

Faculty of Science Coordinating Council Minutes

Thursday, February 4, 2021

Meet via Microsoft Teams

Attendance:

Dean's Office	P	Chris Houser	P	Philip Dutton	P	Dan Mennill
Biomedical Sciences	P	Andrew Hubberstey	P	Martin Crozier	A	Hamza Serdah
Chemistry & Biochemistry	P	James Gauld	P	Drew Marquardt	P	Michael Ocheje
Computer Science	P	Ziad Kobti	P	Pooya Moradian Zadeh	P	Anish Sharma
Economics	P	Nurlan Turdaliev	A	Dingding Li	P	Xueting Li
Environment	R	Joel Gagnon	P	Cameron Proctor	R	Libby George
Forensic Science	P	Maria Cioppa		N/A	P	Deanna Fisher
Institute Directors	P	Lisa Porter	P	Mike McKay	P	Roman Maev
Integrative Biology	P	Isabelle Barrette-Ng	P	Barbara Zielinski	P	Niya Vanganur
Math & Stats	P	Richard Caron	P	Adrian Zahariuc	R	Penny Cardelli
Physics	P	Steven Rehse	P	Jeffrey Rau	A	Dimitri Shinas
Non-voting	A	Luke Strong	P	Laura McLean	P	Sharon Rasul
Non-voting	P	Sara Elliott	P	Dora Cavallo-Medved	P	Bob Hodge
Non-voting	R	Margaret Garabon				
R=Regrets, S=Substitute, G=Guest						

1. Welcome and approval of Agenda

MOTION: To approve the agenda.

**Hubberstey/Marquardt
CARRIED**

2. Approval of Minute from January 14, 2021

MOTION: To approve the amended minutes of January 14, 2021.

**Barrette-Ng/Hubberstey
CARRIED**

3. Report from the Dean

- Fall 2021 – Assumptions from the Provost Office:
 - Not everyone will be vaccinated by the fall semester.
 - Province will have some degree of mask requirements and social distancing limitations.
 - Some students or faculty may not be able to return to classroom.
 - Students who are required to quarantine will be expected to keep up with coursework.
 - Workplace accommodations will be needed for faculty and staff who need to quarantine.
 - There will be an on-campus screening and testing program to identify asymptomatic carriers.
- Concerns were raised about workplace accommodations and how difficult it will be to cover teaching/staff needs for when people are quarantining.
- Discussed a need to differentiate between people who are just quarantining or for people who test positive.
- We will be dependent on who can be and who wishes to be on campus (students and faculty) and how to do hybrid deliveries. This will require significant infrastructure on campus.
- Registrar's is opening fall registration to students in May (before they decide about fall delivery).
- Fall 2021 – Objectives from the Provost Office:
 - Maximize the possibility for face-to-face delivery

- Some programs and faculty may prefer online hybrid teaching.
 - Ensure that every student has an option for face to face in their classes.
- Fall 2021- Current Institutional Plan
 - Maximize face to face opportunities for high enrolment (above 50 students) first year courses, and then second year high enrolment undergrad courses.
 - Provide lab and other essential face to face courses.
 - Provide face to face opportunities for lower enrolment classes when scheduling doesn't impeded face to face classes (above)
 - Registrar's will have control over all classroom assignments.
- Discussed the range of delivery modes (face to face, online, hybrid, etc.) for adoption.
 - Concerns were raised about prioritizing face to face delivery for larger classes vs courses where the student experience is essential to the learning outcomes.
 - Some felt that it would be better to keep large enrolment courses online and smaller classes face to face.
 - Discussed doing lecture portion online and 1-hour tutorials in smaller groups.
 - The priorities will vary by department.
 - Discussed that face-to-face instruction important for first year retention. Need to find a balance between face-to-face teaching and doing more focused on the student experience.
 - Suggested that all teaching could be done online, and all assessment done in person.
 - Discussed operational implementation concerns. Once a model is announced, operational planning will need to be done.
- Considerations:
 - Social distancing results in lower capacity which means an increase in sections however there will be no additional resources to implement this. Suggested that courses may consider requiring less lab hours so that students could be divided into smaller lab sections with a staggered schedule.
 - Students will need on campus space to use during their time between classes.
 - Suggested the possibility of splitting a hybrid course where you rotate the students who attend face to face. (25% week one in person, 25% in week 2, etc.)
 - Discussed the possibility of doing 6-week intensive courses like we do in summer.
 - www.gather.town website has been good for giving students an option to connect.
 - On February 26th from 2:00-4:00 Science will be holding a faculty wide discussion on this topic. All are encouraged to attend.
- Enrolment Update:
 - Science is up slightly from last year but everyone else is down. Majority of local students are applying to UWindsor. Strongest growth in biomedical.
 - Conversions will be key to our enrolment. Everyone is encouraged to put a heavy focus on conversions.
 - 101 applications are increased. 105 applications are increased (historical peak in transfer applications)
 - Overall, we are up 8 students from 2020 and up 34 over 2018. Current projection 2021 and 2020 intakes are the same (+63 with flowthrough, net 0 plan for graduate students).

- Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Update:
 - Looks like we will move forward and having something in place by 2022.

4. COVID On-Campus Screening

- Lisa Porter, Yufeng Tong & Mike McKay are initiating an on campus COVID screening program. This program will make us leaders in the Province.
- There not been a uniform decision on COVID screening among all universities and colleges.
- Studies suggest that up to 45% of COVID positive people are asymptomatic.
- People can be contagious 12.3 days before symptoms arise.
- Ontario numbers are based on nasal swabs. It is possible that you could be asymptomatic and not infectious, which can be determined by a saliva test.
- There are many different screening measures. PCR is the gold standard (what our program is based on). Uses the same primers as Public Health. We are putting in a 3rd primer that Public Health isn't using. Our test is using saliva samples, so the viral load is lower than a nasal test.
- PCR tests have the lowest number of false positives.
- Rapid PCR screens have been used in several US Universities to do face to fac successfully.
- Survey tested 500 people and matched results with Public Health, and it was very accurate.
- The test would produce results in 45 minutes, faster than Public Health.
- 3 phase approach
 - Phase 1 (Jan 1- Apr 1): optimization of processes
 - Phase 2 (April 1-July 1): increasing sampling capacity
 - Phase 3 (july1 -sept. 1): preparation for screening phase
 - Campus wide screening by September 2121
- 1st phase is being done on a research cohort on a voluntary basis.
 - Samples are de-identified
 - A handheld app will provide contact
 - MyCap will be used to remind participants that they need to continue to follow Public Health recommendations
 - Each participant will be given their own sterile swabs.
- Sample collection
 - Collected from each participant once/week
 - Test sites will be manned by a technician who will guide participants through the procedure from a safe distance
- Sample Transport of samples
- Sample processing
 - Automation of sample poling
 - 5 or 10 samples pooled
 - Analysis by qPCR
 - We have 5 qPCR machines
- Data Reporting

- Participants will get a positive notification on their phone if 1 person in their cohort tested positive.
- Next the cohort will be re-tested
- Positive identified person will be notified on their phone and instructed to self-isolate, etc. They will be asked to get re-tested by Public Health
- Program will be linked to the hospital database and the wastewater database.
- Scaling up
 - Looking to add additional research group and a team
 - Goal of moving to all approved groups.
- Budget & Capacity
 - The current cost is \$5 per sample. Trying to reduce costs.
- Goals
 - Set up cost efficient process to screen UWin and St. Clair campuses
 - Prevent outbreaks
 - Permit face to face learning in September 2021
 - Provide a made at home solution
 - Involves all partners (WE-SPARK, College, and Hospitals, etc.)
- Discussion
 - Plans to test the variants?
 - Yes. Working on CIHR grant now. Combines this project and wastewater project.
 - Will allow us to rapidly change the primer when screening population
 - Working with Legal to determine options for those who don't comply (come back for a re-test).
 - Messaging will be key to getting large scale buy in
 - What is the capacity for testing? And backups?
 - Working with 1 industrial partner. They make both the kits that we are using. This is a different partner than Public Health is using so we won't be competing for supplies. The industry partner makes their own PCR machines.
 - A phased in approach ensures that we will be able to meet capacity. Will likely need a 2nd robot to do campus wide capacity. This is another reason to bring on St. Clair College.
 - The President and Faculty of Science have both committed funds and space to get this off the ground.
 - Public Health is only testing symptomatic people.
 - We would be the first in Ontario and Canada to do this.

5. Undergraduate Update

- The last day for formal appeals from fall term is February 20th.
- Working closely with Registrar's and CTL to determine how to help faculty and students have a good experience in upcoming fall.
- Sharon, Chris, Phil and Heads/Directors are working on teaching assignments.
- Summer course proofs are coming out shortly.

6. Graduate Update

- There has been an issue with getting GAs/TAs paid in a timely fashion in the fall and winter terms. Thanks to Gilian Heitz and Chris Lanoue who offered emergency interest free loans to those who needed it. People who weren't paid on January 29th are set to be paid on February 12th. Dan to work with Grad Studies to improve this process in the future. We continue to push for change.
- Ranked OGS/QEIIIGSST applications are due to Dan Mennill by tomorrow. This has moved to an electronic process using Sharepoint. If you have problems, please connect with Dan Mennill.
- International PhD Tuition:
 - These rates are very high (approximately \$24,000/year). Science has developed a proposed framework to lower international tuition.
 - We need to continue to recruit domestic PhD students. Our proposal allows us to lower international PhD tuition if we simultaneously push for more domestic PhD recruitment. If you want to be involved or have specific input, please contact Dan Mennill. Would like to present something more concrete by next Council meeting.

7. Report from Heads

IDIR

- Received MITACS and NSERC grants (\$700K) in November.
- Dr. Maev received a mentoring award for teaching achievements from American Physical Society.

Biomedical Sciences

- Just submitted NOI for MSC & PhD programs in Biomedical Sciences.
- Hired a new graduate secretary (shared with Integrative Biology)

Chemistry & Biochemistry

- Last year, the Quality Assurance Council was considering immediate shutdown of the MMB program. They have worked to implement an Executive group and implement program changes. The Quality Assurance Council gave the program a clean bill of health in January with no conditions.

Computer Science

- BCS Honors for University Grads is about to be approved.
- Master of Applied Data Science program has gone for Vector approval. NOI coming soon.
- Bachelor of Applied IT (2+2 format) is in development. This will create a pathway for St. Clair grads.
- Cybersecurity certificate coming soon.
- Working on approving Network and Security Specialization/Stream

Forensic Science

- Adjunct Professor of Practice (Gary Scoyne) helped with shipping supplies out to forensic students. Couldn't have been done without him. Highly recommend other programs/units consider the value of Professor of Practice appointments.

Integrative Biology

- Working on mission, vision statement, and launch of curriculum mapping and redesign project this month.
- Congratulations to ERCA award recipients – Trevor Pitcher, Ken Drouillard, & Emily Browne

8. Other Business

- Some equipment suppliers are now willing to ship us parts instead of sending their technicians down for things under warranty. Contact your tech support staff in the department as some companies are more flexible than ever about sending us the parts.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting.

**Hubberstey/Rehse
CARRIED**