THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

Fresno, California 93740-8014 Fax: 278-5745

Telephone: 278-2743 (EC-03)

October 4, 2021

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

Members excused: Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval (President), Thomas Holyoke (former Chair of the Academic Senate)

Guests: Venita Baker (Academic Senate), Marsha Baum (former AVP Academic Affairs), Bernadette Muscat (Interim Dean of Undergraduate Studies), Jim Schmidtke (Interim AVP Academic Affairs)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hall at 3:17 pm on Zoom.

1. Approval of the Agenda.

MSC

1. Approval of the Minutes 9.20.21.

MSC

1. Communications and Announcements.

Communications from the Provost:

The administration has continued to update the PowerPoint presentation of COVID-19 data presented at, for instance, the last Senate meeting, while the dashboards on the data are being finalized.

On vaccination and self-certification rates:

There is an increase in vaccination numbers among students and employees. Faculty have until Oct 27 to complete self-certification and so far, 75 per cent of all faculty who claim to be on campus have self-certified as vaccinated. Furthermore, 794 (3 per cent) of students have not completed their self-certification form yet, of whom 269 have in-person courses.

On testing:

The total number of campus community members who need to be tested is close to 4,000 individuals, and about one third of them is complying with weekly testing. Work is being done to increase testing compliance through positive reinforcement and emphasizing that testing is not a punishment or an inconvenience and that it serves campus safety. Testing on campus is free for campus members, while it comes at a cost if done off-campus, there is no need for an appointment etc.

On confirmed COVID cases:

Since the start of the semester, there have been 174 confirmed COVID cases on campus. This is lower than the number of reports done to EHS, because not all these reports end up being confirmed COVID-19 cases. In addition, 36 cases are under investigation. There are more students on campus this semester, so it is not unexpected that the number of confirmed cases is higher than before, but positive cases are caught and quarantined – no outbreak has ensued on campus.

Questions for the Provost:

**Senator Dyer** referred to EHS at the start of the semester being overwhelmed with calls about COVID guidelines, which lead to getting a call center involved, and wanted to know whether the volume of calls is still very high.

**Provost Fu** answered that the volume of calls per day to the call center has decreased from about 100 per day to a few dozen per day.

**Provost Fu** added that he will send a message to faculty about EHS response time to reports of suspected cases, following a question about this at last week’s Provost forum. This message will also include information to clarify that when a reported case is not confirmed as COVID, faculty will not be informed. EHS has prepared a flow chart, including their risk assessment process. This flow chart will be shared with faculty.

**Senator Raya-Fernandez** inquired about the nature of contact to students and whether it is secure.

**Provost Fu** explained that students are contacted by email, not by phone, and that no sensitive or private information is shared in that message.

**Chair Hall** expressed concern about low testing compliance, which could jeopardize our campus. We want to move towards unmasking in classrooms, for instance, but with low levels of testing compliance we cannot get there yet.

**Provost Fu** explained that the discussion about a response to non-compliance, including on consequences for non-complying employees and students, is ongoing. The discussion about consequences for non-complying employees involves the Chancellor’s office, legal counsel, and labor unions. There is a draft (not finalized) plan for disciplinary actions for non-complying students, which will be implemented by next week. It involves registration holds for students who have not self-certified and student card deactivation for students who do not comply with the testing requirement, which will inhibit them from accessing the library and some other buildings where card access is needed (cards will be reactivated once complying with requirement to get tested). Other consequences include suspension, which will involve due process, as required by EO1098. Provost Fu repeats that this plan is not final and that some details still need to be ironed out, *e.g.*, the impact on SSD services and access to food cupboard. Operational steps need to be developed as well (*e.g.*, need to find alternative means to communicate with students - they may not be responding to email or text due to technical issues students are experiencing, for instance).

**AVP Schmidtke** explained that he had been waiting for system guidance on consequences for non-compliance among employees and will be meeting with HR to discuss a preliminary systemwide policy. This will be communicated to the Academic Senate. He added that it seems that many emails to remind people about the testing requirement have not been read.

**ASI President Jackson** mentioned that during a forum for students it was highlighted that a lot of first year students do not have their key cards yet.

**Provost Fu** mentioned that this should be signaled to Student Affairs, and he will reach out to them. Deactivating key cards is meant to be a reminder for students that they have to follow the guidelines, but they will still have access to Canvas and the class room (since many buildings do not have key card access). Their right to education is maintained.

**ASI President Jackson** expressed concern about the possibility of suspension for non-complying students.

**Provost Fu** explained that students are given due process, and suspension would only be used in extreme cases (*e.g.*, when documentation was falsified) and as a last resort. This is in line with the Chancellor’s office guidance and respecting EO1098.

**Chair Hall** agrees with the need for due process, and that we also need to pay attention to risk of infections when a student who is not in compliance but coming to class.

**Provost Fu** responded that there is a lack of knowledge about risk level. The administration hopes that deactivating student cards for non-compliers will be a clear message and will encourage compliance.

**Chair Hall** added that there are about 2,000 students and employees who are not complying with weekly testing requirements. We may not know what the infection risk is, but there are faculty who are staying away from campus due to medical and other concerns, and they want to come back. We also want to move to removing the mask mandate, and compliance with vaccine and testing mandates are essential if we are to accomplish this.

**Senator Raya-Fernandez** referred to the issue of many reminder emails not being read. How many faculty and how many students does this concern? Are emails sent by a third party, which may end up in junk mail folders?

**AVP Schmidtke** responded that he does not know how many faculty and how many students it concerns.

**Senator DeJordy** asked whether we would make a distinction between students falsifying documentation, and students making mistakes in providing evidence, and whether documentation is being actively verified.

**Provost Fu** explained that mistakes would not be considered to be falsification. Knowingly uploading false information would be falsification. A student certifying that they will not access campus, but coming to campus nonetheless is also problematic. It is not clear how this will be operationalized and checked, however. Still working on the implementation.

**Provost Fu** then shared more data. For instance, 372 faculty should be getting tested, but not all of them are getting tested. We don’t know how many exactly are not complying, because the data still needs to be cleaned (*e.g.*, some faculty are not coming to campus). For faculty who are not complying, the focus is still on communication, but the tone of the communication is shifting from ‘this is a reminder’ to ‘you should be getting tested’.

**Senator Dyer** understands that it is too soon to tell whether we will be masking in spring, but we should look to the CDC for mask requirements in line with the transmission factor.

**Provost Fu** explained that there are regular meetings with the county health department, and that we need to look at the local risk level, not only the state risk level.

**ASI President Jackson** suggested to organize testing by last name to improve testing compliance.

**Provost Fu** responded that this is challenging. We now have walk-ins, which allows for flexibility. By requiring students and employees to come on a certain day based on their last name, we make the process less convenient. But it would make the process more structured and predictable, so this suggestion will be taken into consideration.

**AVP Schmidtke** added that assigned testing days is difficult for people who are not regularly on campus. It might also, for instance, require faculty to come to campus on a day that they do not have class.

**ASI President Jackson** suggested that if student disenrollment is on the table, this body should help the administration to find a way to increase testing compliance.

**Chair Hall** welcomes any proposals in this regard, in addition to the educational efforts that have already been made.

**AVP Schmidtke** added that phone calls are being made to people who are not complying with testing requirements and repeated that the issue is not the lack of testing opportunities. The focus is now on finding out why people are not getting tested.

**ASI President Jackson** emphasized the need to continue to think of positive reinforcement rather than negative consequences to protect students’ right to education.

**Senator Raya-Fernandez** added that it could be helpful if President Jiménez-Sandoval sends out another message with information to the campus community, including a statement that people who are not complying with campus requirements will be receiving phone calls. This could encourage compliance. This notification could also be included on the Fall 2021 Repopulation and COVID-19 webpage.

**Action Items**

1. Email dated September 22, 2021, from Emily Marshall, Executive Assistant to the Vice President for University Advancement, to Raymond Hall, Chair Academic Senate re: Honorary Doctorate nominations 2021-2022. Email has been received.

Suggestion: on agenda for this meeting

1. Email dated September 22, 2021, from Svetlana Bagdasarov, Research Compliance Officer, to Raymond Hall, Chair Academic Senate re: Revised Conflict of Interest Policy (APM 505). Email has been received.

Suggestion: on agenda for this meeting

1. Email dated September 23, 2021, from Dr. Xuanning Fu, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to Raymond Hall, Chair Academic Senate re: Dean of Research and Graduate Studies Search Committee. Email has been received.

Suggestion: call for service will be sent out

1. Nominees (Executive Session today)
   1. University Student Union Board
   2. AVP for Faculty Affairs Search
   3. Technology Steering Committee
   4. Ad hoc member on the APM 206 Online/Blended Education Subcommittee
   5. Chief Diversity Officer Search
2. Proposal: Syllabus template as part of APM.

**Chair Hall** explains that this item concerns the idea of incorporating the course syllabus template into APM 241 [Policy on Course Syllabi and Grading]. It is not entirely clear who has authority to edit it before it gets posted. One solution could be to make the course syllabus template part of an addendum to APM 241 – this would then have to be ratified by the Senate.

**Senator Dyer** wanted to know which Senate committee is responsible for APM 241? Would that put it in the domain of AP&P or of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee?

**Chair Hall** explained that the chair of AP&P said the template has historically resided at the editorial beckoning of AP&P.

**Senator Dyer** explained that it would indeed seem that the template would be under Standards and Grading, a subcommittee of AP&P, because APM 241 concerns course syllabi and grading. If the template is attached to APM 241, that automatically attaches it to that particular committee and she suggests that the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee would seem to be a better place for it.

**Senator DeJordy** asked whether it has to be one committee or can it be multiple committees?

**Chair Hall** highlights that giving it to multiple committees, who can then make changes, will cause confusion. He added that the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee has been asking to have the syllabus template line up with the APM, which they use to approve curriculum proposals. It is also important that Senate sees the revisions in the template to encourage best practice of using the template.

He asked whether we should send it to AP&P and ask them to consult with both the Standards and Grading committee and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

**Senator Miele** wanted to know whether changes to the syllabus template have to be approved by the Academic Senate.

**Chair Hall** will look into this.

**Dean Muscat** added that AP&P is working to have syllabus changes initially come through the Undergraduate Office and then before Executive Committee of the Senate and the Senate, because it is unclear which committee has jurisdiction over the template. The template is the purview of the faculty, and no changes will be made without a faculty committee approving them. The Undergraduate Office has seen requests to make changes regarding COVID, HyFlex, information for additional resources for grievance with an instructor, which have then been communicated to AP&P.

**Senator Dyer** suggested that if we are going to designate a committee and if we put effort into revising the template, it should also be cleaned up - it is unclear and could be in a better format.

**Chair Hall** referred to the need to safeguard SSD requirements.

**Senator Dyer** added that a committee should be designated to decide on the content, but that we should then allow the Undergraduate office to structure it better.

**Chair Hall** will take this discussion back to the chair of AP&P.

1. Honorary doctorate committee nominations 2021-2022

Volunteers: Senators Schlievert, Miele, Hall, Raya-Fernandez, Van Camp

1. Revised APM 505 (Conflict of Interest Policy)

**Chair Hall** explained that we do not have a redlined copy and explanatory memo and decided to postpone this item to the next Executive Committee meeting. Meanwhile, he will request a redlined version.

1. New business

**Senator DeJordy** was seeking clarification on the HyFlex course modality: can HyFlex modality be designated to a faculty member teaching from home, with students partly in class on campus and partly at home?

**Provost Fu** responded that that cannot be the case and that a HyFlex course is considered to be an in-person class.

Executive session called at 4:40pm.

1. Executive Session.

Currently no COSS representation on Task Force Exploring Fresno State Operations in a Post COVID World. A call for service for a COSS faculty member will be sent to COSS.

University Student Union Board:

Sharon Freeman (JCAST)

Ad hoc membership on the Online/Blended Education Subcommittee:

Falon Kartch (Arts and Humanities)

Katy Tarrant (JCAST)

Michael Shepherd (Arts and Humanities)

Harry Xia (Craig School of Business)

Talar Terzian (Health and Human Services)

Technology Steering Committee:

Eran Rubin (Craig School of Business)

Search committee for a permanent AVP for Faculty Affairs:

Cory Brooks (Science and Math)

Melissa Gibson (Arts and Humanities)

Search committee for a Chief Diversity Officer:

Zoulikha Mouffak (Lyles College of Engineering)

MSC

-------------------------

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on Oct 18 via Zoom.

Submitted by: Approved by:

Tinneke Van Camp Raymond Hall

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate