THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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February 25, 2019

Members excused: N. Chanda, M. Dangi, P. De Walt, P. Hooshmandrad, T. Lone, C. Yun

Members absent: P. Adams, T. Botts, C. Copher, M. Ellis, M. Golden, S. Lankford, B. Singh, D. Wack

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Holyoke at 4:06 p.m. in HML 2206.

1. Approval of the agenda

MSC approving the agenda

1. Approval of the Minutes of February 4, 2019

MSC approving the Minutes of February 4, 2019, as amended

1. Communications and announcements
   1. President Castro  
        
      The President began by inviting all senators and faculty to the President’s lecture featuring Steve Forbes on March 25 at the Save Mart Center.   
        
      The President then announced that Governor Newsome has proposed more money for the CSU system, but that appropriation is still below what the system had requested. As a result, the campus will be focusing on increasing the enrollment growth allocation from 2% to 5% to allow more students enroll in the university. In addition, there will be a request for more Graduation Initiative funds to assist with tenure-track hiring. Finally, there is discussion of a ballot measure to provide additional funds for the CSU in the near future.  
        
      Finally, the President announced that the search for a Provost is ongoing and a number of candidates will be on campus in the coming weeks.  
        
      Senator Hensen (English) stated that she had not received any information about the Provost search. The President and Provost clarified that the information was provided as part of the campus newsletter. Senator Hensen suggested a separate email be sent regarding the search.   
        
      Senator Ram (University-wide) asked how many students would be represented by the 5% proposed increase, and what plans were being put into place to accommodate them. The President answered that that final number was not yet established, but the money would go to the Level A budget allocation. Senator Kensinger (Women’s Studies) asked whether increasing student numbers would place additional pressure on faculty and diminish the quality of student education. President Castro responded that he shared the Senator’s concern and does not intend to increase student numbers substantially above the state-funded capacity.   
        
      Senator Cupery (Sociology) asked what other changes to the university’s operations might be expected with these increasing funds and student numbers. The President stated that deans and department chairs will be consulted in the resource allocation process. The President additionally stated that the campus has a somewhat unique challenge in that its demand is very high when some other universities are facing pressure in the opposite direction. As a result, the one-time funds from the state will be allocated for infrastructure while the additional funds will be allocated for personnel and tenure density. Any increases in tenure density will be accompanied by discussions about the benefits pool and related issues.   
        
      The President agreed to update the Senate about the budget situation in April. Senator Ram (University-wide) asked the President to clarify any facilities issues related to having sufficient classrooms to house additional sections of courses.
   2. Chair Holyoke

Chair Holyoke introduced Dr. Catherine Nelson, Chair of the Statewide Academic Senate. Chair Nelson updated senators on the statewide GE task force report which was recently distributed to senators. The proposal would reduce the overall number of GE units and replace the current areas of focus with four new areas. The Statewide Senate will shortly be considering several resolutions related to the report and will be sending it on to a subcommittee for further consideration. In addition, the Statewide Senate will be gathering feedback from faculty across the system over the next several semesters. Some feedback has already been received.   
  
Chair Nelson also updated senators on recent legislative activity in Sacramento. SB 14 is the CSU bond bill being proposed in the senate, and Chair Nelson encouraged senators to monitor the legislation’s progress. In addition, Chair Nelson recently met with legislators to discuss a number of issues including faculty diversity. The CSU is considerably ahead of its fellow education systems when it comes to diversity efforts and is leading the way across the state.   
  
In addition, Chair Nelson announced that a new committee has been proposed to examine data related to higher education across the state. Some concern has been expressed that this body might become a de facto oversight body.   
  
Senator Kensinger (Women’s Studies) asked Chair Nelson about the logic behind the proposed decrease in GE units, specifically upper-division GE units. Chair Nelson stated that she was not on the task force that drafted the proposal, but her understanding is that the change is proposed to bring the CSU in line with national trends, and that the change might help students graduate more quickly. Senator Kensinger additionally asked about the timeline for those proposals being considered might be, and what pressure is being brought to provide support for campuses that are being forced to reevaluate their entire curriculum. Chair Nelson stated that discussions had not yet reached that point, but she would bring that point forward at a later date. Senator Bryant (University-wide) asked for clarification as to why and how the task force was formed, and whether any historians or political scientists were on the task force. Chair Nelson replied that she did not believe either of those disciplines were represented on the committee. In addition, the task force was established as the result of a push to re-examine GE elsewhere in the CSU system. The Statewide Executive Committee subsequently assembled the committee membership, which ended up representing expertise in GE rather than disciplines themselves.   
  
Senator Gillewicz (English) asked about the concerns being expressed about double counting GE courses toward majors. Chair Nelson stated that the task force had recommended that double counting of GE not be allowed, despite a recent executive order to the contrary.   
  
Senator Mullooly (Anthropology; Chair, AP&P) was recognized and reminded Senators that March 1 is the deadline to submit abstracts to the Student Success Summit. In addition, on March 4 the Workforce Quality Survey will be launched.   
  
Chair Holyoke reminded senators of the upcoming presentations by student ratings vendors that will be happening later in the week. As a result, the March 11 Senate meeting will include a vote on which direction the university will take regarding student ratings. Senator Ram (Universitywide) asked how senators’ feedback will be gathered by those vendors, and whether the task force developing their own battery of questions will be available before the next senate meeting. Chair Holyoke stated that a feedback mechanism will be developed for each option. In addition, the questions will be distributed to the senate.   
  
Senator Kensinger asked whether the task force will be available to answer questions at the task force senate meeting. Chair Holyoke stated that many members of the task force will be present. Senator Gillewicz (English) asked whether the task force questions will be intended for the entire campus, or whether disciplines can modify those questions. Chair Holyoke stated that in his understanding, faculty would be able to choose questions from a pool but not develop their own. Senator Kensinger asked whether it is true that this process must be completed this academic year. Chair Holyoke replied that that is the case.   
  
Finally, Chair Holyoke reiterated the upcoming Provost forum events and encouraged all faculty to attend.

1. Installation of new senators  
     
   The following new senators were introduced and installed:

Mandy Greaves

Counselor, Education and Rehabilitation Department

1. New business

There was no new business for the Academic Senate.

1. Consent Calendar  
   1. Degree Change for Mathematics Graduate Program. University Graduate Committee.   
        
      Dr. Doreen De Leon was recognized to introduce the proposal and stated that the change reflects a program review recommendation and also an alignment to the department’s recent change to a B.S. degree. Three new courses were also added, but there were no budgetary implications of the changes.   
        
      No objections were raised and the item was deemed passed.
2. Guidelines for Free Speech. Second Reading. Personnel Committee.  
     
   Chair Tsukimura (Personnel) was introduced, and discussed some recent changes to the document. A series of footnotes were added at the request of the Senate clarifying existing case law in the area.   
     
   Senator Wise (Media, Communications & Journalism) asked about the lack of footnotes for items c) and d) on the list on p. 3. Chair Tsukimura stated that vandalism codes would vary by community and therefore no footnote was required. Senator Hensen (English) made a friendly amendment to correct grammar on p. 5. Senator Ram (University-wide) asked why the specific cases on p. 4 were chosen as examples. Chair Tsukimura stated that the cases were taken from a text highlighting the most commonly cited caselaw.   
     
   Senator Tawfik (Civil & Geomatics Engineering) stated that a colleague had suggested differentiating free speech from academic freedom. Chair Tsukimura stated that APM 103 deals with academic freedom specifically. Senator Tawfik replied that it might be worthwhile to still specifically discuss academic freedom in the document.   
     
   Senator Ram asked about the citation on section e) and the relevant caselaw. Chair Tsukimura clarified that Justice Souter’s dissent from the case cited has been used to exclude university faculty from free speech restrictions on some public employees. Senator Ram additionally asked where the specific restriction on course content deviating from faculty expertise came from. Chair Tsukimura replied that there is related case law in this area. Senator Chowdhury (Art & Design) asked whether the footnote in fact invalidates the statement in e), and suggested that the item might be problematic because of the difficulty in judging such a standard. Chair Tsukimura replied that he would be open to eliminating the list item.   
     
   Senator Parra (Accountancy) urged the Senate not to view the document as a legal document, but as a set of minimal guidance and a reference point for faculty. Senator Hall (Physics) stated that APM 103 also contains complicated language, and moved to strike item e). The motion was seconded. Senator Kensinger spoke in favor of the motion, as did Senator Gillewicz. The motion passed (1 abstention).   
     
   Senator Kensinger noted that footnote 3 including the AAUP’s statement on academic freedom has now been struck from the document and should be reconsidered by senators at a later time.

The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:20 p.m. The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be on Monday, March 11, 2019.

Submitted by Approved by

Bradley Hart Thomas Holyoke

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate