THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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March 14, 2022

Members present: Raymond Hall (Chair), Tinneke Van Camp (Vice Chair), Rich DeJordy (At-Large), Kathleen Dyer (Universitywide), Xuanning Fu (Interim Provost), D’Aungillique Jackson (ASI Executive President), Jennifer Miele (At-Large), Rebecca Raya-Fernandez (At-Large), Susan Schlievert (Statewide)

Members excused: Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval (President)

Guests: Venita Baker (Academic Senate), David Low (Chair Personnel Committee), James Mullooly (Chair AP&P), Jim Schmidtke (Interim AVP Academic Affairs), Katy Tarrant (Chair Online/Blended Education Subcommittee), Laura Yager (Registrar’s Office)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hall at 3:00pm on Zoom.

1. Approval of the Agenda.

MSC

1. Approval of the Minutes 02.28.22.

MSC

1. Communications and Announcements.

Communications from the Provost:

Campus is preparing and scheduling for fall 2022.

Based on feedback from faculty and their concerns for safety following the announcement of ending the mask mandate on campus, it was decided to give faculty a choice to mandate a mask in class. Chair Hall was consulted about this. We are building on guidance from the County Health Department, but also want to take account of campus community members who have a continued need to be protected, especially in classes in which social distancing is not possible, or for faculty who look after elderly or young family members, hence the option to allow faculty to make the best decision for their class room, and as such also avoiding more in-person classes to shift to online modality mid-semester.

*Questions for the Provost*:

**Senator DeJordy** inquired about the opportunity to reevaluate remote work for staff, to allow staff to keep taking advantage of remote working.

**Provost Fu** mentioned that decisions about remote working for staff is not under the purview of Academic Affairs. Staff remote working was piloted, and experiences from the pilot will allow for modifications. He will work on this with the President.

Webinar on AB 928 (Chair Hall):

**Chair Hall** informed the committee that he attended a webinar on AB 928, and that this bill will impact our GE courses. Information about this was added to the Executive Committee documents in Box.

**Action Items**

1. Memo dated February 28, 2022, from Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval, President to Raymond Hall, Chair of the Academic Senate, re: Faculty Appointment to Title IX Task Force. Memo has been received.

Suggestion: on agenda; call for service for one faculty member has already been sent out, which emphasized statement of qualifications.

1. Memo dated March 2, 2022, from Keith Clement, Chair to Raymond Hall, Chair of the Academic Senate, re: Transmittal Memo for Food and Nutritional Science, Bachelor of Science (B.S.) Major and Options Name Changes. Memo has been received.

Suggestion: on consent calendar for Senate meeting

1. Memo dated March 3, 2022, from David Low, Chair of the Personnel Committee to Raymond Hall, Chair of the Academic Senate, re: APM 330 Policy on Market-Based Salary Increases. Memo has been received.

Suggestion: on agenda

1. Memo dated March 7, 2022, from Dr. Joseph Ross, Chair of the College of Science and Mathematics Curriculum Committee to Dr. Raymond Hall, Chair of the Academic Senate, re: APM 206 Curriculum Evaluations. Memo has been received.

Suggestion: first agenda item today

1. New Business.

None

1. APM 206: issues with course approval OBE Committee backlog for Fall 2022.

**Katy Tarrant** (Chair Online/Blended Education Subcommittee) explained that the Online/Blended Education (OBE) approval process is an in-depth process. It extends well beyond the minimum requirements for in-person class assessment. An OBE review requires the review of a full semester worth of online course construction. Many faculty are trying to get courses approved through OnBase at the moment. There are currently 9 active reviewers on the OBE subcommittee. The committee follows the QLT review process. Typical review time is 8 to 10 hours, involving two reviewers, and includes feedback to faculty, amendments and re-review, followed by a full subcommittee approval. Coming up to fall, many faculty anticipated teaching online but did not have their course OBE approved yet, and the subcommittee is now still getting questions on how to get courses approved before fall. There is a back-log and some applications might not be approved on time.

**Tarrant** further informed the committee that there was no master list of courses that had been approved for online teaching prior to the creation of the OBE subcommittee. CFE is now working on such a master list and the list will be shared with the departments. It might be that some courses that are currently being taught online were never approved to be taught online, or lack a record of approval. There is a disconnect for some courses, due to failure to notify CFE, for instance. This is an issue for students who are now choosing courses because modality may have to change as we get closer to the fall semester. In addition, the current APM requires course and faculty approval for online teaching of a particular course. Prior to this, departments approved a course for online teaching, which then various faculty at once could teach online. On the master list that is forthcoming only the faculty who submitted a request for a course to be taught online will be associated with the approved course and only this faculty member will be allowed to teach it online. Other faculty will need to apply again to teach the same course online. This is a software level issue.

**Chair Hall** wanted to know what the cut-off date is for new requests.

**Tarrant** responded that the subcommittee has made a checklist and is working on providing more transparency. A lot of faculty do not anticipate that they need to submit a full course workout, and this can be overwhelming. She added that CFE has stipends to get paid reviewers in the summer to continue reviewing applications. Providing a deadline could be good but she is hesitant to bring down the hammer too quickly because the approval process is not entirely clear to faculty and some faculty may not be aware that they are not on the master list.

**Senator DeJordy** mentioned that most of our faculty have now built online courses on canvas due to the pivot to online teaching during the pandemic. He wanted to know whether they can use this for the course proposal.

**Tarrant** answered that they could, as long as it meets the QLT rubric, which not everyone will have taken into account during COVID. Many online courses during the pandemic were also synchronous online, and such online construction tends to be on the lighter side, and it would require work to transform them to asynchronous online courses.

**Senator DeJordy** suggested that maybe we need to find an interim solution to allow synchronous online teaching.

**Senator Miele** argued that we need some level of flexibility for fall because schedules are already set, with courses waiting in the cue of the OBE approval process. Department Chairs did not have a master list of approved online courses yet that could have been taken into account for scheduling. The APM may need to be updated to reflect faculty’s experience in online learning during the pandemic.

**Schmidtke** wanted to know whether there is department level support for faculty who want to teach online. Departments need to approve online sections first, regardless of whether they have OBE approval.

**Tarrant** responded that the checklist that accompanies the application includes a statement that faculty should verify that their department is ready to offer online sections and applications are routed to Department Chairs.

**Schmidtke** suggested to send a communication about this to Department Chairs.

**Senator Dyer** saw a link to the master list this morning. There are courses that were being taught online in her department that are not on this list. She added that the backlog for OBE approval was even larger pre-pandemic and that once a course was submitted for approval, a faculty member was allowed to start teaching the course online prior to approval due to the back log. She also asked whether AP&P is working on APM 206, for instance to remove the requirement for course review and to allow for online synchronous classes. Student surveys indicated that students want both synchronous and asynchronous online courses.

**Chair Hall** asked whether QLT training would be considered adequate for synchronous online teaching.

**Tarrant** responded that that would be adequate, but that an extra level of training or refresher training might be required to account for new developments and knowledge in online teaching.

**Chair Hall** also asked whether, if the APM is adapted to allow synchronous online courses, would the OBE subcommittee process be OK to assess these.

**Tarrant** responded that that would be the case.

**Provost Fu** added that a course that is approved for online teaching does not always have to be taught online. We need to be mindful of requirements for WASC and for accreditation of in-person degrees, which limit the proportion of distance learning courses on our campus. There may be changes at WASC and at the Department of Education about what constitutes in-person degrees. The Provost also mentioned that HEERF funding is ending and this will have an impact on enabling online access for a good number of students. He further reminded the committee that the students’ wish list for fall courses is opening soon.

**Chair Hall** wanted to know whether approval of online courses in the fall can be ready if we appoint additional reviewers in the summer with summer stipends.

**Tarrant** mentioned that the OBE subcommittee is currently on track to complete all reviews for the courses for which the subcommittee has all the required material available now. But there is a number of courses that are still in OnBase and have not come to the subcommittee yet. She expects that the workload for the subcommittee will increase, but that this can be managed with additional reviewers in the summer.

**Provost Fu** added that Dean Muscat informed him that the number of courses that are still in OnBase and not yet in the OBE subcommittee docket is relatively small at the moment.

**Chair Hall** responded that more applications may be submitted between now and April 1 following the distribution of the earlier mentioned master list of approved courses matched with particular faculty members.

**Senator Miele** repeated that fall schedules are set. These include classes that were being done online pre-COVID, and if these are not in the earlier mentioned master list, and this list is enforced, modalities might have to be changed, rooms have to be booked, etc, and this could be problematic. If a faculty member is approved for online teaching, they should be able to teach an approved online course even if they did not submit the online teaching course request themselves.

**Senator Dyer** wondered whether the Office of Academic Scheduling is going to come in and schedule class rooms for courses that are not on the master list, and that they would struggle to find physical class rooms. Only Chairs and their DAAs can schedule rooms for classes, so this decision should be reverted back to them. She also highlighted that Chairs have been scheduling online modalities in good faith, and if the Office of Academic Scheduling would ask to reschedule courses, this would be problematic. She further suggested that we should disconnect an approved course from an approved instructor.

**Chair Hall** asked whether faculty can be pulled from teaching a course that is scheduled as online in the fall when they are not on the master list.

**Schmidtke** responded that policy states that a faculty member needs to have completed training for online teaching.

**Senator Dyer** added that there is a separate list of instructors who are approved for online teaching. The main issue is when a course was approved but matched with only a particular trained faculty member, and not various trained faculty. APM 206 could be changed to only require that an instructor is approved.

**Schmidtke** suggested thata course needs to be approved for online instruction, and an instructor needs to be trained for online teaching, but they do not necessarily have to be matched. If a faculty is trained to teach online, they should be able to teach a variety of courses that have been approved for online modality.

**Tarrant** mentioned that a course is intellectual property, and instructors should be able to opt out of sharing their approved course shells with others.

**Chair Hall** asked for input from Mullooly and AP&P.

**Mullooly** argued that the spirit of APM 206 is embedded in faculty rights and training but that the bureaucracy that ensued from new APM 206 is creating a barrier. He invited the OBE subcommittee to AP&P. AP&P suggested to simplify the OBE rubric and mode of assessment, similar to how CFE used to assess courses. The current OBE assessment is intense and exhaustive, and faculty may not be aware of this. He also mentioned that there will be a proposal of a renewed APM 206 to senate soon. It was also suggested to review online courses every five years, for instance. Mullooly also offered a solution to the master list issue: if a faculty taught a course online prior to COVID, they could be grandfathered in on the master list.

**Chair Hall** suggested to, while we wait for a new APM 206 to come to Senate, grandfather in faculty who have already taught a course online and who received QLT training on the master list as a temporary fix, and to request that courses cannot be rescheduled by the Office of Academic Scheduling without consultation with Department Chairs.

**Senator Miele** asked that in addition to this, for fall, if a faculty member is approved to teach online with QLT training, and they have a course scheduled for fall for online teaching, to leave this too. Department Chairs are not trying to sneak in online courses with untrained faculty.

**Senator Dyer** responded that the Office of Academic Scheduling has been moving faculty in and out of HyFlex/DISCOVERe class rooms because the faculty was not trained for HyFlex/DISCOVERe. This is problematic for departments.

**Schmidtke** offered a point of clarification. Instructional assignment and individual faculty are the responsibility of the appropriate administrator, in consultation with the Department Chair and individual faculty. This is an administration purview and it is in the CBA. This may explain what the Office of Academic Scheduling has been doing, in conjunction with the policy.

**Senator DeJordy** wanted to know whether the discussion about a renewed APM 206 will involve the possibility of synchronous online course.

**Mullooly** confirmed that that will be part of the discussion.

**Provost Fu** added that synchronous online is a new modality since COVID and is not in the APM yet. If we stick to APM 206 for now, we will have not this virtual mode. He also mentioned that if COVID continues to retreat, we want to return to in-person instruction as much as possible. Students suffered under virtual teaching and in-person engagement matters. We need to continue to consider student success factors.

**Chair Hall** will consult with Dean Muscat, Dr. Munoz (Director CFE) and Dr. Berrett (Director IDEAS) about the operational aspects and suggested to adopt an interim policy to allow for virtual instruction.

**Senator Miele** suggested to also involve someone from the Chair’s Council.

**ASI President Jackson** appreciates this conversation and added that students will be happy to engage in this discussion as well.

1. APM 320 New Designated Position (Chief Diversity Officer).
   1. Faculty Appointments to Search Committee - Chief Diversity Officer.

**Chair Hall** referred to the memo from the President regarding this new administrative position. He added that he received the job description.

**Senator Dyer** expressed concern about the fact that the university keeps establishing new administrative positions which increase administration, but she highlighted that this particular new position is a good addition.

**ASI President Jackson** appreciated that this would be a separate position from the Director of the Cross Cultural and Gender Center and how this new position contributes to the mission to look at how best to meet the needs of diverse students. She supports this and agrees it is a good addition to administration.

**Senator Schlievert** is not against this particular position, but shares Senator Dyer’s concerns for increase in administration.

**Senator Miele** also isin favor of this position.

**Senator DeJordy** endorses this position given that it is important to have this position directly in the cabinet to allow for advocacy. He shared the same concerns about the administrative creep.

**Chair Hall** suggested to ask for more justification for future administrative positions.

*Vote on approval of suggested amendment of appendix: approved.*

*Call for service authorized.*

1. APM 360 Policy on Sabbatical and Difference-in-Pay (DIP) Leaves.

Schmidtke argued that this is not a pressing issue but that it will need to be resolved by the end of the semester. He added that there will be more APM’s out of line with the new CBA that will need to be addressed.

1. Student Withdrawal policy update.

**Chair Hall** explained that the Chancellor’s Executive Order 1037 does not allow the extraction of the instructor from the drop and withdrawal process. The Executive Order requires that drop and withdrawal requests are approved by both the instructor and Department Chair. The Registrar’s Office is reworking the new online process proposed previously in this committee to include the instructor again.

**Yager** added that the Executive Order offers no guidance on whether documentation needs to be seen by the instructor. Also, the Department Chair’s approval may trump an instructor’s denial. Hence, some APM changes may still be needed. The Registrar’s Office also proposes to set auto-approval after four calendar days, rather than the earlier proposed 72 hours.

**Chair Hall** asked Yager to send the specific questions for policy changes to him for the Executive Committee to consider. Meanwhile, he argued that the automated process could go ahead.

**Senator Dyer** expressed that she would like to be involved in the discussion about the required policy amendments.

**Senator DeJordy** suggested that if faculty do not approve a request, the Department Chair should be able to approve. Some oversight is needed. He agreed with allowing four calendar days for auto-approval instead of 72 hours to account for weekends.

**Chair Hall** will seek input from AP&P about putting a time limit as well.

**Yager** added that if we are including instructors and chairs, there would be no need to include the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of Graduate Studies in the first 80 percent of the semester.

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The Senate Executive Committee adjourned at 5:00 pm.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on March 28 via Zoom.

Submitted by: Approved by:

Tinneke Van Camp Raymond Hall

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate