

THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO
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(EC-14)

February 8, 2016

Members present: Kevin Ayotte (Chair), Thomas Holyoke (Vice Chair), Joseph I. Castro (Ex-officio), Abigail Hudson (ASI), Michael Jenkins (At-large), Madhu Katti (At-large), Loretta Kensinger (Statewide Senate), Melanie Ram (University-wide), Rebecca Raya-Fernandez (At-large), Lynnette Zelezny (Ex-officio)

Members excused: None

Guests: Venita Baker, Marianne Jackson (Student Affairs Committee), and James Mullooly (AP&P Committee)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ayotte at 3:04pm in HML 2108.

1.) Approval of the agenda

MSC approving the agenda

2.) Approval of the Minutes of January 25, 2016

Friendly amendments made by Senator Kensinger, President Castro, and Senator Ram

MSC approving the Minutes of January 25, 2016, as amended

3.) Communications and announcements

a. President Castro

Responded to Senator Kensinger's request from last week about the status of the search for a Title IX director. He noted that the search has been launched and is on schedule.

Interim CFO Clint Moffat announced his retirement, effective September 30, 2016. He is retiring for personal reasons. There will need to be a search in the near future, and it will most likely extend into the summer, meaning an arrangement will need to be made for faculty to serve on the committee in the summer. President Castro also wants to think more about having a clear succession for the CFO in the future. He also noted that this search will use a search firm.

b. Provost Zelezny

She and CIO Orlando Leon have been working together on a plan to re-organize CSALT and TILT so that a lot of their responsibilities, including DISCOVRe, leave Academic Affairs and are incorporated into Leon's new division. Academic Affairs will still contain technology staff that will help faculty redesign courses that will be overseen by a director in the Office of Faculty Affairs.

Senator Kensinger (Statewide Senate) asked where responsibility for Blackboard would be. It will be under CIO Leon. Vice Chair Holyoke expressed concern that greater responsibilities for the Office of Faculty Affairs, which is also going to operate faculty development programs (including a leadership training program), would mean the office, which is already operating slowly, would get even slower. The provost acknowledged that the office is overwhelmed and needs additional staff.

Senator Ram (University-wide) asked if the Provost had a chance to ask Vice President Lamas (Student Affairs) about "instructor operated scanners." The Provost admitted she had forgotten, and Senator Ram said it was not a problem and she would ask herself.

c. President Hudson (ASI)

Noted that ASI now realizes it has two ex-officio seats on the Academic Senate and she will fill one of them and come to meetings along with Vice President Farnesi.

She noted that students are asking her about how the just announced California Faculty Association strike will affect them.

She wants to prepare an information sheet for them. Senator Kensinger (Statewide Senate) noted that CFA and Students for Quality Education have a lot of information on their websites that ASI should look at to answer questions.

She noted that the CSU Board of Trustees has made important changes to their proposed sustainable financing model. They have dropped the deferred maintenance fee that would have been assessed on students. There will also not be an automatic tuition increase from year to year, and they have promised to have more student input on task forces and committees.

ASI is trying to figure out whether background checks are required for students who are running for ASI executive offices. The Chancellor's office told them it was not required, and then said it was. ASI is trying to find the answer before the next elections.

At 3:29pm Vice Chair Holyoke became presiding officer.

ASI is going to present to the Fresno City Council a plan to revitalize the Sierra Madre housing complex and the area around it, which is a source of blight and crime near the campus. They also want the city to help clarify jurisdictional responsibility for the area between the Fresno Police Department and the Fresno State Police Department.

d. Action items

- i. Memo dated December 8, 2015, from Marilyn Wilson, Chair University Graduate Committee to Executive Committee of the Academic Senate re: MFA Degree in Creative Writing – Option Proposal. Memo has been received.

This will be on the next agenda of the Senate Executive Committee.

- ii. Memo dated January 26, 2016, from Frank Lamas, Vice President for Student Affairs, to Kevin Ayotte, Chair Academic Senate re: Faculty Appointments to search committee for an AVP for Student Affairs Finance and Administration Search Committee. Memo has been received.

A call for service will be sent.

- iii. Memo dated January 29, 2016, from Christine Thibodeaux, Director for Advancement Operations, to Kevin Ayotte, Chair Academic Senate re: faculty appointments to a search committee for an Executive Director of Advancement Services Search Committee. Memo has been received.

A call for service will be sent.

- iv. Memo dated January 28, 2016, from James Mullooly, Chair Academic Policy and Planning Committee, to Kevin Ayotte, Chair Academic Senate re: B.S. in City and Regional Planning Major. Memo has been received.

This will appear on the next agenda

4.) APM 233 – Policy on Repeating Classes. Second reading.

Senator Ram (University-wide) asked if AP&P Chair Mullooly had a chance to speak to the chair of the graduate committee about changing “both” to “all” in the section under “Graduate Students”. He had not, but Senator Ram proposed to strike “both attempts” and replace it with “all attempts for graduate credit” as a friendly amendment.

She also expressed concern about the confusing use of “both” in other sections of the document. President Hudson (ASI) also expressed concern over the lack of clarity on sections regarding substituting classes taken at other institutions.

MSC re-referring APM 233 back to the Academic Policy and Planning Committee so Chair Mullooly can clarify the language and run it by Graduate Committee Chair Wilson.

5.) APM 231 – Policy on Adding and Dropping Classes. First reading.

This discussion was divided into two sections. The first is on the change in the class drop deadline from four weeks to three. The second change is the new language recommended by the Senate Student Affairs Committee.

Senator Kensinger (Statewide Senate) asked if it was possible to have the add class deadline be even earlier than three weeks because having a late deadline creates problems for faculty, especially because students adding a class late means they have missed a quarter of the semester and must make up a lot of material. They rarely pass. Also, some faculty organize their classes around the students they have on the first day and it can be very difficult to re-adjust when new students add after a few weeks. Senator Ram (University-wide) also said she would like to have the add deadline moved up.

President Hudson (ASI) argued that it often takes a few weeks for a student to figure out if they are going to be able to succeed in the class, and if they drop late they need to be able to add other courses as replacements. Senator Raya-Fernandez (At-large) said that she had heard the same thing in many of her counseling sessions with students.

The Provost explained that these changes were being proposed to deal with the severe bottleneck problem that has developed in many classes and is an impediment to the ability of many students to graduate on time. Senator Katti (At-large) agreed, noting that a late drop deadline interferes with a lot of other classes because students are then running around trying to add other classes well into the semester.

AP&P Chair Mullooly noted that another problem this might help solve is students coming to a class and doing the work without actually being enrolled in the class, hoping they can add it later as other students drop out. This would at least force students who are going to drop out to do so early, making new seats available.

President Hudson asked if it might be possible to create a new procedure for dropping classes with the instructor's signature, but not requiring severe extenuating circumstances, between the third and fourth weeks of the semester. Senator Kensinger expressed her support for this as an idea worth further exploration. Perhaps Dean Fu could discuss this idea with the committee.

The Provost said that Dean Fu (Undergraduate Studies) has a lot of data showing how the late drop deadline is causing problems. These changes to APM 231 are his idea. It was decided to invite Dean Fu to attend the next meeting of the executive committee to answer questions.

Senator Ram also expressed a technical concern. Does three weeks to the drop deadline mean three weeks from the first day of class, or is the first week the first week there are classes (meaning the clock begins ticking on the Monday of a week where classes actually begin on Wednesday or Thursday)? When the reference point in the calendar was the “Census Day” it could be figured it out, but by striking out references to this day it becomes ambiguous as to when the clock starts ticking. She hopes Dean Fu can answer this question as well.

Marianne Jackson, Chair of the Student Affairs Committee, discussed her amendment, which was originally passed by her committee in 2013 but had fallen through the cracks. The new language would give a student only six years to petition for an adjustment to their record, like substituting another course.

Senator Ram asked if it was possible now for a student to petition for an adjustment that was more than six years ago. President Hudson suggested it was and gave an example.

Senator Kensinger asked if such an absolute limit was a good idea given that some of our students have dramatic life events that often disrupt their education for many years, but they still want to return and finish their degrees. Chair Jackson said that an exception was discussed in the committee but rejected because other exceptions exist in the APM. It was recommended that these be noted as a footnote. Chair Jackson said she would find them and offer a footnote as an amendment at the next meeting of the executive committee.

Senator Ram and Vice Chair Holyoke expressed their dislike of the second sentence in the amendment which they felt was more opinion than policy.

MSC striking the second sentence in the amendment.

This item will return for a second reading at the next meeting of the Senate Executive Committee.

6.) APM 205 – Policy on Undergraduate Advising

Vice Chair Holyoke asked if a specific definition of “advisor” was needed. Student Affairs Committee Chair Jackson indicated that it had been

considered in the committee but felt the new language they put in was clear enough. Vice Chair Holyoke then expressed concern about the possible meanings of the words “meaningful” in terms of academic advising plans as well as “career advising” requirements.

Provost Zelezny asked if perhaps graduate school advising should also be included as something advisors should discuss with students in addition to academic roadmaps and career advising.

Senator Kensinger (Statewide Senate) expressed her concern that double majors are required to file separate academic roadmap plans for both majors, which was a large burden on them.

Senator Ram (University-wide) noted that the number of footnotes did not match the number of footnote indicators in the document. Chair Jackson promised to fix that error.

Senator Ram asked if the term “advising threshold” was too vague and should be replaced with “advising deadline.” However, there are many deadlines for advising. It was decided to include a footnote here in Part III, Section A, paragraph 4 that gave examples of advising deadlines.

This item will return for second reading.

The Senate Executive Committee adjourned at 4:42pm.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be at 3:00pm on Monday, February 29, 2016.

Submitted by:

Thomas Holyoke
Vice Chair
Academic Senate

Approved by:

Kevin Ayotte
Chair
Academic Senate