THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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November 28, 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), Jim Schmidtke (interim AVP Academic Affairs), David Low (Chair Personnel Committee), Aaron Stillmaker (AP&P), Dean Muscat (Dean Undergraduate Studies)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hall at 3:02 pm.

1. Approval of the Agenda.

*MSC*

1. Approval of the Minutes 11.14.22.

*MSC*

1. Communications and Announcements.

Communications from the Provost:

**Provost Fu** explained that our enrollment numbers have been improving since last week. It is anticipated that 700 transfer students will be accepting to enroll. Further information will be shared with the Executive Committee of the Senate as it comes in. Various initiatives are being planned to encourage high school students to attend Fresno State.

**Provost Fu** informed the committee that the search for the AVP for Faculty Affairs will be launched. Once this permanent leadership is in place other positions can be made permanent as well. There will have to be a call for faculty service to serve on the search committee before the end of the year or in the spring.

**Chair Hall** mentioned that various searches are currently ongoing (for AVP Institutional Effectiveness, Vice Provost, Deputy Director of Athletics and AVP Enrollment Management) and there is fatigue to serve on these committees. We also have to allow ten days to respond. Hence, it is preferable to do the call for service in spring.

*Questions for the Provost:*

**Senator Dyer** asked for clarification regarding the really big enrollment drop in Arts & Humanities.

**Provost Fu** explained that the number of students taking area C courses significantly dropped because, for instance, Business and Engineering double count these courses. He added that the enrollment target was set artificially high by the Chancellor’s Office and we are not looking to meet it; the CO is looking to lower it. Every College’s target is high and higher than last year’s. None of the Colleges are close to their target, which is why we are focusing on returning students rather than meeting the target.

**Chair Hall** wanted to know whether the budget is related to target.

**Provost Fu** responded that that is indeed the case.

**Chair Hall** asked whether the Provost will provide the guidelines for fall 2023 based on the recommendations made by the Post-COVID task force.

**Provost Fu** will share these with Chair Hall today. They are based on the task force recommendations, with two exceptions, for which justification will be provided.

**Chair Hall** will share the Provost’s guidelines with this committee and mentioned that changes to the policy will be discussed next semester.

**Provost Fu** added that the guidelines will also be shared with the Chair of the Post-COVID task force and have been shared with the Chair of Chairs.

Communication from Chair Hall:

The election for Senate Vice Chair will take place in the next Senate meeting. Voting options will have to be in place for in-person and online attendance.

**Action Items**

1. Memo from Nicole Walsh, Vice Chair of the Academic Policy and Planning Committee, to Raymond Hall, Chair of the Academic Senate re: APM 220 – Program Review (Revisions). Memo has been received.

Suggestion: on agenda

1. New Business.

**Senator Schlievert** commended outgoing Senator DeJordy for his service on the Senate.

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

1. New Policy on Credit for Prior Learning Assessment.

**Stillmaker (AP&P)** explained that changes were made to comply with an EO. It follows the language in the EO and mirrors language from existing policies in three schools.

**Interim AVP Schmidtke** will check with Diane Volpp for a policy number.

*Motion to send to senate.*

*Seconded and carried.*

1. APM 327 Policy on Promotion.

**Low (Chair Personnel Committee)** explained that APM 327 has been useful for tenure track faculty, but not for tenured faculty moving to full professor. Provost Fu and Dr. Mercado-Lopez initiated a new group for associate professors. The common narrative in this group is the lack of clarity about promotion from associate to full professor. The Personnel Committee looked at policies to this effect in other CSUs. It was also noted that associate professors take on a lot of service, which takes away time for research. There are also concerns about burn-out. Promotion can be done using self-based (compared to previous self), norm-based (compared to other faculty) and criterion-based assessment (compared to standards). In the proposed policy changes, assessment for promotion to full professor is criterion-based, while assessment for early promotion to full professor is both norm-based and criterion-based. Standards can be designed by departments, because they will likely not be the same across departments. Criteria for promotion to full professor cannot be lower than those for promotion to associate professor.

**Chair Hall** noted that the use of departmental standards is similar to how probationary plans are made.

**Low** confirmed this, but that there would be fewer sections than in the probationary plan; there are only three areas to be assessed.

**Interim AVP Schmidtke** commended the Personnel Committee for the proposed changes. He suggested to include a process that mandates revision of the departmental standards.

**Senator DeJordy** referred to section III.B.b. and wanted to know whether the intention is to allow for more weight to one area over another.

**Low** explained that teaching, RSCA and service will be rated, and that each rating should be equal.

**Chair Hall** wanted to know why there would not be a review by the College, in addition to a review by the Provost.

**Low** responded that this was discussed and that the committee wanted parity. He is not opposed to including a College review.

**Senator Miele** suggested that each department has a particular expertise and that a College-level approval could muddle this. Some colleges are very diverse.

**Chair Hall** responded that a College-level review could, however, diffuse tensions at a department level.

**Senator DeJordy** was concerned about forced parity given that some Colleges have very diverse departments.

**Interim AVP Schmidtke** suggested that each department could meet with the College Personnel Committee and Colleges could consider having different departmental standards, and they could speak to what is equitable across departments.

**Chair Hall** added that each College Personnel Committee has representatives from each department who can explain the diversity in standards.

[*Interim AVP Schmidtke had to leave the meeting.*]

**Low** suggested to change ‘parity’ to ‘equity’.

*Edit made on the floor by Low.*

**Senator Miele** suggested to have reviews done by the College Personnel Committee, instead of by the Dean.

**Chair Hall** asked about the role of the Department Chair.

**Low** responded that they have no role other than as member of the department.

***Low*** *added review by College Personnel Committee in the document.*

**Senator Miele** expressed concern about the use of norm-based criteria for assessment for early promotion. Is it necessary for someone who demonstrates being exceptional in all three areas to also be compared to other faculty? Who would they be compared to?

**Low** responded that our current and previous Provost have compared candidates for early promotion to others going up for promotion.

**Senator Miele** wondered whether this should be done and suggested to strike this requirement.

**Low** responded that this is similar to the footnote about early tenure in the same policy.

**Vice Chair Van Camp** indicated that that footnote has been found to be ambiguous.

**Senator DeJordy** wanted to know whether reference to other colleagues helps early promotion or inhibits it. He agreed to strike it if the motivation was the latter.

**Low** suggested that it neither inhibits nor facilitates, but clarifies the assessment.

**Chair Hall** suggested that we should consider why we allow early promotion. It sets an expectation that faculty can get an early promotion as well as add pressure.

**Senator Miele** responded that it helps with motivation and retention and allows acknowledging stellar faculty who are exceptional in all areas.

**Low** added that being promoted to full professor is not an expectation and that the bar for early promotion should be high. Yet, it is doable to go up early the way the suggested policy is written now. He was sympathetic to remove the norm-based assessment. He added that it is difficult to compare across departments.

**Senator Dyer** wondered what the reason is Provosts have been comparing, when this is not in the policy. If we don’t want them to, this needs to be enshrined in the policy. She added that there could be social pressure in a department to support an application for early promotion and the Provost might find comparison useful in that respect.

**Senator DeJordy** mentioned that departmental standards should be clear and communicate what is exceptional, with the use of clear rubrics. Evidence presented in the three areas of assessment can be assessed as good, very good or exceptional [*see III.E. and III.F.*]. When performance in all three is exceptional, that should be OK to approve early promotion. These various options are useful to protect the integrity of the department.

**Low** added that candidates can also write a rebuttal.

**Chair Hall** mentioned that the Provost has to approve departmental standards, so they can make sure they are high enough.

**Senator Raya-Fernandez** returned to the issue of having a process to revise the departmental standards.

**Low** referred to III.B.d. which states that a department may revise their standards every so many years.

**Chair Hall** suggested that Faculty Affairs could keep track of changes made to departmental standards.

**Senator Miele** referred to footnote 18, which states that there will be no grandfathering into previous standards, but what if an associate professor is on track to go for promotion in year 4 and then the standards are revised significantly?

**Chair Hall** wondered whether they would not inherit the standards at the moment they got promoted to associate professor?

**Senator Miele** responded that thisis excluded by footnote 18.

**Low** responded that this was discussed in the Personnel Committee and the footnote was suggested by Interim AVP Schmidtke, due to a concern about faculty who are associate for, for instance, 15 years.

**Chair Hall** suggested that standards are applicable to all when this policy goes into effect, but when standards change, the ones that applied when a faculty became associate should apply. We cannot move the goal post on faculty.

**Low** will take this back to the Personnel Committee.

**Senator Raya-Fernandez** suggested that if a person has a certain time frame in mind and they exceed that time, maybe new standards could apply.

**Chair Hall** suggested that they could also be allowed to choose standards that they entered into or the new standards.

1. Federal Compliance Issue Commencement Attendance.

**Dean Muscat** explained that for financial aid there is a federal requirement to document a student’s last attendance.

**Senator Dyer** agreed with the request to create a committee to address this. Faculty have the academic freedom not to take roll in class. Requiring faculty to take attendance can be problematic.

**Dean Muscat** responded that UC Davies uses self-attestation. Students self-attest to the last date they attended their classes.

**Chair Hall** wanted to know whether this requirement only applies to students with financial aid.

**Dean Muscat** responded that this is a question for the Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships, Kelly Russell.

**Senator Miele** referred to the requirement for faculty to include the last date of attendance when submitting a WU grade.

**Senator DeJordy** mentioned that we canlook up the last student activity on Canvas as an indication.

**Chair Hall** will invite Kelly Russell and Dr. Nisbett to get more information before creating a new committee.

**Dean Muscat** mentioned that work is in progress on a mechanism to be able to do this.

**Senator Dyer** suggested that Canvas activity is helpful but that some faculty do not use Canvas. We could also invite CFE to ask whether they can do a report the day before census date and identify students who have not checked in.

**ASI President Alvarez** suggested that we could introduce a Canvas activity that students need to do before they can proceed to their next modules in a course on Canvas.

*Concluded first reading.*

**Low** mentioned that the Personnel Committee has approved amendments to APM 328 [on periodic evaluation of tenured faculty].

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The Senate Executive Committee adjourned at 4:55pm.

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

Submitted by: Approved by:

Tinneke Van Camp Raymond Hall

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate