

College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
Council of Chairs Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2022

Topics Discussed:

- Burdick Hall – Costs remain high for ongoing university projects and will impact other budgets. Burdick occupants will be out for at least two years. The cost of the project has grown to \$12M. Dr. O’Connell will assist in the design needs of the remodeled building.
- Academic scheduling must occur sooner going forward.
- University Committees – Dean Addison requests nominations as appropriate. The following committees are filled by Faculty Senate nomination:
 - At-Large Housing Exemptions Committee (5-year term)
 - At-Large Benefits Advisory Committee (1 year term; part-time faculty)
 - Faculty Grievance Panel (2 year term)
 - UCA Core Council (3 year term)
 - Both of the above must be an assistant professor level or higher.
 - Academic Assessment Committee (3 year term)
 - Diversity Advisory Committee (2 year term)
 - Institutional Animal Use and Care Committee (5 year term)
- URC Funds – The University Research Council has made adjustments for the first time since it decreased funding at the onset of the pandemic. Revised allocations are to support resumed travel and the rise in cost of travel. Highlights are as follows:
 - Previous college allocation increased from 1, 000 to 2,000
 - Allocation of student research funds raised from 9,000 to approximately 14,000. Note, these are first come first serve basis.
 - Faculty research grants reduced to 52,000. This decrease will result in fewer proposals and stiffer competition.
- Request for any upcoming sabbaticals should be submitted.
- The effects of regional enrollment decline
 - Discussion around the Kansas Board of Regents request by Emporia State University to initiate the process of transforming the campus workforce and realigning academic offerings to address harsh financial and enrollment trends. The board approved the President’s request to use options at the six public universities which may expedite the dismissal of tenured faculty and other employees.
 - Natchitoches-Northwestern State University’s enrollment decline this fall reflects nationwide trends of student population losses in higher education and the university expanding initiatives to reestablish its recent pattern of enrollment growth and stability. Their enrollment losses are being addressed from multiple perspectives to include early retirement for eligible candidates, and not hiring for budgeted positions that are unfilled. Nation-wide, more than one million fewer students are enrolled in college now than before COVID-19 began. According to data released by the

National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, U.S. colleges and universities saw a drop of nearly 500,000 undergrad students in the fall of 2021, continuing the historic decline that began in the fall of 2020.

- Dean Addison shared that UCA is doing another VERI to avoid layoffs and furloughs. COLA's and budget increases will only occur when revenue increases or costs decrease.