THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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April 11, 2016

Members excused: N. Akhavan, I. Basurto, O. Benavides, P. Crume, L. Herzig, A. Mckeith, U. Müller, R. Fernandez, M. Schettler, J. Therkelsen

Members absent: L. Cornelio, B. DerMugredechian, J. Giglio, M. Thompson, R. Thornton, J. Whiting

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Ayotte at 4:07pm in HML 2206.

1. Approval of the agenda

MSC approving the agenda

1. Approval of the Minutes of March 28, 2016

Friendly amendment to the minutes

MSC approving the Minutes of March 28, 2016 as amended

1. Communications and announcements
2. Chair Ayotte

Reported that he was recently at the Council of Senate Chairs at San Francisco State University, and there Dr. Elizabeth Boyd, the academic senate chair from Chico State, thanked him and us for our resolution of support. It meant a great deal to the faculty at Chico State.

1. Senator Malik Raheem (Counselor Education and Rehabilitation)

Congratulated the California Faculty Association for its outstanding work in collective bargaining, but noted that not all faculty in other states have it so well. In Illinois, where he is from, faculty are facing the possible shut down of higher education institutions because of a state budget stalemate that has lasted ten months.

1. President Hudson (ASI)

Last week she and Chair Ayotte attended a meeting regarding textbook adoptions. She explained how important it is for faculty to order their textbooks on time because this means students will receive more money when they sell back textbooks that may be used again. It also means the bookstore has more leverage with publishers to negotiate a lower textbook price, and the office responsible for making textbook materials accessible has time to get their work done. Unfortunately, last year only 35% of faculty met the deadline.

Chair Ayotte urged senators to tell their faculty to get their orders in on line. He will also send a message to all faculty, though faculty need to make sure they do not send their book orders to him.

It was asked whether faculty need to let the bookstore know if they are not ordering any books for a class. Yes, they do.

1. Senator Magdalena Gilewicz (English)

Announced that the writing center is hiring student tutors for the fall. They want to recruit more students from majors other than English so that there will be tutors with specialties in other fields. The students will be well trained and paid $12 an hour. Please recommend to exceptional students that they consider this opportunity.

1. Matt Schultz – Fresno State Career Connections

He discussed and demonstrated a new internet tool that Fresno State students can use to connect to alumni, who will give them advice on how to find jobs, how to interview, how to write a resume. The project is being funded by the Alumni Association and ASI, and can be seen at fresnostate.evisors.com.

1. Second Budget presentation by President Castro and Interim CFO Moffit on Salaries

The main point of the presentation was to show the breakout of salaries by position type from FY2013-14 through the predicted budget for FY2015-16, as well as show how the overall cost of salaries and benefits is increasing at Fresno State.

Senator Moreman (Communication) asked how coaches were classified. President Castro was not quite sure but felt that head coaches were MPPs while other coaches were classified as faculty.

Senator Slagter (Women’s Studies) asked why the student salaries for FY2015-16 appeared to have declined from previous years. CFO Moffit indicated that the student salary data was very rough, and had not been projected out for the rest of the fiscal year (they had projected it out for the remainder of FY2016 for other salary categories). Once the fiscal year was done, student salaries would probably also have increased from the prior fiscal year.

Senator Ram (University-wide) asked if the actual level of staff salaries had risen, or if we were just seeing the result of an increase in staff hiring. CFO Moffit thought both were probably true, but did not have actual headcounts of staff for comparison.

President Castro said that they were a little worried about the increase in salaries and benefits, especially with new raises being phased in. He expressed hope that the legislature would fully fund the budget request of the board of trustees, which was roughly $100 million higher than the governor’s proposed budget for the CSU for next year.

Senator Maldonado (Philosophy) asked if salaries and benefits as a percentage of the total state allocation is going to drastically increase next year under the CFA agreement with the CSU. It will.

1. New business

Senator Karr (Music) introduced a resolution calling on the Academic Senate to form an ad hoc task force to look into ways to solve the faculty workload issues, and report back to the senate and the Senate Personnel Committee.

MSC approving the addition of the resolution to the agenda as new item #9.

1. APM 321 Report on the Faculty Scholar Blue Ribbon Committee and APM 324 Policy on Probationary Plans and Faculty Mentoring. Second reading.

MSC calling the question and closing debate

MSC approving the elimination of APM 321 and approving the revised APM 324 and appending Chapter 2 of Boyer et al. (1990) to it.

1. Resolution on Final Grade Due Dates. Second reading.

Senator Kensinger (Statewide Senate) explained that the resolution primarily calls for greater consultation between administration and faculty to find a final grade due date that fits everyone’s needs, though at the end of the fall semester it cannot be earlier than January 2.

Responding to clarifying questions from Senator Moreman (Communication), Senator Kensinger explained that faculty can certainly turn in their grades earlier if they wish. She also noted that “working days” was defined to exclude weekends and holidays.

Senator Wakabayashi (Earth and Environmental Science) pointed out that regardless of when the due date is, the fall semester actually ends the day after final exams, so any due date is going to be after the end of the semester.

Senator Sanmartin (Modern and Classical Languages) noted that last semester she gave an essay final exam, which meant she had over 100 essays to grade. It was very difficult for her to complete them by the due date. Even the end of the spring semester, she felt, was problematic because commencement took up so much time.

Senator Lewis (Kinesiology) felt that she was not ready to vote on this because she did not have enough information, such as how the final due date was being set in the first place. Specifically, she did not want to vote until Tina Beddall (Registrar) could be present to explain how the date was set and who might be hurt if it was pushed back.

Senator Sanmartin noted that the tight deadline was pushing many professors away from giving essay final exams.

Senator Maldonado (Philosophy) asked if anyone knew why we now have this problem, since he did not believe it existed four years ago.

Senator Lewis moved to table the motion to approve the resolution until the next senate meeting which Registrar Beddall could attend. Her motion was seconded.

Senator Kensinger asked if any administrator attending this senate meeting could explain how the date was set. Dr. Fu (Dean of Undergraduate Studies) explained that the Chancellor’s Office requires grades to be due on the last day of the semester, which is the day after finals are given and is, of course, not actually possible. He has not personally worked on this issue, but believes that the Office of Financial Aid must make decisions regarding aid for students ten days before classes start in the spring semester, and they need seven days before that point to prepare and process all of the information, including student grades from the fall semester. So he believes the grade due date is set to balance faculty needs with those of students and the Office of Financial Aid, but feels that only Registrar Beddall can explain it all properly.

Senator Moreman noted that the resolution intends that the final date be worked out with students and the registrar, so he felt these concerns were already being taken into account.

Senator Williams (Agricultural Business) asked if we were still debating the motion to lay the motion to adopt on the table.

Senator Ram (University-wide) argued in favor of the motion to lay on the table, arguing that it would be best to wait until the registrar could come to the meeting and hear our concerns.

The motion to lay the motion to approve the resolution on the table was approved (2 abstentions).

1. APM 231 – Adding and Dropping Classes. Second reading.

AP&P Chair Mullooly provided some background on the long process of getting this policy to the Academic Senate. He noted that for a long time the final class drop day for students has been exactly the same day as the last day to add classes, at the end of the fourth week of the semester. We cannot change the add deadline, but to handle a bottleneck problem we can consider changing the drop deadline. The current recommendation is that the drop deadline be moved to the third week of the semester. He criticized ASI a little because they did not express any concern about the proposed change until about a month ago. He and Dr. Fu (Undergraduate Studies) have both been working with ASI on this, but they do not yet have an agreement and he believes this policy needs to be passed now so the change can be implemented in the fall semester of this year. He hopes that the Academic Senate will vote one way or the other on the policy proposal this semester.

President Hudson (ASI) and Vice President for Finance Farnesi (ASI) presented an alternative that they developed based on the process at CSU Northridge. They do not want anything changed in the first two weeks of the semester, but they proposed that in the third and fourth weeks students could only drop a class if they got their professor to sign a drop form (which would have to be created). President Hudson felt that the very fact that students would have to approach the professor for a signature would significantly reduce the number of students dropping in the third and fourth weeks and prevent the bottleneck. She presented data from Northridge showing that the change had drastically reduced the number of dropped classes there down to 1%.

Senator Maldonado (Philosophy) asked if the hundreds of students dropping on the last day are the same hundreds that appear to be adding classes on that same day. AP&P Chair Mullooly was not sure, but did note that there tends to be a huge rush to add classes on the last day, and this disrupts the semester for faculty.

Dr. Fu noted that the proposal that came out of AP&P is modeled after San Jose State University’s policy. ASI’s is from Northridge, and he also noted that at CSU San Marcos students can drop through the end of the third week without their professor’s signature, but cannot do so after that deadline. Whatever plan is approved, he feels that we need to do something because students are not able to get the classes they need because other students are not dropping classes, and so not opening up seats in needed classes, until the last day to add classes. They had thought about creating a “drop number” similar to the add permission number but felt that doing this, or creating a drop form as ASI proposes, would just add to the faculty workload.

Senator Henson (English) moved to accept the ASI proposal as a substitute for the proposal from AP&P, which was seconded.

ASI VP for Finance Farnesi said that ASI discussed the issue of faculty workload, and considered having department administrative coordinators sign it instead. Since they felt that very few students would actually approach faculty members for a signature, it would not be much of a burden on faculty and so it should be the professor’s job to sign the form. Senator Kensinger (Statewide Senate) agreed, saying this was a faculty responsibility.

Dean Moore (Continuing and Global Education) asked if this would apply to online classes. Presumably, though it was not clear how faculty signatures would be obtained for online classes.

Chair Ayotte announced that there would be an additional Academic Senate meeting this year on May 2, though we could cancel it if we were getting most of the work done.

The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:30pm.

The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be on April 25, 2016, at 4:00pm in HML 2206.

Submitted by Approved by

Thomas Holyoke Kevin Ayotte

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate