THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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December 3, 2018

Members excused: D. Cady, N. Chanda

Members absent: P. Adams, T. Botts, M. Ellis, M. Golden, L. Kensinger, Y. Luo, K. McBee, G. Sandi-Diaz

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Holyoke at 4:00pm in HML 2206.

1. Approval of the agenda

MSC approving the agenda

1. Approval of the Minutes of November 26, 2018

MSC approving the Minutes of November 26, 2018 as amended (1 nay)

1. Communications and announcements
   1. Interim Provost Harper

The Provost reminded senators about the new AVP of Faculty Affairs beginning her position in January. In addition, a second AVP position has been created to oversee the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, in addition to other roles. The new position will be titled AVP for Academic and Institutional Effectiveness.

* 1. Chair Holyoke

Chair Holyoke reminded senators that this is the last meeting of the Fall 2018 semester.

Chair Holyoke informed senators that bids had been received from vendors as part of the student ratings RFP process. Faculty have been drawn from the 2 relevant task forces to score those bids. Presentations will then be made by the top bidders in both categories and the Senate will be asked to vote. The Provost will then make a final decision. If an internal option is chosen, the Academic Senate will need to approve the final set of questions.

Senator Hensen (English) asked to whom the presentations would be made. Chair Holyoke clarified that they will be open to all. Senator Cupery (Sociology) asked whether a new system would be used in the Spring 2019 semester. Chair Holyoke stated that the new system would go into effect in fall 2019.

* 1. Principles of Community Draft.  
       
     Dr. James Mullooly was recognized to introduce the presentation. The PowerPoint is available from the Vice Chair on request.   
       
     Senator Ram (University-wide) asked how this document will be used to address the concerns shared in the recent workplace quality survey. Dr. Mullooly replied that the document will be used simply to provide guidelines for improving the Fresno State environment and potentially influencing and informing future policy directions. The document is currently aspirational. Senator Gillewicz (English) asked about the specific phrasing “how we treat each other” and the combination of describing the current state of the university and future aspirations for it. The Senator asked whether it would be better to not mix descriptions of how the university is, and how it should be. Dr. Mullooly stated that these considerations would be taken into account in future versions.   
       
     Senator Hooshmandrad (Music) suggested including a need to create a safe environment where all can engage in meaningful conversation. The Senator also asked whether the first section describing the university mission could be made more specific and focused. Senator De Walt (Liberal Studies) asked about the potential impact of these principles on vulnerable groups and communities, specifically because the principles expressed in the document are subjective and might be adopted by only one individual in a situation and thus imperil another. Dr. Mullooly replied that this is a question that the committee has been considering. The Senator encouraged the committee to examine this issue further.   
       
     Dr. Matthew Jendian was recognized and stated that he agreed with the expressed concern over power dynamics and the assumption of “good intentions” in general. Dr. Jendian stated that faculty should still be discerning about their individual situations despite the aspirational statements in the document. Senator Lewis (Kinesiology) stated that the committee had taken survey data into account in the preparation of the document, and therefore members wanted to ensure that the experiences of faculty and staff who responded to the survey were represented.   
       
     Senator Yun (Literacy, Early, Bilingual and Special Education) reminded senators that the current document is primarily aspirational and lays out expectations for faculty and staff. The senator stated that the document is a starting place for ongoing discussion.   
       
     Senator Dangi (Geography and City and Regional Planning) asked whether students were involved in creating the document. Dr. Mullooly stated that the target for this document was faculty and staff, and ASI will be brought into the discussion at the upcoming phase. Senator Dangi suggested defining terms such as “Discovery, Diversity and Distinction” in the future to clarify the university’s unique status. Dr. Mullooly stated that the document is more aspirational and not designed to directly define everything in the workplace.   
       
     Senator Cronin (Social Work Education) asked whether it might be desirable to state that all the principles listed in the document should be followed, not just a few in isolation. Senator Bohlin (Curriculum and Instruction) stated that the preamble could be improved to eliminate some grammatical and structural issues that could improve clarity. Chair Holyoke stated that he would share Senator Bohlin’s previous email on the topic with the writing team of the committee.  
       
     Senator Kensinger (Women’s Studies) stated that many of the items included might vary based on cultural backgrounds, and wondered whether the document should state that cultural aspects of communication should be considered, along with unconscious biases. Dr. Jendian stated that this would be considered in the next iteration of the document. Dr. Song Lee (Counselling; Committee Member) stated that the committee had considered this issue but was unable to find an obvious place to include such a statement. Dr. Lee stated that the committee very much wants to include such a statement and asked for any recommendations from the Senate.  
       
     Senator Chowdhury (Art & Design) stated that he was troubled by the lack of accommodation for differing communication styles in the document and unpopular opinions in the document. The Senator stated that he would like the document to open to door to unpopular and possibly confrontational dialog. Senator Lewis (Kinesiology) replied that the committee believes there is a place for this type of language in a document of this type, but wanted to gather more feedback before adding it. The Senator encouraged all colleagues to send anonymous feedback on the document to the committee via the document website. Chair Holyoke stated that he would email the link to all senators.  
       
     Senator Kensinger stated that a number of the terms that had emerged during the meeting provide a strong base on which revisions to the document might be made. Dean Hironaka-Juteau (Health and Human Services; Committee Member) stated that the committee had discussed adding a definition of diversity from the university website and will consider making those changes.

1. New business

There was no new business for the Academic Senate.

1. APM 231 Drop Deadlines. Second Reading. Academic Policy and Planning.

President Wack (ASI) and Dr. Mullooly were introduced to propose the item. The change would move the drop date by one day to allow students to add courses in which spots had recently opened. Dr. Mullooly stated that Dean Xuanning Fu would be able to quickly update the drop date if the proposal passes to inform students about the change. Dr. Mullooly stated that moving the drop date could make a major difference for a large number of students who would now be able to add classes after the drop period.   
  
Senator Kim (Economics) asked how the change would affect students who seek to drop on the census date itself. Senator Parra (Accountancy) asked why a “serious and compelling” reason is required to allow something to leave the class. Dr. Mullooly stated that the university has made it somewhat more difficult for students to drop during the last week before census. Some aspect of this simply requires documentation of a serious reason, and some of it also relates to state regulations. Senator Parra stated that obtaining documentation can often be invasive and embarrassing for students. Dr. Mullooly stated that medical conditions are protected by federal law. Senator Parra replied that the need for documentation still creates an invasive layer of bureaucracy.

Senator Ram suggested that there is an error in the document related to what students may do on the census date itself. Senator Hensen (English) moved an amendment to change the term “After” to “From” on page 2 and 3. The motion passed unanimously.

Senator Ram made a friendly amendment to correct a typo on page 3. Senator Kim stated that the language related to days and weeks in the document is confusing and encouraged senators to examine it further.

The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:15pm. The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be in the spring semester.

Submitted by Approved by

Bradley Hart Thomas Holyoke

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate