

THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO
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(AS-12)

April 3, 2017

Members excused: N. Akhavan, L. Bryant, N. Delich, S. Lankford, M. Schettler, B. Singh, A.M. Tawfik, E. Waldman, W. Wu

Members absent: A. Alexandrou, L. Davis, B. DerMugrdechian, J. Giglio, M. Golden, A. Hammons, J. Karr, H. Marshall, C. Perez, M. Raheem, S. Teyarachakul, J. Wenger

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Ayotte at 4:06pm in HML 2206.

1.) Approval of the agenda

MSC changing item #10 (approval of the proposed Liberal Studies Department) to be item #8 with the rest of the agenda re-ordered accordingly.

MSC approving the agenda as amended.

2.) Approval of the Minutes of March 20, 2017

MSC approving the Minutes of March 20, 2017

3.) Communications and announcements

a. Provost Zelezny

Thanked Chair Ayotte for providing a captioned version of the recorded keynote address from the Student Success Summit.

With the CSU having approved a tuition increase on students, the Provost wants all faculty to think hard about ways to decrease other student costs, especially when it comes to textbooks. She also noted that the textbook adoption deadline is coming soon, April 15, and it is important for faculty to get their orders submitted on time.

Senator Maldonado (Philosophy) noted that the tuition increase may be rolled back if the State Legislature sufficiently increases its funding for the CSU.

b. Chair Ayotte

Noted that Bryan Barrett and Eric West, both from the Center for Faculty Excellence, deserve the credit for producing the captioned keynote address.

He also urged all faculty to get their book orders in by the deadline.

Senator Forcags (Mathematics) said that he was not finding the Bookstore to be helpful with ordering older editions of his textbook. The Provost said that the Bookstore had promised her that it would do everything possible to obtain cheaper materials, so let her know if the problem does not get resolved. Senator Botwin (Psychology) said that a note can be placed in the electronic order form telling the Bookstore to use older editions.

4.) Installation of new senators

Judith Scott
Department of Communication (Ex-officio)

5.) New business

There was no new business for the Academic Senate.

6.) APM 215 – New language on ePortfolios for General Education assessment.
Second reading.

Senator Ram (University-wide) presented three additional amendments. The first requires students to submit the majority of their lower division

GE assignments prior to reaching 75-units or a hold will be placed on them that could only be removed by an advisor.

Senator Williams (Agricultural Business) argued that advisor holds were still really a barrier to graduation. Dr. Jordine (Director of Assessment) said that a 75-unit advising hold already exists, and also noted that this new language reduced the mandatory workload on students by about a third from what was originally proposed.

Senator McKeith (Animal Science) noted that many her majors have not been able to get into their lower GE courses prior to 75 units because not enough sections are offered. Would this requirement hurt them? Dr. Jordine said no because the hold would be waived if the student had not yet taken the relevant lower division course.

Senator Gilewicz (English) argued that the minimum number of items to be uploaded to clear the hold will end up being the actual number most students will upload.

MSC approving the lower division GE hold amendment (2-nays, 1-abs).

Senator Ram explained her next amendment putting a new 100-unit hold on students to make sure that had completed and uploaded the majority of their upper level GE assignments.

Senator Maldonado asked why 100 units was chosen. Dr. Jordine said it was a good point because most students should have completed their upper level GE by this point, but there was still enough time after 100 units for them to complete GE if they had not been able to get their classes.

Senator Durette (Art and Design) wondered if holds amounted to an unwritten graduation requirement, and would it lead to more student complaints and even possible legal action if these holds got in the way of their on-time graduation? Dr. Jordine said that the information would be provided in writing so students would know about the requirements and the holds.

Senator Ram asked if adding the new 100-unit hold, and increasing the responsibility associated with the 75-unit hold, was going to add a significant burden on advisors. Dr. Jordine did not think so. Students

have to see an advisor at 75-units now, and the GE requirements at 100-units were small and easily addressed.

Senator Maldonado noted that it might be possible for students to get away without uploading any upper level GE assignments at all because they can all be taken after the 100-unit hold.

Senator Williams noted that for departments where faculty still do much of the advising, this means more work. Senator Maldonado agreed that this is a workload issue, but Senator Müller (Biology) argued that it reduces the workload because departments no longer have to submit GE assessment reports.

Senator Fulop (Linguistics) noted that this is no longer a hard and fast requirement for graduation because the submission requirements can be waived. But who decides to grant a waiver? Dr. Jordine said waivers will only be granted by the GE sub-committee.

MSC approving the amendment (3-nays).

Senator Ram's final amendment regards an incentive to honor students completing all of the assessment requirements at graduation.

Senator Williams noted that this means recognizing students for doing something simple, and they do not even need to do it well.

Senator Maldonado said he liked this idea, but wondered whether it should actually be in policy. Senator Ram answered that inclusion would be useful. Senator Ram then asked what kind of recognition was possible. Dr. Jordine thought it might be an honor cord, though students would have to pay for those. Certificates might also be possible.

MSC approving secondary amendment to strike "at graduation" from the primary amendment (2-abs).

Senator Forcags asked if students will be told about this in writing. Dr. Jordine said they would.

Senator Jenkins (Mechanical Engineering) said that students who are not required to take all of the upper level GE courses might not be eligible for the recognition. Dr. Jordine said this would be taken care of.

MSC approving the amendment (3-nays, 3-abs).

Back on the main motion to approve the proposed new policy.

MSC approving an amendment specifying that the proposed GE Subcommittee would have exclusive authority to administer this policy (1-nay).

Senator Scott (Communication) noted that many of the GE courses are taught by lecturers, so will they also be informed about these changes? Dr. Jordine said that they would be informed. She also noted that faculty are not responsible for whether or not students upload their assignments and reflections.

Senator Botwin (Psychology) said that he thought ePortfolios were supposed to be long term records of student achievement that employers could access. Does that need to be include in this policy? He also felt this might raise issues of who has access to an ePortfolio and intellectual property protections.

Senator Scott asked what happens if the GE subcommittee finds evidence of plagiarism and cheating. What will they do? Dr. Jordine said that the subcommittee is not going to be looking for this.

Senator Williams asked about the “preference” emphasis in the selection of members for the GE subcommittee. Does it override the normal election process? Dr. Jordine says that, all things equal, it does not, but they need to bring on to the committee faculty who specialize in teaching the area of GE to be assessed.

MSC approving an amendment changing selection of members of the subcommittee from an election to appointment by the GE Committee (1-nay, 1-abs).

The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:20pm. The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be on Monday, April 24, 2017.

Submitted by
Thomas Holyoke
Vice Chair
Academic Senate

Approved by
Kevin Ayotte
Chair
Academic Senate