THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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September 21, 2020

Members present: Thomas Holyoke (Chair), Raymond Hall (Vice Chair), Rebecca Raya-Fernandez (At-Large), Tinneke Van Camp (At-Large), Jennifer Miele (At-Large), Hisham Qutob (ASI Executive Vice President), Lisa Bryant (Universitywide), Susan Schlievert (Statewide), Saul Jiménez-Sandoval (Provost)

Members excused: Joseph Castro (President)

Guests: Venita Baker (Academic Senate), Deborah Adishian-Astone (VP Administration and CFO), Marsha L. Baum (AVP for Faculty Affairs), Laura Yager (University Registrar), Jenny Diaz (Registrar’s Office), Bernadette Muscat (Interim Dean of Undergraduate Studies)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Holyoke at 3:01 pm on Zoom.

1. Approval of the Agenda.

MSC

1. Approval of the Minutes 8.31.20 as amended

MSC

1. Communications and Announcements.

Provost Jiménez-Sandoval: Updated the committee on a number of ongoing processes. Face to Face Task force has reconvened from last semester and lists of needed course are being compiled at the colleges. He noted that more flexibility might be available for Spring 2021, and also trying to address some courses that were not typically offered in Fall. The list finalized by next week, and will then be vetted by VP Astone to see if the needs of cleaning can be met.

He also mentioned that a search firm has been hired to facilitate the three ongoing search for college Deans.

Chair Holyoke inquired if it was standard practice to hire search firms for Dean positions? The Provost indicated that it was the case and a best practice.

Dr. Bryant inquired if there was any news on the Vice Provost search. The Provost told the committee and announcement will be made by the end of the week.

Dr. Schlievert informed the committed that the Statewide AS just met and that she will send out report shortly.

Chair Holyoke reminded that the next Senate meeting will be dedicated to a budget update from President Castro and VP Astone.

**Action Items**

1. Email dated September 3, 2020, from David Low, Chair Personnel Committee, to Dr. Thomas Holyoke, Chair Academic Senate re: Student Ratings and APM 322. Email has been received.

Suggestion:

Will include on next executive meeting agenda for due consideration.

1. Email dated September 3, 2020, from Dr. James Marshall, Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, to Dr. Thomas Holyoke, Chair Academic Senate re: Revised Abbreviated Program Review Process. Email has been received.

Suggestion: Also include on next meeting agenda. Invite Jim Marshall for consultation.

1. Memo dated February 28, 2020, from Christopher R. Meyer, Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics to Dr. Xuanning Fu, Interim Vice Provost re: Support for Name Change for the Department of Chemistry. Memo has been received.

Suggestion: Will place on the Consent Calendar for next Senate meeting.

1. Extension of CR/NC grading through Spring 2021 Semester.

Ms. Yager’s office will implement the extension of CR/NC grading options to Spring 2021 upon the committee’s request. She mentioned that the Winter session is run by CG&E so student portal access not her purview for that session.

Request to apply interim policy on CR/NC grading where students are allowed to change the grading method up to last day of instruction (but can change back too).

MSC

 Interim CR/NC policy adopted for Spring 2021

1. APM 231 (Interim) Policy on Adding and Dropping Classes.

Ms. Yager again addressed the committee concerning the drop deadline as per APM 231, where her office wishes to align the last day to drop with the census date. Current policy is one day earlier than add, and according to Ms. Yager this causes many bookkeeping issues and staff effort.

Vote: Extend interim drop deadline policy through the Spring 2021 semester.

 MSC

Chair Holyoke mentioned that we will send APM 231to AP&P for consideration of this interim policy for permanent status.

1. Proposed Amendments to APM 127 (University Constitution).

Chair Holyoke brought to the committee proposals for some changes to our University Constitution and supplied the members with a draft of with two amendments.

1. The first is some added language that would enable a basis for allowing flexibility of APM interpretation during an emergency crisis like that in which we currently find ourselves. The proposal would allow a 2/3 vote executive committee vote to allow application of flexibility on an interim basis, and defines carefully the limits and procedures for such flexibility.
2. The second proposed amendment would expand the senate membership to enhance representation of campus stakeholders in the form of additional voting ex-officio members:
3. The Chair of Chairs and Vice Chair of Chairs (would not get two votes if already a member of the senate)
4. Chair of Staff Assembly.

In partial explanation, he mentioned that most other CSUs have such on their Senates.

This is a first reading of this proposal.

1. The Covid 19 Situation and Chancellor’s Office Executive Orders on the use of Liability Waivers

The committee was presented with background information about concerns raised by some faculty that liability waivers may be infringing student’s rights, specifically with respect to a number of Executive Orders and official memos from the Chancellor’s Office. These mandates seem to have been implemented independently in various divisions on the campus. Dr. Fiorentino, Dr. Baum, Ms. Willis, Ms. Kao, Dr. Fu and others have been working on aligning Fresno State Policy with these Chancellor’s Office requirements, and there does seem to be differences in interpretation an implantation.

Dr. Bryant offered that by her reading the mandates from the Chancellor’s Office, as they are implemented now, do not seem treat students equally. Why, she asked, are some students treated differently based on odd criteria? Two students at same place in their graduation paths, taking the same course, by these rules, one must sign a waiver and the other would not.

The Provost agrees that clarification must be sought and he told the committee that in in light of all of this that he, Dr. Fu, and Dr. Baum will meet with Chancellors Office legal counsel Darrel Hamm tomorrow.

An update on this issue and meeting with Mr. Hamm will be given at the next executive meeting, and the issue will placed on the Oct 12th Senate agenda.

1. Request for on-campus testing facility.

Mr. Qutob brought to the committee a request to consider an on-campus testing facility, if not this Fall, for the Spring 2021 semester. He spoke on behalf of students that the virtual environment puts an undo strain on some students when their home environment is far less than optimal for the task of taking exams.

The Provost was sympathetic to the exam environments that some students find themselves it. However, he pointed out that we are limited at many levels, first from the state in terms of the established watch list on Covid rates, and at a campus level in terms of logistics of cleaning staff, and especially needed screening to accommodate up to 24000 students.

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The Senate Executive Committee adjourned at 4:49 pm.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be as needed and conducted remotely.

Submitted by: Approved by:

Raymond Hall Thomas Holyoke

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate