THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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October 17, 2022

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

Members excused: Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval (President)

Guests: Venita Baker (Academic Senate), Bernadette Muscat (Dean of Undergraduate Studies), Jim Schmidtke (interim AVP Academic Affairs)

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

1. Approval of the Agenda.

Amendment to the agenda: item 6 (Record Adjustment Committee) has already been actioned.

*Motion to approve agenda as amended*

*Seconded*

*Carried*

1. Approval of the Minutes 10.03.22.

*MSC*

1. Communications and Announcements.

Communications from the Provost:

Provost Fu mentioned that there are concerns about enrollment numbers at the CSU. We are experiencing a significant decline in enrollment. On census date this fall, only two campuses exceeded last year’s population, and all the others are below, including Fresno State, of which some with more than 1000 under last year’s FTES. Fresno State was 800 FTES over last year’s target. New student enrollment is good on our campus, but we are losing continuing and returning students, for instance, to the labor market. Two student success centers are being set up and we have funding for student success through the GI 2025 initiative. In addition, we will need to think about student preferences for distance learning, for instance, and to enhance reporting of early signs of students facing challenges in order to be able to support and retain them.

*Questions for the Provost:*

**Chair Hall** referred to academic success coaching to get help to students that are struggling.

**Provost Fu** agreed that this is important as well as to track referred students to see whether they return.

**Provost Fu** added that there are potentially consequences for the budget next year, resulting in having to cut back courses or support for research, for instance. He added that rather than not returning because of academic challenges, students are not returning because of financial issues and not being able to meet basic needs. We need to make them feel welcome and supported. This will require strengthening Student Affairs.

**Senator Miele** mentioned that more staff is needed, and has to be retained, to respond to and be there for students.

**Provost Fu** agreed that we are experiencing structural and staffing challenges, so we will need to look within our resources.

**Senator Schlievert** added that we teach evening classes on our campus, and a lot of our students are on campus after hours. Student support and technology support close at 5pm, and that is challenging.

**Provost Fu** mentioned that this was a challenge already prior to the COVID pandemic. This is a resourcing issue. We could look into flexible hours.

**Senator DeJordy** suggested to look at the possibility of hiring students on campus to ease staff shortages. More students could be getting paid and could help increase comfortability on campus.

**Provost Fu** responded that if there is an operational need, Deans can reach out to him to hire students. He mentioned that we have already hired more student mentors as well.

**Senator DeJordy** wanted to know whether new increased money we received was based on a new FTES target.

**Provost Fu** responded that part of our budget is State-funded money and part is tuition. A loss in budget is related to less money from student tuition due to lower enrollment.

**Chair Hall** mentioned that we need to ensure that we use OIE data and put money towards strategies for student success that are working. Solutions to retaining students need to be data driven.

Communication from Interim AVP Schmidtke about request for tenure-track appointment temporary faculty member:

**Chair Hall** explained that in line with the new CBA, temporary faculty can be allowed to enter a tenure-track position on our campus if they are offered a tenure-track position elsewhere. This needs to be approved by the department faculty.

**Dr. Schmidtke** added that this can also only happen if there is not currently a search for a tenure-track position happening. This situation is now occurring in a program, not a department. There is no department faculty to form a committee to review this request to hire the temporary faculty member on a tenure-track position in line with the provisions in the new CBA. Dr. Schmidtke has already sought a recommendation from the Associate Dean for tenure track faculty in the college to serve on a committee to make a determination about converting the temporary faculty position into a tenure track position, but it is unclear who would vote to approve that committee. Rather than asking for a college wide vote, dr. Schmidtke proposes to send this to the Elections and Nominations Committee to approve the committee, to ensure that faculty have a voice in this.

[**Provost Fu** had to leave at this point in the discussion.]

Members of the executive committee expressed various concerns over the fact that this program is not assigned to a particular department. Who does the scheduling for that program, who does mentoring for faculty in the program (**Senator Dyer**); what structure is the program associated with (**Senator Miele**); are there other programs that do not have a department (**Chair Hall**)?

**Dr. Schmidtke** responded that scheduling is probably done by the program coordinator and that there is a handful of programs that do not have a department home.

**Senator DeJordy** asked whether there are also tenure track faculty that are not affiliated with a specific department.

**Dean Muscat** added that interdisciplinary studies are not affiliated with a specific department but that faculty from other departments teach in it.

**Dr. Schmidtke** responded that we would need to find a department home for this new tenure track position and that this is an urgent issue.

**Senator Dyer** expressed concerns about a process that would pull in a new tenure track faculty on campus without there being a clear structure on who would review their RTP and provide departmental support.

**Dr. Schmidtke** explained that the President has the final say on appointing the temporary faculty member to a tenure-track position.

He offered that maybe different colleges could be involved if this is an interdisciplinary program.

**Senator Miele** suggested to look at what College now provides the instructor their contract.

**Senator Dyer** mentioned that programs may be interdisciplinary, but it is problematic if a faculty member does not have a home college.

**Dr. Schmidtke** responded that the review committee for this new tenure-track position could be composed of different colleges, but the position would not be housed in multiple colleges.

**Senator Dyer** repeated that departmental review of an RTP is instrumental.

**Chair Hall** mentioned that CBA article 12 refers to ‘department’. So it needs to be specified what department they would be in.

**Senator DeJordy** wanted to know whether there is grounds for a grievance.

**Dr. Schmidtke** replied that this is a new provision in the CBA that has not been tested yet. The decision would not be grievable but the process could be.

**Chair Hall** suggested that the Dean of the College where the program is housed should make the call.

**Senator DeJordy** added that this College’s personnel committee could be involved.

**Dr. Schmidtke** agreed that involving the College personnel committee is a good recommendation. Faculty need to be involved in this decision. This could be the test case for similar issues with other interdisciplinary programs.

**Senator DeJordy** wanted to know whether there is an APM on interdisciplinary programs.

**Chair Hall** responded that that is not the case.

Communication from Dean Muscat about academic probation

**Dean Muscat** explained her request to change the term ‘academic probation’ to ‘academic notice’, which sounds less harsh, and would also make the process less confusing – different kinds of ‘probations’ are used on our campus. The term ‘academic notice’ is used on other campuses as well when students fall below a certain GPA. She added that she consulted with various other colleagues about this. There is no APM governing it, but GPA thresholds are included in EOs.

**Senator Raya-Fernandez** suggested that sometimes we might want to use stronger language to encourage students to improve their GPA.

**Dean Muscat** mentioned that if students do not improve their GPA, they could be in disqualification.

**Senator Raya-Fernandez** added that she likes the ‘notice’ part but that students might need to be incentivized.

**Senator DeJordy** wanted to know whether the proposal is to use ‘academic notice’ and also keep ‘disqualification’.

**Dean Muscat** confirmed this.

**Senator DeJordy** informed the committee that ‘probation’ is mentioned in at least four APMs.

**Chair Hall** suggested to keep ‘academic probation’, and use ‘disqualification’, instead of ‘probation disqualification’.

**Dean Muscat** responded that they are seeking to use gentler language. The literature indicates that language can be off-putting for certain groups.

**Senator Dyer** wanted to know where this terminology lives.

**Dean Muscat** responded that it is used in EOs. She has been working to remove structural barriers to student success following a Chancellor’s communication. It is in this context that this issue came up. The current language is harsh and off-putting. Messages to students should also include referrals to support services.

**Senator Raya-Fernandez** wanted to know whether the campuses that already use ‘notice’ instead of ‘probation’ have conducted studies to see the impact following the terminology change.

**Dean Muscat** responded that she does not have such data but that anecdotal information is promising. She will reach out to these campuses to ask for data.

**Chair Hall** repeated that the word ‘probation’ comes up in multiple policies.

**Senator DeJordy** added that APM 405 says ‘academic probation’, for instance, so language will have to be changed in the APMs too.

Communication from Chair Hall about AB 928

Chair Hall consulted the executive committee on how to handle the request from the ASCSU for feedback on CAL-GETC, which is due on Oct 24. There is no time to negotiate and come up with an alternative path if we do not agree with CAL-GETC.

He explained that this transfer pathway is still decoupled from our own GE requirements.

He referred to a resolution passed by Humboldt.

He suggested to make this the highest agenda item at our next Senate meeting, and to have someone propose a resolution. When we have the transfer pathway in place, we will need to discuss how to align it with our GE pattern. He has received some concerns from Dean Muscat in this regard.

**Senator Miele** agreed that having a resolution from the Senate will be helpful to put the feedback together.

**Senator Dyer** suggested that our resolution should state that consultation should have been more authentic.

**Senator DeJordy** mentioned that it could cite our bylaws on what consultation should look like.

**Senator Schlievert** added that the transfer pathway was developed by people who worked in this for several years and were elected to do this.

**Senator Dyer** finds it strange that some Colleges were aware of this long before other Colleges were.

**Chair Hall** agreed that the consultative process should have been better.

**Chair Hall** will get a resolution drafted.

**Action Items**

1. Email dated October 14, 2022, from Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval, President to Raymond Hall, Chair of the Academic Senate re: Memorandum: Faculty Compensation Study. Email has been received.

Suggestion: information is in Box.

1. Nominations – Executive Session
   1. Technology Steering Committee
   2. Vice Provost Search Committee

Suggestion: in executive session today

1. New Business.

None

1. APM 322 Policy on Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness. Second Reading.

[David Low (chair Personnel Committee) not able to attend today. Memo included in meeting documents]

**Senator Dyer (Chair Student Ratings Subcommittee)** worked with Low on these amendments and mentioned that some of the changes suggested for this APM were not addressed during our first reading of the item. For instance, the Personnel Committee wants to add deadlines in the APM for submission of peer evaluations. Also, college level personnel committees can now request more frequent evaluations, but they do not look at part timers, for instance, so department chairs would have to be able to request these for part times - they do not have such authority in the current APM. Further, a new modality for a course should be considered a new course to be evaluated; it should be recognized that teaching a course online is not the same as teaching it in person.

**Senator DeJordy** wanted to know whether department chairs would be allowed to set deadlines for peer evaluations that are earlier than the policy deadline, which seems to be a practice in some departments.

**Senator Dyer** suggested that the policy could state ‘no later than’ instead of ‘by’.

**Dr. Schmidtke** offered that this could require CFA consultation because it is a workload issue.

**Senator Dyer** responded that junior faculty need to be protected and need their peer evaluations in their personnel files.

**Senator DeJordy** offered a friendly amendment to the amended APM:

*In section II D 3 change ‘by the last day of the semester’ changed to ‘no later than the last day of the semester’*

*Correction made*

***Chair Hall*** *moved to add this item to the Senate agenda and he will alert Low to the friendly amendment made.*

*Seconded*

*Approved*

1. Policy on Technology.

**Dr. Schmidtke** requested the creation of new policy on technology [see memo]. The university wants to prevent students from having to buy different software packages for different courses, so we have preapproved software. A list of preapproved software can be included in an appendix in such policy, to prevent having to change the policy every time. Some faculty have been refusing to use Canvas, and the use of Canvas is not embedded in policy. There has been an issue with students having been required by faculty to use a different online learning platform, for which the software produced problems and computer viruses. New incoming faculty could then also be informed, through policy, about what software and technology is supported on campus.

**Senator Dyer** wanted to know what the procedure is for creating new policy.

**Dean Muscat** responded that AP&P creates new policy.

**Senator Schlievert** asked whether technology support can review apps and technology a faculty member may find and wants to use.

**Dr. Schmidtke** responded that technology services can assess these and see whether what we already have and use can do the same job.

**Senator Dyer** also referred to companies reaching out frequently to faculty about apps, and faculty need to know they can tell them no.

**Chair Hall** mentioned that some textbooks come with homework on an app that is not supported by Canvas, and we should be able to use those.

**Dr. Schmidtke** responded that what is most important is that technology services can provide support.

**Senator Miele** agreed that flexibility is needed, especially since we aim to provide zero cost solutions.

**Senator DeJordy** agreed that there needs to be flexibility for useful tools that are easy to learn and free, for instance.

**Chair Hall** emphasized that we cannot exclude certain apps, *e.g.* for textbook affiliated assignments, purchased through our bookstore.

**Senator DeJordy** referred to APM 357 as a possible policy where this can be included. He also referred to the Academic Information Technology Subcommittee.

**Chair Hall** will reach out to the Chair of this subcommittee.

1. Executive Session.

*Appointment to the Technology Steering Committee: Steven Choi*

*MSC*

*Appointment to the Vice Provost search committee: Scott Sailor and Aaron Stillmaker*

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The Senate Executive Committee adjourned at 5:05pm.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on Oct 31.

Submitted by: Approved by:

Tinneke Van Camp Raymond Hall

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate