

THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO
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March 6, 2017

Members excused: N. Akhavan, M. Botwin, L. Bryant, B. Buckner, P. Durette, P. Garcia, L. Kensinger, J. Mullooly, R. Raya-Fernandez, M. Schettler, G. Thatcher, J. Wakabayashi

Members absent: L. Cornelio, J. Giglio, M. Golden, A. Hammons, M. Raheem, L. Toren-Immerman, E. Waldman

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

1.) Approval of the agenda

MSC approving the agenda

2.) Approval of the Minutes of February 13, 2017

MSC approving the Minutes of February 13, 2017

3.) Communications and announcements

a. Provost Zelezny

Thanked faculty who came to the recent Student Success Summit.

Announced that on March 15 we will host a second forum on free speech and the First Amendment with a guest speaker from the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund.

b. Chair Ayotte

Received a request from the Alumni Association for a senator to sit on the Top Dog Selection Committee.

Senator Müller (Biology) and Senator Jenkins (Mechanical Engineering) were nominated. Senator Müller won the election to the selection committee.

4.) Installation of new senators

Pei-Chun Ho
Department of Physics

Lizhu Davis
Department of Child, Family, Consumer Sciences

Jacob Wenger
Department of Plant Science

5.) New business

There was no new business for the Academic Senate.

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

Dr. Melissa Jordine (University Assessment Coordinator) presented the proposal again to remind senators as to the specifics of the proposal. She also demonstrated how this will be done by faculty members on Pathbrite using Blackboard.

Senator Ram (University-wide) asked how long the reflections are supposed to be. They are not to exceed one page each. Senator Ram suggested that fewer reflections be done in the first round as we are still learning how this might work, and also suggested that we do away with the cumulative reflection requirement.

Senator Wilson (Computer Science) asked if somebody was going to be looking at the content of these reflections to make sure students were not submitting junk. Yes, the proposed committee will be looking at them and will require students to do the assignment again if they do not take it seriously.

Senator Benavides (Statewide Senator) asked if the reflections could be recorded video rather than written. Yes, that would be possible.

Senator Marshall (Criminology) said her department is concerned about who might be policing students to make sure that they write and upload their reflections. Dr. Jordine said that faculty would not have to do that. Pathbrite will automatically send them reminders to comply.

Senator Fulop (Linguistics) asked who will be creating the rubrics to evaluate the material. Faculty on the assessment committee will do it.

Brandon Sepulveda (ASI Finance) expressed concern about making compliance a graduation requirement. Felt that this was an overreach of authority. Dr. Jordine said there was no clear alternative for getting students to comply. Reflections will not be hard to write and there is a process for petitioning for a waiver if necessary.

Senator Miele (Finance and Business Law) suggested we try this for one year without a hard requirement to see how well students voluntarily comply. Dr. Jordine doubted they would voluntarily comply.

Senator Müller (Biology) was not sure faculty could create meaningful rubrics to evaluate all of the reflections. Is there help? Yes, Dr. Jordine would provide help.

Senator Gilewicz (English) expressed concern about how well the reflections would show what students learned. Will we need to teach them how to write a reflection? Dr. Jordine said there would be plenty of information for students on how to write a reflection, and many faculty already have students write them.

Senator Maldonado (Philosophy) expressed concern about the graduation requirement, wondering if it was ethical. Asked if there were other requirements on students for graduation like this? Dr. Jordine suggested the writing requirement was similar.

Senator Marshall suggested that some students may not know how to upload their reflections. Dr. Jordine promised that there would be lots of help for them.

Chair Ayotte asked if a student who had already graduated could access Pathbrite to upload a reflection? Yes.

Senator Ram suggested that a registration hold might be a better way to compel students to comply. Dr. Jordine said it might be possible but a lot of work might be required to set up such a system.

Senator Sanmartin (Modern and Classical Languages) asked about the petition for a waiver. What kind of criteria would allow a student to be exempt from the requirement and graduate? Dr. Jordine explained that the faculty petitions committee would review them and those that are approved would be handled by herself.

Senator Maldonado asked if we use a registration hold system instead of a graduation requirement to get student to comply, would WASC be satisfied with this, knowing that some students might not have to file all of their reflections? Dr. Jordine thought it might be possible if we still had a representative sample.

Senator Ram asked if current students would have to comply. No, they are exempt.

MSC striking the sentence in the proposed language for APM 215 requiring a cumulative reflection.

Senator Henson argued that the reflections are not like the writing requirement. The latter tests a specific skill students need to learn while the former assesses the GE program. Dr. Jordin disagreed noting that the GE Program is to teach skills and knowledge to students that can be assessed.

Senator Ram spoke in favor of the idea of using a registration hold, perhaps at 60 credits when most students should have finished their lower level GE requirements.

President Ryan (ASI) spoke in opposition to the graduation requirement.

Senator Williams (Agricultural Business) argued that being required to upload reflections was no more a barrier to graduation than the writing requirement or just getting passing grades.

Senator Marshall argued that the writing requirement is not the same as writing reflections because taking a W course counts towards the 120 credits for graduation but filing the reflections does not.

The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:15pm. The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be on Monday, March 20, 2017.

Submitted by
Thomas Holyoke
Vice Chair
Academic Senate

Approved by
Kevin Ayotte
Chair
Academic Senate