Minutes of the Department of Biological Sciences - Departmental Council Meeting
April 17, 2013, 2:00 pm, CW410 Biological Sciences Building, University of Alberta

Present: Meeting Chair: Coltman, D.

Allison, T.; Cahill, J.C.; Campbell, S.; Chang, J.; Cooke, J.; Currie, P.; Dennis, J., Devito, K.; Deyholos, M.; Felix, L.; Forest, A.; Fryza, B.; Gallin W.; Haag, M.; Hamilton, J.; Harrington, M.; Harris, N.; Howatt, D.; La Farge, C.; Lanoil, B.; Locke, J.; Luong, L.; Magor, K.; Mash, P.; McKenzie, D.; Murray, A.; Murray, M.; Nargang, F.; Ortega, V.; Palmer, R.; Paszkowski, C.; Pemberton, J.; Preston, D.; Pilgrim, D.; Proctor, H.; Shostak, A; Sperling, F.; St. Louis, V.; Stafford, J.; Stein, L.; Tonn, B.; Wilson D.

Recording Secretary: Christensen, L.

NO.	AGENDA ITEM
1.	**Call to Order** (The Chair) The meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m. on Wednesday, April 17, 2013.
2.	**Introductions** (The Chair) There were no introductions.
3.	**Approval of the Agenda** (The Chair) *Moved/Seconded by Palmer/Proctor that the agenda for April 17, 2013 Biological Sciences Department Council meeting be approved. The Chair noted that the discussion on the "Reorganization Plan" will be split from the "Comments from the Chair" and will be discussed as the last agenda item.* *All in favour, CARRIED.*
4.	**Approval of the Minutes of February 13, 2013** (The Chair) *Moved/seconded by Currie/Sperling that the minutes of the February 13, 2013 Biological Sciences Departmental Council meeting be approved, All in favour, 6 abstentions, CARRIED.*
5.	**Comments from the Chair** (David Coltman)
	5A: Budget At the recent Science Chairs' meeting, the take on the budget situation remains unclear. There is a widespread rumour of a $67M shortfall for the University of Alberta, of which one-third may go through Central; one-third through the Faculty, and one-third remain as a deficit with the approval of the province. This amounts to ~$23M across academic units. A horizontal cut would amount to a 3-4% reduction, possibly 5%, for Biological Sciences, which is about $100,000. This could be covered through unfilled positions. The department can absorb up to a 5% cut without causing hardship. Anything beyond that will be like trimming from muscle to bone. There is an upcoming meeting with the Board of Governors and the Provost may provide clarity about the budget by the end of the week. **5B: FEC** The Dean of Science has raised the bar of excellence for tenure and promotions, and files will be scrutinized more. The expectations regarding excellence will be closely aligned with the wording in the Faculty Agreement. **5C: Incentives for Retirement** The incentives for retirement will be coming from the Dean's office, not from Central. The door is open to discussing retirement with non-monetary incentives, i.e. provisions of space.

NO.	AGENDA ITEM
	5D: Reorganization Plan This will be the last agenda item discussed to allow enough time to do this.
6.	**Courses and Curriculum Committee** (Cindy Paszkowski) Note that the Course and Program changes will be dealt with as a block. Attachment #6.2 "New Certificate Proposal" will be voted on separately. *Moved/Seconded by Paszkowski/Chang that the proposed program and course changes for the 2014-2015 calendar year be accepted as a whole.* <u>Course Changes</u> **BIOL 298 Understanding Biological Research** **Change:** … formulating research questions, experimental design, ~~hands-on skill development~~ … **changed to:** formulating research questions, <u>hands-on-skill development</u>, experimental design, … **Change:** Students will attend lectures and selected seminars, and ~~participate in~~ biological … **changed to:** Students will attend lectures and selected seminars, and <u>conduct</u> biological … **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT #1:** Keep this sentence the same, i.e. "participate in" should remain. **Added after this sentence: Open to all students in Honors and Specialization Programs …:** <u>This course is designed for and required of students wishing to obtain a Research Certificate in Science (Biological Sciences); all students must apply for admission.</u> **Changed:** Prerequisite: BIOL 107 or ~~BIOL~~ 108 or SCI 100. **changed to:** Prerequisite: BIOL 107 or 108 or SCI 100. **BIOL 321 Mechanisms of Evolution** **Change:** Prerequisites: BIOL 108 ~~and 20~~7. **changed to**: Prerequisites: BIOL 108 <u>and any 200-level Biological Sciences course.</u> **BIOL 381 People, Pollution and the Environment** **Change Title:** ~~People, Pollution and the Environment~~ **changed to**: We Broke the Planet **NOTE:** After discussion, it was agreed that the Vince St. Louis would rework the proposed title change and bring it back to a future CCC meeting. He will also work on a new course description. **BIOL 507 Seminars in Systematics and Evolution** Put on reserved list **BIOL 631 Seminar in Ecology** **Change Title:** Seminar in Ecology **changed to:** Seminar in Ecology <u>and Evolution</u> **Change:** *1 *(fi 2)* either term, 0-~~2~~s-0) **changed to:** *1 *(fi 2)* (either term, 0-<u>1</u>s-0) **Added:** EARLY IMPLEMENTATION REQUESTED FALL 2013 **BOT 210 Biology of Land Plants** Put on reserved list **BOT 306 Biology of the Fungi** Put on reserved list **BOT 308 Plant Anatomy** **Added:** Offered in alternate years. **BOT 314 Biology of Bryophytes** **Added:** Offered in alternate years. **BOT 322 Field Botany** **Added:** Offered in alternate years.

NO.	AGENDA ITEM
	BOT 330 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Function of Algae **Changed:** *3 (fi 6) (~~first~~ term, 3-0-3) **changed to:** *3 (fi 6) (second term, 3-0-3) **Added:** Offered in alternate years. **BOT 411 Paleobotany** Put on reserved list **BIOL 409: Zoonoses** **Changed:** Prerequisites: one of ZOOL 352, ZOOL 354, ENT 392 … **changed to:** Prerequisites: one of IMIN 200, ZOOL 352, ZOOL 354, ENT 392 … **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT #2**: **Changed**: Prerequisites: one of IMIN 200, ZOOL 352, ZOOL 354, ENT 392 or ~~equivalent and~~ consent of instructor. **changed to:** Prerequisites: one of IMIN 200, ZOOL 352, ZOOL 354, ENT 392 or consent of instructor. **Program Changes** Plant Biology **Years 2** **Deleted:** ~~BOT 210~~ **Changed:** *~~3~~ approved option **changed to:** *6 approved options **Years 3 and 4** **Deleted:** Approved options include, but are not restricted to the following: … BOT ~~306~~ … ~~350~~ … ~~411~~ … Paleontology Program This program is run through the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences. The Department of Biological Sciences is the co-author of this program. We cannot make any changes here in Biological Sciences. Attached #6.4 shows the new courses have been incorporated into the Paleontology program. *Moved/Seconded by Chang/Proctor that the proposed program and course changes for the 2014-2015 calendar year be accepted with the exception of BIOL 381 and the two noted Friendly Amendments.* *39 in favour, 3 Abstentions, CARRIED.*
6.2	**New Certificate Proposal** The proposal for a Research Certificate in Science (Biological Sciences) has been unanimously approved by the Courses and Curriculum Committee. This needs to be vetted by GFC, just like a course change, and then circulated within the University community. Attachment #6.2 is what will be moving forward. This has grown out of the department retreat two years ago. The approval of BIOL 298 started the process for this certificate proposal. The department will still have the capacity for a research "stream" even if a Research Certificate is not approved. The Faculty of Science would like this to be open to all students in the faculty, but there could never be enough research projects for the hundreds of General Science students. There will be an application process for places in BIOL 298, which is our opportunity to control the number and quality of students allowed to pursue the certificate based on the number of projects available. An additional component, and source of quality control for the certificate, is BIOL 399, which is a third-year full-year research experience, OR BIOL 398/498, where students can work in two different labs. Students who perform poorly in BIOL 298 will not find supervisors for 3XX project courses, and thus will not be able to complete the certificate. BIOL 298 is a very structured, graded course. This course will serve as the gatekeeper as students must have this course to enter the certificate "stream". BIOL 398 and BIOL 399 are assessed based on 70% skills/in lab performance and 30% on the research report. The 400-level courses have higher expectations for data analysis and interpretation (more weight on communication of results). An evolving list of courses for students to take to learn hands-on skills and data handling will need to be produced and maintained

NO.	AGENDA ITEM
	as part of the certificate. A presentation at a conference is required as part of the certificate program; it was noted that the on-campus opportunities for presentations at conferences has grown. The BGSA was applauded for how many undergraduate (and graduate) students participated in the RE Peter conference this spring. **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT #1**: Changed: Students may pursue the Research Certificate … (b) BIOL 399 (*6) **or** ... **changed to:** Students may pursue the Research Certificate … (b) BIOL 399 (*6), (added comma) **or** … **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT #2**: Change: (d) *6 from a list of 300 and 400 level approved options research-related … **changed to:** (d) *6 from a list of 300 and 400 level approved options in research-related … **Discussion Q&A:** **Q:** Who will the student go to for advice as to which courses to take and how this fits into their program? **A:** On Page 4 there was a section on "Resource Implications", which recommends that 1 FTE drawn from among the current complement of academic staff in Biological Sciences to evaluate applicants, deliver and coordinate the course each year, and oversee the certificate program year round. **Q:** There is a problem with the exclusion of other departments (e.g. IMIN). **A:** The reason that Biological Sciences courses are listed as providing the 300-level and lower research experiences is because we want to promote our programs and courses. **Q:** If this becomes too popular will there be a problem with how many students want courses vs how many courses are available? **A:** It is hoped that some money from donors would be earmarked for these projects making supervision more attractive. There would be a cap of 35 students for BIOL 298 in Fall and Winter terms, an enrollment arrived at based on the 65-70 students that take BIOL 499 each year (and thus successfully find project supervisors in the department). **Q:** Currently, as presented, there is no official obligation to students to receive a certificate once they get past BIOL 298 yet there is a moral obligation because we have promised something we may not be able to deliver. **A:** We are in control of the number of students allowed into BIOL 298 (and thus eligible to pursue the certificate). An adjustable cap can be set as appropriate, and this cap does not need to appear in any public documents. There would be additional control of the certificate-student population at the 300-level. Students will be responsible for their performance in project courses at each step so they will be attractive to future supervisors as they advance from 200 to 300 to 400 level courses. BIOL 298 would be offered often enough to capture students who transfer into Honors and Specialization programs. The department must do a good job of advertising to attract students. BIOL 299 will be kept for the short-term to let students get research experience early in their academic career without guaranteeing the Research Certificate. When the Research Certificate is completed, a separate parchment of graduation will be issued. *Moved/seconded by Paszkowski/Haag that the Research Certificate Proposal be accepted with the two noted Friendly Amendments.* *All in favour, CARRIED.*
7.	**Undergraduate Student Updates** (Cindy Paszkowski) The Research Certificate Program was discussed (see above).

NO.	AGENDA ITEM
8.	**Graduate Student Updates** (Michael Caldwell) There were fewer PhD NSERC and Vanier applications this year. Although the number is down, we had a strong showing. **NSERC:** 15 awards; 13 MSc (all CGSMs) and 2 PhD (1 CGSD, 1 PGSD). This was the largest number for a department on campus. **Vanier:** One of two nominated by BioSci (Tiago Simoes [Brazil]) with Mike Caldwell. Science received two, ours and one in Math. One of ten on campus (4 NSERCs, 1 CIHR, 5 SSHRCs). Last year there were nine Vaniers on campus, with only one SSHRC. **AIFSs** should be announced soon. **QEII**s are still a mystery. The admissions are continuing. We have 30 offers (3 declined, 11 accepted, rest outstanding). Two are bringing NSERCs, one is coming on an international scholarship (King Abdullah). We are in the process of making 20 more offers. Most of the February 1 cohort has been dealt with. The March 15 cohort is continuing to move through the system. There are big changes coming to FGSR soon. A lot of the responsibility for the paperwork is moving to the department or Faculty, including admissions. It looks like FGSR will continue to exist. These changes will increase the office workload; therefore we will increasingly demand people stick to deadlines. Come to the "Celebration of Excellence" tomorrow at 3:00 pm in CW410. Maggie offered congratulations to the BGSA for all of the work done this year, and wanted to make sure this was recognized at Departmental Council.
9.	**9A: Adjunct Renewal Application from Drs. Harriet Harris, Richard Jobin, Jim Schieck, Garry Scrimgeour and David Walter** (David Coltman) All of the following adjunct renewals have been unanimously recommended by the Adjunct Committee. **Harriet Harris:** Dr. Harris was first appointed as an Adjunct Professor on July 1, 2003 and successfully renewed on July 1, 2008. She has since retired from teaching at Concordia University College of Alberta and is a Professor Emeritus in the Department of Biology and Environmental Sciences at Concordia University College. During her most recent adjunct professor period, Dr. Harris has been a guest lecturer in ENT 378, ENT 602 and BIOL 495/595. She is actively pursuing research on the reciprocal, stable relationship between insect hosts and the bacterial endosymbiont Wolbachia pipientis at the cellular level. She has supervised four NSERC USRA students from Concordia, and all of these students completed their summer projects at the UofA. She is supervising three graduate students in Bio Sci. Dr. Shelagh Campbell has written a letter to support her renewal application. Over the next five years she would like to supervise the writing of the manuscripts of these graduate students. She will also be writing and publishing three manuscripts and oversee the cleaning and de-contamination of the laboratory space she is occupying. She plans to retire when all of this has been completed, which might be sooner than 5 years. *Moved/Seconded by Coltman/Proctor that Departmental Council recommend to the Dean of Science that the Adjunct Professor status in the Department of Biological Sciences be renewed for Harriet Harris for a five-year period. 45 in favour, 3 abstentions, CARRIED.* **Richard Jobin:** Dr. Jobin was first appointed as an Adjunct Professor on July 1, 2003, and successfully renewed on July 1, 2008. He is the Forensic Unit Manager for the Special Investigations and Forensic Services Section of the Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Branch, Alberta Justice and

NO.	AGENDA ITEM
	Solicitor General. During his last adjunct period, he has given an annual seminar on forensic use of DNA for GENET 418, and from 2008 to 2010 for BIOL 380. He has co-supervised an MSc student with David Coltman. He has done research collaboration which led to one peer-review publication with David Coltman and many presentations at conferences. David Coltman has provided a letter of support for his renewal application. Over the next five years, Dr. Jobin plans to acquire another graduate student project. He would also like to develop and validate a DNA sequencing test for fish species identification. Lastly, he would like to do an analysis of the genetic structure in populations of the black bear across Alberta and BC. *Moved/Seconded by Coltman/Harrington that Departmental Council recommend to the Dean of Science that the Adjunct Professor status in the Department of Biological Sciences be renewed for Richard Jobin for a five-year period. 45 in favour, 3 abstentions, CARRIED.* **Jim Schieck:** Dr. Schieck was appointed as an Adjunct Professor on July 1, 2003, and successfully renewed on July 1, 2008. He is a Research Ecologist with the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute, Alberta Innovates – Technology Futures. During his last term, he has interacted and collaborated extensively with Dr. Stan Boutin and Dr. Erin Bayne, which has resulted in five peer-reviewed publications. He was involved with the PhD candidacy exam of Stephen Mayor, a PhD student in Stan Boutin's lab. He has also given four lectures in BioSci undergraduate courses. He supervises four research associates and five technicians that work within ABMI at the UofA. Dr. Erin Bayne has provided a letter of support for his renewal application. Over the next five years, he would like to continue working with academic staff and students at the UofA and with ABMI. He will pursue research and collaboration with Dr Stan Boutin and other academic staff, graduate students and ABMI staff. The ABMI Graduate Student Grants program will continue to support graduate student research, and they will continue to publish results from this research in peer reviewed journals. He is willing to join MSc and PhD Supervisory Committees when requested. He also intends to continue giving lectures in undergraduate courses and supervising ABMI staff. *Moved/Seconded by Coltman/Campbell that Departmental Council recommend to the Dean of Science that the Adjunct Professor status in the Department of Biological Sciences be renewed for Jim Schieck for a five-year period. 45 in favour, 3 abstentions, CARRIED.* **Gary Scrimgeour:** Dr. Scrimgeour was appointed as an Adjunct Professor on July 1, 2003, and was reappointed on July 1, 2008. He is currently the Director-Land for Canada's Oil Sands Innovation Alliance (COSIA) in Calgary. Drs. Paszkowski and Tonn have provided a letter of support for his renewal application. Over the past five years, he has given eight lectures in ECOL 364 and BIOL 603. He has had mentoring opportunities to many students. He presented a departmental seminar in 2008. He has served on nine graduate student supervisory committees, and is currently on three. He has been an active research collaborator with Dr. Bill Tonn and Dr. Cindy Paszkowski, and has co-authored 15 papers with graduate students and other professors in the department. He has supported and managed the development of a contract between Parks Canada and the UofA to support the maintenance of the tissue data bank managed by Dr. David Coltman. He is in the process of finalizing an endowed research chair for Dr. Stan Boutin as part of a 1.75M contribution from COSIA to the UofA. Over the next five years, Dr. Scrimgeour wants to create and expand research opportunities within the department and the UofA, and he hopes to develop and nurture a larger research portfolio. He will continue collaboration with Drs. Tonn and Paszkowski. **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT:** Remove the dollar amount (i.e. $1.75M) from the COSIA contribution. *Moved/Seconded by Coltman/Tonn that Departmental Council recommend to the Dean of Science that the Adjunct Professor status in the Department of Biological Sciences be renewed for Gary Scrimgeour for a five-year period with the noted Friendly Amendment. 46 in favour, 2 abstentions, CARRIED.* **David Walter:** Dr. Walter was appointed as an Adjunct Professor on July 1, 2003, and was reappointed on July 1, 2008. He is currently a Scientist 1 in Invertebrate Zoology at the Royal Alberta Museum. His research area is Acarology (the study of mites). Over the past five years Dr. Walter has cooperated with Heather Proctor on a number of projects. He has been able to help students in the labs

NO.	AGENDA ITEM
	of Heather Proctor, Maya Evenden, Erin Bayne and Bill Tonn. He has provided support for scientific research to Albertans at the international level and to members of the general public. He has been involved with the Alberta Biodivesity Monitoring Institute (ABMI) since 2007 developing a training program, and also training students through summer employment. He has given annual lecturers for Felix Sperling's ENT 427 course. Since 2008, he has five publications with UA personnel. He regularly meets with the entomologists and participates in a variety of functions sponsored by them. Dr. Felix Sperling has written a letter to support his renewal application. Over the next five years, he hopes to continue to provide support for graduate students, and he would like to develop new associations within the department, specifically with Dr. Lien Luong. He will continue to provide support for scientific research. *Moved/Seconded by Coltman/McKenzie that Departmental Council recommend to the Dean of Science that the Adjunct Professor status in the Department of Biological Sciences be renewed for David Walter for a five-year period. 44 in favour, 4 abstentions, CARRIED.*
	9B: Amendment to the "Terms and Conditions for Adjunct Professors and Cross-Appointments" (David Coltman) David Coltman pointed out that many of the terms on the previous regulations were redundant, except for the two noted here (Attachment #9.2), and that it was a professional courtesy to let the Chair know if you intend to become an adjunct in another faculty. *Moved/seconded by Coltman/Chang that the following points be added to the "Terms and Conditions for Adjunct Professors and Cross-Appointments":* *(l) The Chair of the home department of the cross-appointment must be in agreement with having a staff member become a cross-appointment in the Department of Biological Sciences.* *(m) Adjunct Professors shall not be entitled to voting privileges at Departmental Council.* *All in favour, CARRIED.*
5D	**Reorganization Plan** (David Coltman) The recent mandate letter and budget from the government prompted the Executive Committee to look at doing things differently for the research units in the Department of Biological Sciences. The time has come to align our new priorities along our existing/emerging strengths. A draft Reorganization Plan was formulated by the Executive Committee and sent out to RIG Leaders on April 10. The following is a summary of the discussion on future directions in this area. • The Dean of Science sent out a "visioning request" to all departments and asked each one to identify areas of strength in research. The current RIG structure makes the department vulnerable. It's time to think about how the department might look like in the future. • We can realign this department and position ourselves for change. A starting point is a mandate for the Department Chair to look at reorganizing the RIG structure. This will need support from the department and the Dean of Science. • A first attempt was made at dividing the RIGS into two groups: (1) Ecological, Evolutionary and Environmental Biology; and (2) Molecules, Cells and Cell Systems. Note that some people do not fit neatly into "sides". • These groups are viewed as a network, and the Executive is not advocating a split. It is important to think of how the department is viewed from the outside. There is also a need to be careful that the department is not cut into smaller units, as it would be easy to perceive which ones might disappear. • The Chair of Physiology in Medicine and Dentistry is testing the waters for a Biomedical Sciences program from merging departments. • It was noted that two units provide a good path to be absorbed into other departments. A bigger

NO.	AGENDA ITEM
	group is less vulnerable than two medium groups. A split now makes the department more vulnerable to more splits five-ten years down the road. • This is a work in progress, and the mission today was to start the discussion. A forum to do this will be set up in the near future.
10.	**Other Business** There was no Other Business.
11.	**Adjournment** Rich Palmer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:17 p.m.