THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE (AS-09)

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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Office of the Academic Senate

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February 14, 2022

Members excused: K. Ayotte

Members absent: N. Akhavan, L. Brillante, B. Mason, C. Wang, J. Winder

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Hall at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom video conferencing.

1. Approval of the Agenda.

MSC

1. Approval of the Minutes of 01/31/22.

Typo corrected on p.2.

Corrected the date of the meeting in the header: it was Jan 31, 2022, not Jan 31, 2021.

Motion to approve minutes as amended: MSC

1. Communications and Announcements.

Communications from President:

Rapid anti-gen tests will be available on campus soon.

Another 25 million dollars will be distributed to students from HEERF funding. This will be the last distribution. This money comes on top of students’ financial aid.

An advocacy day for the CSU happened last week, at which the Governor’s budget was discussed. Chair Hall, ASI President Jackson, VP Adishian-Astone, Michael Lukens and the President participated. Fresno State representatives advocated for university farms, and for 50 million for the Fresno State farm and 50 million for the other CSU farms. They also advocated for staff and faculty salaries that are competitive with the rest of the country to keep our talented staff and faculty, for deferred maintenance, and for affordable housing for students.

Information on how the GI 2025 funds will be allocated will be sent to Chair Hall to share with the senators.

With regards to the Library task force, a landing page will be published by the end of the week with FAQs and updates on the efforts and research into Henry Madden by faculty, students and the task force.

The President is in the process of creating a task force on allegations of sexual harassment on our campus, which will include between 15 and 20 members, with transparent and across-campus representation. A landing page will be created for this task force as well. A consulting firm will be hired to assist and assess current policy, culture and training. This will result in recommendations for our campus regarding policy development, investigations, enhancing resources, education, and a culture of regulatory compliance. Ultimately, we want to empower individuals by providing information about support systems and alleviate fear of retaliation.

*Questions for the President:*

**Senator Walter** wanted to know what the scope of the audit in the wake of revelations of sexual harassment involving former VP of Student Affairs Lamas will be, and whether it will address what happened up to these revelations.

**President Jiménez-Sandoval** explained that an internal audit will be led by a consulting firm, that will also work with the task force. There will be a systemwide audit of CSU policies, procedures and resources. Updates about this will be shared with the senate as the President receives them.

**Senator Moreman** thanked the President for reacting in an immediate way. He wanted to make sure that we also to think about the need for a culture shift on campus, not just focus on policy and compliance.

**President Jiménez-Sandoval** agreed. This will not only concern an institutional review, but also, and primarily, a process that can lead to creating an empowering culture. From the President’s meetings with Student Affairs, he learned that people affected felt alone and disempowered. We want to empower individuals with information and awareness of their rights and resources.

**Senator Smith** suggested that sexist micro-aggressions, that do not necessarily fall under Title IX, should also be addressed in this audit.

**President Jiménez-Sandoval** agreed and responded that that is part of the facilitation of a culture shift that the task force will look into.

**Senator Coy** added that the focus should not be on getting people to report, which some people may find difficult to do; the onus should be on people who harass others and on changing their behavior.

**President Jiménez-Sandoval** appreciated this perspective, and confirmed that he is seeking to implement a system that is victim-informed and empowering. The news about sexual harassment on our campus has triggered many, indicating that this is a systemic problem, rather than localized. He also referred to adopting a restorative justice point of view.

**Senator Wise** wanted to know what the composition of the task force will be.

**President Jiménez-Sandoval** responded that it will include faculty, students, Dean Muscat (who has a background in victimology), our survivor advocate, and a community member. He is still in the process of establishing the task force.

**Senator Wise** asked whether the task force will work independently from the President’s office and administration.

**President Jiménez-Sandoval** confirmed that he will charge the task force, that will then work closely with a consulting firm, but that the task force will have full authority to assess the situation and make recommendations.

Communications from Provost Fu:

Provost Fu will be holding a faculty Q&A forum on Thursday Feb 17 between 2 and 3pm.

He is also holding virtual office hours per college.

*No questions for the Provost.*

Senator Jenkins (state wide senator)

Senator Jenkins shared that there is a lot of disappointment and anger from other CSU senates about the revelations about former VP of Student Affairs Lamas and how this situation was dealt with by then President Castro, now Chancellor of the CSU.

Chair Hall introduced new CIO and VP for Information Technology Bao Johri.

1. New Business.

Jenkins introduced a resolution on No Confidence and Call for an Independent Investigation Into the Actions Taken by CSU Chancellor Castro as President of CSU Fresno.

*MSC*

Motion to move to top of agenda

Seconded

**Senator Jenkins** argued to discuss the resolution as a first reading item, but to put it at the top of the agenda today due to its urgency.

*Motion passed.*

1. Resolution on No Confidence and Call for an Independent Investigation Into the Actions Taken by CSU Chancellor Castro as President of CSU Fresno – first reading

**Senator Jenkins** explained that this resolution was developed at CalState LA. Jenkins received permission to use it to draft a Fresno State resolution. The resolution expresses a lack of confidence in the Chancellor due to how he dealt with the allegations against then VP of Student Affairs Lamas, when he was President at Fresno State. The resolution also suggests that there should be consequences for the Chancellor. This is a systemic issue that requires a response.

**Senator Walter** asked Chair Hall to explain to the senate what a resolution means and what the impact can be.

**Chair Hall** explained that a resolution is not policy but a statement made by this body that represents faculty. It will be sent to the President, the Chancellor and others CCed. It is a statement of principle and will, but has no policy weight.

**Senator Jenkins** added that resolutions might not have any policy weight but they go into the public record and have communication weight.

**Senator Dyer** mentioned that the Board of Trustees is meeting on Thursday Feb 17, hence the timeliness of this resolution. She wanted to learn from Chair Hall what other CSU campuses are doing in addition to CalState LA.

**Chair Hall** was informed at the council of senate chairs last week that about two thirds of the senate chairs mentioned that resolutions on this were coming their way.

**Senator Alexandrou** agreed with Jenkins that the issues we face are systemic and that it is important to address them. He expressed concern that the proposed resolution is very personalized and that we do not have the necessary investigatory tools. He also noted that language regarding the victims is missing in this resolution.

**Senator Jenkins** referred to the USA Today articles about the harassment, which Chancellor Castro, in his letter following publication of these articles, seems to have validated. Jenkins agreed that victims should be mentioned, but the point of this particular resolution is to express disappointment in the leader of our system.

**Chair Hall** added that one resolution does not have to cover all concerns, and that we can have several resolutions on this issue.

**Senator Cady** suggested that the President’s task force is an important step and maybe we should wait for recommendations from this task force before passing a resolution. It might lead to stronger wording because we will have more information.

**Senator Crowell** suggested that the resolution should include more specific contextualization. Fresno State faculty and staff were misinformed about why Lamas left, and this should be included in the resolution.

**Senator Karr** acknowledged that we need to use caution, but it is also important that it is acknowledged that faculty were misinformed about why Lamas was leaving.

**Senator Jenkins** added that further investigation is needed, but we can already express our disappointment.

**Senator Fulop** repeated that a formal investigation is needed first. He added that this was a Title IX issue and Title IX has different standards than legal proceedings.

**Senator Jacobs** urged the senate to make our feelings known now because attention for this issue will wane. Investigations take long and by the time they are finalized, people might have forgotten.

**Senator Coy** urged the senate to stand up as a university body and have it recorded that we said no to this kind of behavior.

**Senator Cady** clarified that he was worried about losing focus on the system that enabled then President Castro’s response to the allegations of harassment. By focusing on Chancellor Castro we might lose sight of the systemic issue.

**Chair Hall** repeated that the focus on the systemic nature of the issue could be part of another resolution.

**Senator Jenkins** moved to waive the second reading on this item.

Seconded.

**Senator Maldonado** and **Senator Miele** wanted a chance to read the document more carefully first.

*Motion to waive second reading was rejected.*

**Senator Jenkins** volunteered to be the point of contact to manage the draft of the resolution.

**Chair Hall** mentioned that the draft will be available on the senate website.

*The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:14p.m.*

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The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be March 7, 2022, via Zoom video conferencing.

Submitted by Approved by

Tinneke Van Camp Ray Hall

Vice Chair Chair

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