To the Faculty Legislature, Santa Barbara Division:

According to Academic Senate Divisional Bylaws and Regulations, Appendix II, D1.93, the Executive Committee of the Bren School of Environmental Science & Management is a committee of the Academic Senate authorized as an organization through which the Faculty of the School can coordinate the academic affairs of the School. The Committee reports to, and is responsible to, the Academic Senate and its officers. The Executive Committee is distinguished from Administrative committees that are created by the Administration and are responsible to, and report to, Administrative Officers.

The Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) for the Bren School of Environmental Science & Management met eight times during the academic year. The following is a list of the major issues addressed by the FEC:

1. ACADEMIC PERSONNEL. Following the faculty retreat on the Academic Personnel process last year, the FEC developed a guidance document based on the key discussion points at the retreat.

2. BUDGET. In the past, the Bren School has been able to use funds from open faculty lines to support many of its activities. Now that it has filled these positions, it faces a number of new budget challenges. The FEC spent a great deal of time this year analyzing current and prospective budgets, providing advice to the Dean on the prioritization of lecturer and staff positions and development activities, and exploring the potential adoption of a supplemental fee for the Master of Environmental Science and Management (MESM) program.

3. JUNIOR FACULTY MENTORING. The FEC designed a new mentoring process for new faculty. Under this process, a senior faculty member is assigned to a junior faculty member and is available to answer questions about procedures at the Bren School and to provide advice on the tenure and promotion process and other career matters.

4. STAFF AWARD. The FEC instituted a new award to recognize the accomplishments and contributions of the Bren School staff. The Staff Award will be given each year during our commencement ceremony to a distinguished staff person, complementing existing student and faculty teaching awards.

5. FTE PLANNING. The FEC led this year’s FTE planning process, producing the Bren School’s FTE Planning Report. As part of this process, the FEC led a faculty retreat on February 10, 2017, to prioritize future hires. The faculty agreed that its greatest need is in the area of Corporate Environmental Management and plans to search for a new faculty member in fall 2017. Other priority areas include environmental economics, conservation ecology, and several continuing lecturer positions.

6. CHANGES TO BY-LAWS. The FEC made changes to the Bren School By-Laws to allow the Dean to appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Academic Personnel Committee, subject to approval of the FEC. Additional revisions were made to clarify the role of the FEC Chair.

7. RETREAT ON MESM SPECIALIZATIONS. The FEC worked with the MESM Program Committee to organize a faculty retreat on MESM specializations on May 5, 2017. All students in the MESM program must select a specialization and complete related coursework. The retreat focused on standardizing and streamlining the specialization requirements.
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8. MEDS PROGRAM. The Bren School, in collaboration with other departments on campus, is pursuing a new graduate program called the Master of Environmental Data Science. The FEC provide input and guidance on the new program at various times during the year.

9. FEC MEMBERS + ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS FOR 2017-18. The FEC conducted a secret ballot of the faculty to elect new members for next year.

Members of the Faculty Executive Committee: Andrew Plantinga, Chair, Arturo Keller, Jim Salzman (replacement for Sarah Anderson, who is on sabbatical during Spring 2017), Ben Halpern, and Steven Gaines, Dean and ex officio.

Andrew Plantinga, Chair

Arturo Keller

Sarah Anderson

Ben Halpern