THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE (AS-7)

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

5200 N. Barton Ave ML 34

Fresno, California 93740-8014

Office of the Academic Senate

(559) 278-2743

December 7, 2020

Members excused: L. Herrera,

Members absent: G. Brar, L. Brillante, F. Chen, K. Jordan, B. Mason,

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Holyoke at 4:02 p.m. via Zoom video conferencing.

1. Approval of the Agenda.

MSC

1. Approval of the Minutes of 11/23/20 as amended.

MSC

1. Communications and Announcements:

Dr. Castro expressed his appreciation to the Senate and faculty as a whole in this last meeting as he finishes his role as University President this month. He told us that he will miss these meetings in the library and conveyed his thanks for the support received over some 7.5 years. He discussed the process of selecting his successor, and that faculty will be selected to serve on the President Search by January, and that hopefully virtual panel discussions will occur in February, and the trustees will make a final selection at a May meeting

Provost Jiménez-Sandoval announced that, due to issues related to Covid safety, Spring 2021 face-to-face courses will begin meet virtually on Jan 21 with all other courses, and begin to meet face-to-face more than a week later (Feb 8th). He also announced that hiring searches to replace two important presidential cabinet positions will be fast tracked (replacements for Larry Salinas and Patti Wade who will move to Long Beach to serve in Chancellor Castro’s office).

Sen Crowell inquired about resources for faculty who are parents and who continue to have Covid related childcare issues. The Provost indicated that he is working to ensure resources are available.

Sen Maldonado inquired if the university is considering cancelling spring break. The Provost indicated that there is strong opposition from many sides on this, and administration agrees.

Chair Holyoke discussed the process for electing faculty to the presidential search panel, and that we will be looking for two full professors, but with no two from the same college, according to policy. He noted that COSS is not eligible since he himself, as chair of the Senate, is appointed by policy already. All faculty will receive ballots open for 5 days. Colleges will select a candidate, then the whole university will select from those. Look for a “Call for Service” email soon.

1. New Business.

none

1. Ethnic Studies.

Policy discussion began by considering amendments offered by Senator Law, which would include language to recognize the negative impacts on programs with high unit majors from the imposed CSU system wide unit cap of 120 units per major.

Sen DeJordy inquired if we are truly excluded from raising the number of required units from the 120 cap. Chair Holyoke indicated that only the Chancellor’s Office has the ability to waive this limitation. Dr. Clement (Chair of the University Curriculum Committee) expressed that it is very unlikely any 120 unit cap will be waived, except for previous exemptions.

Sen Jenkins expressed his support for the proposed amendments, and he feels this this memo and policy is targeting high unit majors mostly burdened by requirements from accreditation.

Sen Maldonado expressed his concern toward the firm cap on units, for not just majors with professional requirements, but also for those that believe in students being generally educated.

Sen Ram expressed her support of the amendment and pointed out that it does not actually state the unit requirements will or should exceed 120. Given that unit-cap-raising is not in this memo, it should not be a reason to vote against.

Sen Jenkins accepted Sen Ram’s comments and emphasized that we should not be forced to compromise GE requirements nor any professional requirements.

Sen Crowell offered that perhaps the mention of extending unit caps be included in the memo bullets. Sen Miele spoke and disagreed with adding units cap extensions into the memo, indicating that in her reading such a move was not in the spirit of the communication.

Vote to accept amendments.

MCS

Sen Ram proposed an amendment with bullet points offering additional ways a major might comply with the new ethnic studies requirement without waiving M/I, options that she suggested could maintain the integrity of high unit majors, but still enable students to get the benefits of a broad-based General Education from appropriate experts in various fields. She noted that these high unit majors already suffer from less exposure to courses and interaction with students outside their fields due to double-counting of major courses and GE waivers and she gave a brief reminder of the reasoning for the MI requirement and the global or international focus of many of the courses.

Sen DeJordy spoke and welcomed these, as more options is better, but inquired as to the order of the options, and inquired if this a statement of priority. Sen Ram answered that what is offered is not intended as a prioritized list, but instead as some options that may lessen the negative impact on GE and M/I. Sen DeJordy asked and Senator Ram confirmed that the list is organized on a continuum from local to general impact. Dr. Clement spoke to support the amendment, and that the curriculum committee would support these bullet points, as they give guidance to W and MI subcommittees. Sen Mullooly spoke in favor of these amendments. Sen Hernandez asked that we ensure subcommittees will have to confirm any changes.

Sen Jenkins express concerned that these might be read as mandates. Sen Ram offered that we can add “not an exhaustive list”, but reiterated her support that these ideas should be shared and we should encourage cross-disciplinary conversations. Sen DeJordy expressed his support for the language.

Vote to amend:

MSC

Sen Crowell reported that faculty in her department feel that the allowance to “exempt MI as a last resort” is still too open-ended and asked what safeguards are in place to enforce that this does not become the automatic default. Dr. Muscat answered that she will work with any department on this issue. Dr. Clement indicated that he believes this policy looks good from the point of view of committee implementation.

Sen Maldonado inquired about what the procedure would look like in the acquisition of an exemption. Dr. Muscat described that she will be working with departments and deans to explore all options, then sending proposals to the appropriate committees. She emphasized that there will be no circumvention of committees or the APM, however, the process will be expedited given the deadlines.

Sen Crowell inquired if the status of any exemption given is permanent, or will a program be allowed to reinstate MI. Dr. Muscat answered that it is dependent on the particular major, and that this requirement can be changed.

Vote is called on ES policy:

MSC

Policy passes

1. Student Internship Policy.

Sen Mullooly was given the floor and he indicated that he was not speaking as chair of AP&P, but as a Senator. He expressed his concern with waiver issue, specifically the provision on what is considered a “required course”. He noted that with the proposed amendment that policy will be that no student will need to sign a waiver.

Sen Miele inquired if this policy language conflicts with the Executive Orders on this topic? Chair Holyoke told the senators that VP Astone has vetted this amended policy and does not object.

Vote to amend

MSC

Vote to approve:

MSC

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The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be February 1, 2021.

Submitted by Approved by

Raymond Hall Thomas Holyoke

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate