THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE (AS-10)

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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Office of the Academic Senate

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March 8, 2021

Members excused: C. Herrera

Members absent: N. Brar, L. Herrera, B. Mason, S. Ogunjemiyo, B. Taylor,

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

1. Approval of the Agenda.

Senator Mullooly (Chair of AP&P) proposed to remove item 5 concerning APM 113 Policy on Academic Organization and Governance from the agenda, as requested by AP&P to enable further work on this policy.

Accepted by unanimous consent.

Approval of the agenda as amended: MSC

1. Approval of the Minutes of 2/22/2021 as amended: MSC
2. Communications and Announcements:

Interim President Jiménez-Sandoval addressed the Senate with news that we are scheduled to receive $54M from recent legislation for direct student assistance, and this will be distributed to 95% of our students, and that he will insure the remaining 5% (international and undocumented) will be helped with other funds. In addition, the Repopulation Task Force will make recommendations this week and he will report their recommendations soon. He noted that vaccines are currently available to faculty now, and available to students in late May or early June. He mentioned some controversy that occurred after an announcement last week about a planned virtual mode commencement, and stated that we now realize we need more feedback from students on this, and that we are looking into how to accommodate their desires for a ceremony. With this goal in mind, a survey is going out to all graduating students to seek feedback that will be used (along with guidance from state government) to determine how we can respond. Finally he mentioned that the grade reports for Fall 2020 showed that freshmen were hit the hardest by the transition to virtual instruction (the rest of the student body fared well) and that strategies to target freshman classes are being developed.

Senator Maldonado (Philosophy) inquired if there were any issues with retention. The President answered that we are doing well on retention, and the record seems to show that strong faculty/student interactions are responsible.

Senator Walter (Biology) followed up on what was asked of our Interim Provost at the last Senate meeting, if any determination had been made on why freshman success was negatively impacted. The President told the Senate that this remains under analysis, but working hypothesis is that without ever visiting our campus freshmen lacked a sense of belonging and community.

Senator Ram (University-wide) asked if courses will be allowed to be taught in the virtual synchronous mode option for the Fall, and if so, will they require online certification. Moreover what course modality options that exist now will be allowed in the Fall? Provost Fu said that we have not made a decision but that his strong sense is that virtual synchronous offerings will stay for Fall 2021. Senator Ram asked for clarification, that even if all are vaccinated, will a chair be allowed to let instructors choose a virtual teaching mode? The Provost indicated that would be allowed.

ASI President Zuñiga asked when the student survey will go out. Interim Provost Fu said it will go out very soon.

Chair Holyoke reminded the Senate that vaccines are available to all faculty, and encouraged all to get vaccinated.

ASI President Zuñiga spoke to inform the Senate about a student petition concerning 2021 commencement, which has more than 2000 signatures so far, and that these concerns will be discussed at an ASI forum on the topic this week.

Senator Raya-Fernandez (Student Services) announced that health services will hold a virtual event tomorrow to showcase the mental health services available to all on campus. Chair Holyoke will send an email to all senators with links and details about this event.

1. New Business.

None

1. APM 203 Special Majors for a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science Degree. First reading.

Senator Mullooly (Anthropology, in role as AP&P Committee Chair) described the changes in the amended document.

Senator Ram (University-wide) asked for clarification if it is still the case that a student must request the change of major at least one semester prior to graduation. Senator Mullooly answered that yes this is the case, and that the intent of the change is to remove the 30 unit requirement, but not the time requirement.

Senator DeJordy (Management) asked for further clarification, that this change would allow a student that may just need one course in their final semester to request a change to a Special Major, and that the unit restriction has changed to a time restriction. Senator Mullooly confirmed that this is the case, with the main goal to allow the registrar more flexibility in allowing students to graduate with these special majors.

Senator Cronin (Social Work) expressed support for this change as it may offer some advantage to students with an acquired disability.

1. Proposed Amendments to APM 127 (University Constitution). Second Reading.

Vice Chair Hall presiding over the meeting.

Senator Holyoke (Political Science) provided a summary of the proposed changes.

Senator Botwin (Psychology) proposed an amendment to Section E regarding the proposed language on granting exemptions to the APM and how to suspend policies during an emergency. He explained the amendment to the body.

Senator Ram (University-wide) expressed her approval of the amendment, but asked if some of the language was repetitive. Senator Holyoke explained that the repeated language applied to a different circumstance.

Senator Miele (Finance and Business Law) asked for clarification on the procedure the senate would use to approve exemptions to the APM, which were provided by Senator Botwin. The Senate gets the final word.

Senator DeJordy (Management) asked why the Executive Committee should get to declare an emergency, which was not the case in Senator Holyoke’s version. Senator Botwin said he added it because it should not be just the administration who can call an emergency since we are in a shared governance system.

Senator Cronin (Social Work) made a friendly amendment to start item number three with the word “Exemption,” which was accepted.

Mr. Qutob (ASI) asked for clarification as to why the consent calendar is used to let the Senate approve exemptions. Senator Botwin explained that, since emergencies were difficult times, this would make it easier for the Senate to express its opinion without using too much time.

Senator DeJordy (Management) offered a friendly amendment noting that Executive Committee declaration of an emergency should be subject to approval by the Senate, which was accepted.

MSC approving the amendment.

Senator Ram (University-wide) asked about adding a staff member as an ex-officio voting member, wondering if it should be non-voting since most items we vote on are outside of the expertise of staff. Senator Holyoke noted that most CSU senates have staff as voting ex-officio members so they could be stakeholders.

Senator Botwin (Psychology) felt that staff could bring a lot of wisdom to Senate deliberations.

Senator Maldonado (Philosophy) wondered if it might make more sense to have staff representation on the standing committees rather than the Senate.

Senator Bryant (University-wide) felt that most of us vote on policies that do not directly concern us, and many policies could easily affect staff. Having a staff member with a vote is a good example of shared governance.

Senator Ram again asked if the APM had many policies affecting staff. Most regard faculty and students. Senator Holyoke noted that the next policy on the agenda, APM 320, very specifically regards staff membership on search committees, so they should have a vote.

Senator Mullooly (Chair of AP&P) noted other policies that have recently come through that benefitted from staff input.

Senator DeJordy supported this point, also noting that policies regarding advising directly concern staff.

Senator Maldonado noted that he still felt that staff should be on the standing committees because it might better connect staff to areas in which they have a specialty.

Senator Crowell (Sociology) noted that the APM had an entire policy on the Division of Sponsored Research that concerned staff.

Senator Wilson (Computer Science) noted that we could just invite staff when we took up issues of concern to them.

Senator Janetvilay (Library) noted that the COVID pandemic hit staff really hard, so they should be included in our decision-making as well.

MSC approving amendments to APM 127

Vice Chair Hall notes that this will have to be approved by the Academic Assembly.

Chair Holyoke again presiding over the meeting.

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The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be March 15, 2021.

Submitted by Approved by

Raymond Hall Thomas Holyoke

Vice Chair Chair

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