THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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February 22, 2016

Members excused: N. Akhavan, M. Botwin, L. Herzig, J. Therkelsen, M. Thompson, Wakabayashi

Members absent: L. Cornelio, B. DerMugrdechian, J. Giglio, A. Liu, M. Raheem, S. Sherchan, R. Thornton, J. Whiting

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Ayotte at 4:09pm in HML 2206.

1. Approval of the agenda

MSC approving the agenda

1. Approval of the Minutes of February 1, 2016

A friendly amendment was approved.

MSC approving the Minutes of February 1, 2016, as amended.

1. Communications and announcements
2. Provost Zelezny

Announced that WASC has reaccredited Fresno State for ten years, which is the best possible result and one rarely achieved. WASC did ask us, however, to take a look at our GE program, which they feel is large and unwieldy and perhaps confusing to students.

The Provost introduced Larry Salinas, the new Executive Director for Government Relations. Mr. Salinas noted that he has met with many stakeholders at the university already, as well as most of the local politicians and government leaders. He intends to raise Fresno State’s profile in Washington and Sacramento as *the* university for the San Joaquin Valley. Senator Kensinger (Statewide Senate) recommended that he take a look at, and promote, AB2019 which would boost CSU faculty salaries with step increases.

Senator Kensinger noted that the deadline for the provost’s awards falls during spring break. Could it be pushed back? The Provost said she would look into it.

The Provost was asked about the status of the search for a new Dean of the College of Science and Math. She said that all of the applications have come in and deliberation over them was about to begin. Overall, it is on schedule.

Senator Slagter (Women’s Studies) noted that WASC seemed to want us to look at the “academic rigor” of our GE program, and wanted to know what that meant. The Provost said those were her words and meant the performance gap between students from under-represented groups and the rest of the student body.

Senator Williams (Agricultural Business) asked about the status of the search for a new dean of the Jordan College of Agriculture. The Provost said that final deliberations were about to begin.

1. Statewide Senate Report – Senator Benavides and Senator Kensinger

Senator Benavides gave an update on the search for a new system-wide CIO, which he is involved with. They will be selecting three finalists for a second round of interviews very soon.

He also noted that Blackboard’s contract is expiring in May and the CSU is search for new vendors, which may include Blackboard. Three final vendors will be selected for the system by the time the fall semester starts and each campus may pick one of the three to use. He also noted that faculty with classes that make extensive use of Blackboard are being asked to volunteer their classes to help test the services of potential vendors. A number of Senators raised concerns regarding changing from Blackboard and the brief or nonexistent transition time. Senator Ram (University-wide) asked if the committee will be able to ensure that our old courses will all be transferred to any new LMS and raised a concern that the committee will not be making a final decision until June, which is after the Blackboard contract ends in May. Senator Hall (Physics) requested information in writing about the plans. Senator Karr (Music) emphasized that a lot more advance notice will be needed to move courses and raised concern about planning for May intersession courses. Senator Schettler (Africana Studies) asked why we should change from Blackboard if it is working fine, and indicated that faculty should be able to vote on keeping Blackboard.

Senator Benavides indicated he will share these questions and concerns with the Committee and will also share the website with the Academic Senate where we can find more information. Senators can also send him any questions to forward to the committee.

Senator Kensinger described several of the resolutions adopted by the Statewide Academic Senate, including one on tenure density, and encouraged senators to consult the January 29 email from Senator Benavides for more details on these and other resolutions discussed.

1. Chair Ayotte

Introduced Dr. Ganesh Lama (Social Work Education) as the new IDEA faculty liaison (taking over from Dr. Samuel Omalayo). He mentioned that a lot of changes are coming. Senator Slagter (Women’s Studies) inquired what those changes are. Dr. Lama indicated that IDEA will be going online and in a couple of years will only be able to be administered online. Chair Ayotte indicated we are guaranteed to still have the paper system for the next couple of years, but all the vendors are moving in this direction so it is something we will need to discuss. Senator Forgacs (Math) said he opposed this because students shouldn’t be evaluating a class they do not attend and having in-class evaluations helps to limit this problem. Senator Kensinger (Statewide Senate) emphasized that we are being beholden to corporate decisions and we should return to a campus-controlled system to ensure quality education. Chair Ayotte indicated that we will make sure there is a lot of campus input on this process.

Chair Ayotte alerted Senators to a communication that will come out tomorrow from the Division of Graduate Studies regarding graduate student tuition waivers. Any department with Teaching Associates should ensure that current and future TAs know they will need to meet the March 2 priority application deadline for FAFSA.

1. Consent Calendar

A. Nomination of Hwan Youn (Biology) to the Committee for Faculty Equity and Diversity (CFED) for a three year term.

B. Nomination of Gil Kim (Economics) to the Student Affairs Committee for a two-year term.

MSC approving the Consent Calendar

1. New business

Senator Kensinger (Statewide Senate) proposed a resolution to extend the deadline for grade submissions.

MSC approving the addition of this as item #9 on the agenda.

1. Faculty Senate consideration of support for U.S. House Bill H.R. 275 – a bill to create a Presidential Commission to look into issues facing Intercollegiate Athletics. Michael G. Bowen, Chair Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA). Second Reading.

MSC tabling of the issue (2-abstentions)

1. Academic Senate Resolution in Support of the Academic Senate and Faculty of California State University, Chico. Chris Henson and Loretta Kensinger.

Senator Henson (English) explained the resolution. Senator Williams (Agricultural Business) spoke against the resolution, stating we are overstepping our bounds as we do not know enough information or have firsthand experience with the events at CSU Chico. Senator Moreman (Communication) inquired if it is typical protocol to support other campuses’ no confidence votes. Senator Benavides (Statewide Senate) emphasized that we should think about what has happened in the past, for example Chancellor Reed refusing to listen to faculty despite several votes of no confidence. We should pass a resolution to support other CSU faculty.

Senator Henson noted that we do have a lot of information about what happened at CSU Chico and all Senators received the resolution their Senate adopted along with the letter to Chancellor White and the Board of Trustees. Their faculty took a lot of effort to resolve this and got little support from the Chancellor. Other faculty should support them. Senator Kensinger noted that CSU Chico faculty solicited input in a campus-wide dialogue and it is important for faculty senates to help ensure our fellow faculty senates are heard.

Senator Lewis (Kinesiology) inquired whether we know what has occurred on their campus since the document was released and whether the Chancellor responded. Chair Ayotte indicated he could request information from their chair but believed they are in the midst of a search for a new President. Provost Zelezny confirmed that President Castro serves on the search committee for their new President, who will be named next month. Senator Williams inquired whether we had asked for input from Chico’s administration or from Chancellor White on this to get the full picture on what is going on; without this due diligence we should not be voting on a vote of no confidence on another campus. Senator Muller (Biology) noted that we are not supporting a vote of no confidence; we are expressing concern that their vote of no confidence did not lead to any action. Senator Williams questioned whether there was no action. Senator Henson explained that the current President will resign at the end of the semester but not due to any action by the Chancellor or the Board of Trustees so this is still a very important resolution. It is still to be determined who will replace them. Senator Alexander (IT) suggested that if the replacement is de facto already done then there is no need for a resolution. Senator Williams questioned how we know there was no intervention from Long Beach. Senator Kensinger reminded the body that we are simply calling on the Chancellor to take this seriously and ensure new leadership has a better relationship with faculty and replacements are made with the advice and consent of the Academic Senate.

This item will return to the agenda at the next meeting.

1. APM 321 Report of the Faculty Scholar Blue Ribbon Committee and APM 324 Policy on Probationary Plans and Faculty Mentoring – Personnel Committee.

MSC tabling this item until the next meeting.

1. Resolution on Final Due Date for Grades. First reading.

Senator Kensinger (Statewide Senate) explained the resolution. The resolution is calling for grades to be due no sooner than January 2, providing at least 8 working weekdays after exams before grades are due. Senator Lewis (Kinesiology) suggested we have Malisa Lee (AVP for Enrollment Services) come to inform us about any implications of the proposed resolution. No objections. Senator Williams (Agricultural Business) acknowledged the concerns are valid but we may be attacking a symptom here rather than the real problem, which is class size and the amount of grading required. He expressed concern that there is no statement about students in the resolution, who may suffer from receiving their grades at a later date. Senator Kensinger agreed that course size is also an issue, but a separate one. She noted that we have had January 2 as a deadline previously.

This item will return for second reading at the next meeting.

The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:21pm.

The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be on March 7, 2016, at 4:00pm in HML 2206.

Submitted by Approved by

Thomas Holyoke Kevin Ayotte

Vice Chair Chair

Melanie Ram Academic Senate

University-wide Senator

Academic Senate