Present – Trish Berger, Chris Calvert, Mary Delany, Dave Campbell, Jan Hopmans, Mark Lubell, Nilesh Maharaj, Kevin Rice, Ken Tate, Diane Ullman, Jeffrey Williams and John Yoder

Absent – Susan Handy, Melody Lin, Martina Newell-McGloughlin, Dan Putnam and Diane Ullman

Guests – Departmental chairs or representatives and dean’s office staff: David Block, Randy Dahlgren, John Eadie, Tom Kaiser, DeeDee Kitterman, Ed Lewis, Michael McCarthy, Anita Oberbauer, Patsy Owens, Michael Parrella, Raul Piedrahita, Peg Rucker, Rich Sexton, Francene Steinberg, Ron Tjeerdema and Chris van Kessel

Chair Chris Calvert opened the meeting of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Executive Committee (EC). Trish Berger moved to accept the minutes of the July 31, 2012 meeting. Ken Tate seconded. The motioned passed.

Report from the Chair

Chris said he had no new items to report. He will attend an Executive Council meeting shortly and report back to the committee.

Dean’s Update

Mary Delany stepped into her new role as interim dean, replacing Neal Van Alfen who recently resigned. She said she had been in this position for three days and briefly recounted her decision-making process for accepting the interim-position that has an end date of June 30, 2013 with the possibility of a one to three month extension, depending on the progress of the recruitment for a permanent dean. Michael Lairmore, dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine, along with a co-chair from the faculty of the CA&ES, will lead the search committee for a new dean. Mary anticipated the full membership of the search committee will be appointed by the provost by September 15th and will be comprised similarly to the search committee for Dean Lairmore’s position: fifteen or more members from the college who will represent the breadth and depth of the college.

Mary had met with the provost and chancellor, and she reported their intention to form an advisory group to address envisioning—where the college would want to be in five years and where the strengths of the college are that the campus can build-on, such as in food and energy.

Discussion opened for members at the meeting. People felt it important that faculty understand that now is a time of opportunity to lead and to not be passive, to be engaged in the search for a new dean and to be engaged with administration in this process of identifying and dealing with the important future issues facing the college.
New Business

Academic Space Assignments – Chris Calvert talked to the group about departmental space assignments. One of the three responsibilities of a department chair is to assign departmental space. However, ultimately, the power of authority for space assignments rests with the provost and chancellor. A recent matter concerning allocation of space that included a department chair and the intervention of the provost has caused concern at the Academic Senate level about the topics of self-governance and transparency. Further inquiry and opportunity for discussion about this matter has been passed to the senate Committee on Decision-Making. Chris will report further on this as progress is made.

Undergraduate Academic Programs Review – It was brought to Chris’ attention that the WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) review of the campus academic programs is incomplete. WASC is the accreditation body that assesses campus programs. This year the Vice Provost’s office has been handling the review; however, currently, it is incomplete due to tardy progress. In the past, the Academic Senate was responsible for completing the review requirements, since academic programs and academic quality are in the realm of the senate. Thus, according to Chris, the Academic Senate office has now decided to take the lead and coordinate steps for completion of the WASC review requirements. One of these steps is to ensure the departments have completed their write-ups on student learning objectives and quality. Chris, along with the help of associate dean Diane Ullman, will coordinate completion of these documents; and Chris encouraged department chairs to let him know where they are in the writing process. (Action item – Chris meet with Diane Ullman)

Chris announced that the final report of the ad hoc CA&ES Curriculum Planning Committee was submitted to the Executive Committee. He said he will send copies of the report to the department chairs for their comments (Action item – Chris Calvert). Also, he said, the Executive Committee has been more proactive with the major reviews received for committee comment, and this year the committee has taken a responsible role in ensuring that items noted of interest in the review process are handled or will be handled at the college level before reaching review stops at the upper administrative levels. Thus far, he reported, this has been a positive change, encouraging faculty in the departments undergoing review to make curricular or programmatic changes that allow for immediate improvement to their majors.

Action Items

- Ensure departments submit their student learning objectives and outcomes for use in the WASC review (Chris).
- Send final report of the ad hoc CA&ES Curriculum Planning Committee to department chairs (Chris and Brenda).

Brenda Nakamoto