## Summary –April 16, 2020

## Announcements

* Apr 13: Fall 2020 Early Registration (April 13-24).
* April 17: Nominations due to Sustainability Champions Award Program. For nomination information, click [here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScTOGOK9_cr6ZCpip7XW3D44L7Qw6vDIRjdDsxr2mWwJ1mYIA/viewform?usp=send_form).
* Apr 27-May 10: Spring 2020 Student Course Evaluation Cycle.
* May 1: [Ideafest](https://ideafest.humboldt.edu/)—extended deadline to register. Event is open to all students, faculty and staff.
* May 8: Credit/No Credit deadline extended. To learn more about grade flexibility, go to <https://covid19.humboldt.edu/news/information-expanding-grade-flexibility>.

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## Department Chair updates

Eileen Cashman, Environmental Resources Engineering

* Eileen is using a professional networking platform called Fishbowl and offered assistance to colleagues if they are interested in learning how to use the platform.

Brian Tissot, Marine Lab

* Brian reported that it’s good to see graduate students completing projects, progressing well and moving on.

Steve Martin, ESM

* Some students have not responded to inquiries, advising is moving along at a normal pace comparatively and appears to be at 80% of registration compared to last year.

David Greene, Forestry

* Student responses appear to be normal. Advising began slow but is catching up. Student capstone groups have confirmed they are getting the work completed.

Nievita Watts, INRSEP

* Nievita is connecting with students routinely and most are managing okay. Students are registering, but if classes are offered online in the fall they will likely not return.

Micaela Gunther, Wildlife:

* Proceeding with tenure track searches. Reaching out to students about advising. A number of Capstone students are working on their projects, thesis defenses are happening via Zoom, overall things are going well given the circumstances.

Andrew Kinziger, Fisheries Biology

* For about 5% of students our situation has been catastrophic, but the vast majority are doing well.

Matt Hurst, Chemistry

* Matt agrees that some students on the fringe are experiencing extreme difficulty. Advising seems normal and on track with many looking forward to the fall semester.

Monty Mola, Physics

* Several faculty with young families are experiencing difficulty balancing work at home (course loads) with the daily demands of a young family. If this situation continues, it will be important to develop appropriate guidelines and expectations for faculty while working at home. We must also think about scheduling differently to avoid conflicts as it appears there are issues arising with impromptu labs outside of regular class time.

Brandon Browne, Geology

* Brandon is working to find time each day to balance family and workload demands. The good news is that the number of students not responding has decreased to 5-10%, much less than before. Connecting with small groups of 3-4 students is highly effective for problem solving and alleviates the issue of “feeling lost” for some. Advising for 90% of students is going well, but there is talk about a gap year if classes move to an online format. Field Camp will be an online experience, 20-30% said they’d wait until next year, but for now it’ll be an online experience. All thesis students are progressing (UG and GR), looking forward to the end.

Bori Mazzag, Math and Computer Science

* An external advisory meeting in Computer Science is scheduled for May. Advising for computer science students is reportedly going well and students are moving forward. Bori is touching base with math faculty and is expecting higher attrition rates in service courses. Classes where instructors have a good rapport with students are experiencing greater success, further illustrating the importance of connecting. Instructors are delivering curriculum in different ways, but it would be good to have guidelines and expectations. Advising is moving slow but going well.

Amy Sprowles, Biological Sciences

* Biology faculty have been successful at moving to the Zoom platform, the tenure track faculty search is continuing, and several master’s level students are graduating, all of which is very exciting. Faculty have been doing a great job with undergraduate students, the majority of which appear to be managing the workload well and are responding to faculty inquiries. Students are asking questions about grade mode changes. A department faculty meeting is held each Friday. Biology faculty are continually working on the curriculum with the department curriculum committee, discussing and exploring how online biology courses are managed by other CSUs.

Jeff Abell, Oceanography

* Jeff does not recommend offering students incompletes for the term as it often increases workload the following term. In response to this statement, some recommend creating department guidelines (*75% of student course work completed*) to prevent the additional workload issue.

Dale thanked department chairs for providing department updates and recommends caution on offering incomplete grades at this time. Much is still unknown for next semester as we talk about reduced class sizes and the continuance of social distancing.

Rick Zechman referenced recent discussions among the CSU Science Deans group about whether next semester’s classes will be face to face. A final decision will be made by California’s Governor Newsom and is outlined in his [six-point plan](https://www.gov.ca.gov/2020/04/14/governor-newsom-outlines-six-critical-indicators-the-state-will-consider-before-modifying-the-stay-at-home-order-and-other-covid-19-interventions/). The CSU Science Deans conversation referenced the format for Commencement noting that several companies are providing technical support for virtual Commencement ceremonies. Additional relevant concerns include the proctoring of final exams, but the issue was not discussed, and how people will begin moving back into their laboratories.

## Budget and College reorganization discussion.

Dale referenced the need to discuss the 1.28M funding cut for 2020/21 and how best to manage the financial shortfall and stabilize the college. He is encouraged that the campus and the Chancellor’s Office is committed to employing faculty and staff. The finalizing of lecturer transaction forms are on hold until mid-May when we will have a better idea of our enrollment numbers. Preliminary (*good faith effort*) reorganization and projection plans due to the Provost by the beginning of May with a final plan due by May 15. The number of departments will not be reduced but the way each is managed may change. We will engage with technical staff and department coordinators to cover the needs in the college. For summer 2020, department chairs will receive the same WTU allocation for summer duties.

Budget reduction scenarios could include 1) across the board cuts or 2) moving to a school’s model (3-4 schools with a director and program leads), but Dale is open to other restructuring ideas that help us manage the current deficit and long-term growth.

Discussion, comments and concerns followed:

* Concerns regarding the uneven impact on smaller departments,
* Understanding that some fixed costs that do not scale due to size, i.e. department chair duties,
* Would like information about retirement incentives for lecturers,
* Carefully planned reductions organized by curriculum, not space, and implemented over time,
* Clearer definition of roles/responsibilities of a department chair versus a program leader,
* Understanding workload differences between a department chair and a program leader,
* Concerns regarding the learning curve associated with the merging of departments,
* This is ultimately an opportunity to collectively transform the college, including possible restructuring of departments, programs and curriculum. Could use summer time to continue restructuring discussions along programmatic lines.
* Concerns regarding reductions to facilities that heavily support research (marine lab),
* Critical time for all voices to be at the table.

Dale added that through creative and innovative thought, it could take a couple of years to reach the optimal restructuring outcome, for but now, keeping departments intact is important for stabilization as we prepare to work with fewer resources. Cost savings can be realized through curriculum changes in the longer term. The University is still debating an overall reorganization plan, but the general consensus is that academic master planning will bring a reduction to the total number of academic programs on campus and make room for new and interdisciplinary programs. A CNRS faculty task force is evaluating curriculum and will report back to Dale by the end of April. Dale will continue to rely on department chairs for a pathway for stabilization and looks forward to discussing creative ideas and solutions moving forward.

## Next Council of Chairs meeting, April 23, 2020.