to focus on one discipline only.

The issue of a cap on desertion credits was also brought up and it was suggested that this cap may be dropped which will allow students to focus more on research, however this was being addressed by each unit and program as they saw fit.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 PM