

Executive Committee Minutes

August 20, 2020, via Zoom

Abstract

Welcome. Approval of Agenda – item added: Appointment of Carmen Works as Past Chair for AY 20-21. Approved. Approval of Minutes of 5/7 and 6/4 – Approved. Chair Report. President Report. Working group for online education policy/procedures discussion. Provost Report. Statewide Senator Report. Carmen Works appointment as Past Chair. Senate Agenda approved. Vice President of Administration and Finance Report. VP for Student Affairs report. Associated Students Report.

Present: Jeffrey Reeder, Laura Krier, Carmen Works, Bryan Burton, Wendy Ostroff, Elita Virmani, Emily Asencio, Paula Lane, Hilary Smith, Sam Brannen, Amal Munayer, Judy Sakaki, Karen Moranski, Wm. Gregory Sawyer, Erma Jean Sims

Absent: Joyce Lopes

Guests: Noelia Brambila-Perez, Justin Lipp

J. Reeder welcomed the members to the Fall 2020 semester and noted that we are facing a number of challenges and how those challenges are addressed will determine, in many ways, the future of the university. He was confident that these challenges can be met with dignity, intelligence, flexibility, and compassion.

He introduced the new members of the Ex Com: Bryan Burton, Elita Virmani, Emily Asencio, Sam Brannen and Noelia Brambila-Perez. He welcomed Karen Moranski in her new role as Interim Provost.

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Approval of Minutes of 5/7 and 6/4 – Approved.

Chair Report – J. Reeder

J. Reeder began by delineating the structure of this meeting going forward throughout the year. He wanted to set the tone for the Ex Com, noting that both the Ex Com and Senate will continue to use Robert's Rules when using Zoom. He noted at the Senate, people's titles are used in a more formal way, but in the Ex Com he hoped first names would be workable. He noted that how anyone chose to address colleagues, could be a matter of personal preference as long as it's within the bounds of decorum, decency, respect and dignity. If anyone feels more comfortable addressing somebody with the title, there will be no repercussions for doing so. He reviewed the charge of the Ex Com. He asked the members to consider brief reports to the Ex Com, particularly if the same report will be given at the Senate.

He noted that since everyone is not all in the same physical meeting space, some of us have virtual backgrounds or physical backgrounds and there might be distractions. There's no need to excuse yourself or feel like you need to excuse yourself if a cat runs across your screen or a child throws something at the back of your head in the background. This is all part of our lives and of our reality right now. If anyone needs to stop the video, that is perfectly understandable as there are many reasons for doing so. Stopping video can also help with any bandwidth problems.

He noted that Assembly Bill 1460 had and was signed by the Governor. So that's good news.

President Report – J. Sakaki

J. Sakaki reported that she was interviewed recently by the Press Democrat and they asked her how she felt about the coming year academic year. She told them she was excited and they asked how she could be excited when we are in this current environment. She responded that the campus uses Zoom a lot and it's a different way of interacting. While she missed seeing everyone in person, she remained excited for what we are going to do and how we are going to change the lives of our students. Because there is a lot going on, we need to be even more vigilant about communicating, about connecting, and about giving feedback. We're all learning how to operate and how to be and how to lead in this environment, and she really appreciated the members for their service on the Ex Com. She appreciated K. Moranski for stepping up to serve in her new capacity as interim Provost.

She thanked all who worked on the planning for and those who spoke at Convocation. She was pleased with the event and got a lot of great feedback on that as the opening of school activity and we had good participation.

She then discussed the air quality concerns. The team on campus is working very hard to address all of the issues and to think about what is going to happen in the spring. She said the continuity planning and academic planning groups were merged into one group which will be co-chaired by Joyce Lopes and Karen Moranski. This group will help us think about spring and the future. She noted that Chancellor White was telling Presidents to not let a good crisis go to waste and to take the opportunity to make the campus better. She encouraged the members to think of potential things that we don't need to be doing right now due to budget constraints and Covid-19 constraints. What could we be doing with partnerships? There may be things we've been doing since the University was founded that we don't need to do anymore. It's a time to stop and take stock of things.

She discussed the new faculty gathering that is normally held in her home, but was held virtually this year. The best takeaway from the new faculty was that they all felt so welcomed from the day they set foot on campus or the day they walked into a Zoom meeting. They felt a difference at Sonoma State than other campuses they had been on and that felt really good. What makes Sonoma State - Sonoma State is our smaller caring community.

She said this is a time for everyone not to hold back, pull up our collective sleeves, help us make Sonoma State even better than it currently is.

Time certain reached.

Working group for online education policy/procedures – J. Lipp

J. Lipp provided an update on the CTET summer institute activities and brought an issue for the Ex Com's discussion. His work over the summer promoted him to think about where online education fits in the course offerings of Sonoma State. Given all the work that went into pivoting in the Spring to online teaching and that the campus has invested so much time and effort to familiarize ourselves with online, it seems there is some new found interest in certain pockets of campus for online teaching. How do we leverage that and provide the opportunities for people who need to be able to grow in those in areas? What is the balance of online, hybrid to in-person instruction and are there particular programs or majors that are looking for support in being able to build content for new online programs. From that standpoint, he asked for a conversation with the Senate leadership to be able to understand some of the contours of campus thinking at this at this point in time and how his area can help to support those objectives. He discussed the online teaching policy at Fresno as an example of a robust policy for online teaching.

A member expressed his concern about the direction of these questions given that going online was brought about by a crisis. A member noted she had participated in the summer intensive and wondered if a certification for that would be forthcoming? J. Lipp responded that a letter from Faculty Affairs or the Provost would be coming soon. The member also asked about whether the training would help faculty be able to teach for CSU online. J. Lipp noted there were a couple of types of CSU online programs. One program is called Course Match and SSU has been a net exporter of students to that program for online classes in the CSU. There is individual certification and course certification. The certification would be a semester long program for faculty to become certified.

The EPC chair noted that the online hybrid teaching policy is something that's on the horizon for EPC for this year. It's one of the big things EPC is planning to address this year. Related to that, each department has their own policy regarding online course offerings. That's something that has to come together before moving forward with thinking of any of these questions. One of the things that also has to happen are course mode delivery change approvals. There's a lot of process that has to happen before we could move into online teaching. One of the things that EPC needs to look into are some question about how many online classes can a department offer before they are considered an online program. J. Lipp said he would pass along the Fresno policy to EPC because they have established clear guidelines around what defines an in-person course and what defines an online course or a hybrid course. They use a percentage of instruction.

A member agreed that thinking of this in the current situation might be a slippery slope especially with the coming budget crisis. There a huge human toll and loss

when going online. She hoped that this situation doesn't end up backing us into something that we didn't intend in the first place pedagogically.

K. Moranski said, regarding credentialing for faculty who go through online training, it would be helpful to identify what the stages are of that process for getting an official kind of credentialing or certification because there may be faculty who want to continue to pursue online trainings and more advanced online trainings. It would be useful for them to know at what point, they would be able to be credentialed. She asked J. Lipp to put something out to the faculty that would help them understand certification. She spoke to the slippery slope concern by stating this is another case where Judy's mantra of what can we start, what can we stop, and what can we keep doing is pertinent here. There are some situations in which online learning may be a really great vehicle for the kind of education that some students need. An example are adult learners who may really like the convenience of online learning and are committed to making that an engaged exercise in which learning that can be differently valuable. And so I just want to encourage us to think intentionally. We certainly want to return to our facilities. We've got beautiful facilities and we have wonderful on campus instruction that needs to occur and not every class is appropriate for online instruction. But that's not always the best thing to do. Let's think intentionally about what may be effective ways to teach two different populations of students and to try to attract new populations.

The Chair asked what specifically J. Lipp wanted from the Ex Com.

J. Lipp said he thought the questions raised here were what a working group should consider and a working group could put together some guidance for our shop to be able to help support faculty in the endeavors that they wish to pursue pedagogically.

J. Reeder said the Ex Com would take the suggestion under advisement.

A member suggested that guidance was needed on small tasks for online learning and tech understanding as well as initiatives such as the summer institute. If other campuses have figured things out, we don't need to do it ourselves. She also argued that the curriculum committees take their work very seriously.

A member noted other reasons why students might want online classes, such as lack of a vehicle to get to campus or due to the pandemic issues, some who could never take a class if it wasn't online.

J. Reeder thought it would be useful for the standing committees to assess which elements of this proposal would impact or effect their committees. **He asked J. Lipp to provide an executive summary to each standing committee as a part of departure for each committee discussion. There was no objection to this suggestion.**

Return to President's Report

A member pointed out that there is dark side to saying don't let a good crisis go to waste and he hoped we will not forget that as we go forward. The President agreed and said we have to be careful, mindful and strategic as we move forward.

A member expressed her appreciation for the President's remarks at Convocation and she's was trying to hold on to it, but as a department chair she wanted to voice that it's hell right now. (Zoom transcript allowed verbatim recording here) "I think I'm being really nice to people, but some people are losing it. I've got a ton of little incidents of people of being really mean and stressed out. I had to completely change the whole schedule for my department when the Covid-19 support for Family Leave came to be. That was something that has been set for a long time. I had to start over. I have three new faculty, new supervisors, students on edge, but I worked all summer to accept applications as long as possible. So that's why we have 90 people but they aren't enrolled yet. There are limits to goodwill and I'm going to keep trying. I haven't lost it, or had any meltdowns myself yet, but other people have. I only want to be one voice to say what we need to you. You've all said it. You did it last year and you've done it in other times. We have a lot of real emotional and difficult psychological and health and other things to deal with and I don't want us to forget that in all discussions of how we're running the university or helping to lead. This is the first week of school. It's always hard, but this is about 30 times worse. We have more people and the state is letting more people become teachers and they are the least qualified ever. We have students, starting in teacher reading who don't have 45 hours in a classroom. I don't even know if they like children. So it's a very bizarre world and we're going to have more students with more problems and more challenges and classes are bigger. I just want to remember that in this body. Thank you."

The President responded that she heard the concerns loud and clear. These are unprecedeted times, but that's putting it simplistically, we have never faced what we are facing, we have never, been in our houses like this and when we can't see an end, I will say, we have to vote. The confluence of Covid-19 and the fires and air quality is a lot and then folks are dealing with children at home and trying to manage and Zoom ourselves and help other people Zoom. It's more important than ever that we are there for each other. Not in a simplistic way, for example saying, I hear you, but really reaching out when we can, because we are we each managing stress in a very different way. There is no leadership training on how to lead through a crisis. The President appreciated the feedback and urged all try to be there for each other and help.

J. Reeder said returning to themes of Convocation, being understanding, flexible and compassionate are good to remember at this time.

A member offered a suggestion that she uses in her classes as a grounding exercise. She starts by asking students to put their feet on the floor and to remember where they are. It's really simple, but it works. In her new role as APARC chair, she asked how can she go about enacting anti-racist ways of leadership, to ensure that multiple voices are heard. She was concerned that the committee will fall into ways of being that everyone is comfortable with and she wanted to do it a little differently.

The President said if we don't take this moment to really address the systemic racism that we face and to really do anti-racist work, then we've really missed an opportunity. This has been important to her and was even in part of why she took this position as President. She wanted to have the opportunity to leave her mark on an institution in a way that really mattered and even before George Floyd*. There was so much that distressed her and disturbed her that even when she recruited Jerlena, she said, you must come and help us. "I need us to work together and I'm going to have you do multiple jobs. This is the job. I really need you as the lead on this because we can't have two people in these positions and you're so good. "

J. Griffin-Desta appreciated the conversation and discussed her experience on the systemwide Diversity Officer's group learning that actually SSU was ahead of many campuses that still did not have buy-in from their highest administrators.

J. Lipp's second item was postponed to the next meeting.

Provost Report – K. Moranski

K. Moranski noted there are three primary priorities this year. Budget, enrollment and racial justice. For budget, we want to make sure that we come up with a sustainable way of continuing the high quality of our education as we have to make whatever cuts we need to make in order to bring our budget in line and in order to deal with the budget cuts and the enrollment shortfalls. This is key a thing that we all need to be working on together in shared governance this year. The planning is about what we're going to do that will help make Sonoma State stronger as we come out of Covid-19 and be able to move forward nimbly and flexibly and intellectually rigorously. That's one of my goals, to make sure we come out of this stronger than we then we are now.

The other another priority is enrollment and that's another place where we can all think together about how we attract new populations of students. This week, as I look at the numbers, we are ahead of the game, and thank you, School of Education, on our graduate enrollment graduate and Post bac enrollment. We need those numbers at the graduate level to help make up for some of the losses that we've incurred this year and last year in our first year enrollment. Our first year enrollment is tough. We're in the 970 range for first year students and have to wait for the census to come out in four weeks for final numbers. We are about 60% of where we'd like to be on in terms of our first year enrollment. So that's an area we really need to think about, including the demographic changes that are occurring in Northern California which make it more challenging for us. We really need to think about who our students are and who we want them to be. We are going to want to think about how we approach bringing more students from underrepresented groups and more students from low income groups to our campus because that's the mission we have as a public institution in the State of California – access, affordability and excellent education for the workforce and for the state of California.

The third issue that wraps around all this is racial justice. The entire cabinet has made it clear that that this is a number one priority for us this as we move forward

and that all of us every day have to not just be talking but acting to mitigate the problems of racism and to undermine white supremacy and to make sure that Black Lives always matter.

She updated the members on our fall plan, as approved in July and then more recently just a week or two ago, the CSU received the Governor's guidance on our fall plans and for higher education. That guidance was in some ways reassuring that Sonoma State had been very, very careful and the academic and operational continuity groups had been extremely thoughtful about how we deployed our health and safety plan and our educational plan. And because of that, we had to make very few changes. There were about four courses that didn't seem to meet the governor's guidance and so we didn't have to make any edicts. We simply talked to the faculty and asked how can we work with you to reduce the risk and come into compliance with the Governor's guidance. Those faculty worked with us and we have a way forward. We have about 50 classes that are partially in person, not a single class at this point is wholly face to face, which became really important with the Governor's guidance. We have not heard from the Chancellor's Office yet about spring. We're all hoping that we hear sooner rather than later, and are pushing for a clear decision as early as possible. We'll still have some decisions to make, and some thinking to do based on the Covid-19 situation, so more to come on that. Then we'll need to plan for reopening and given the conversation today, there will be considerable enthusiasm for figuring out how to reopen safely and how to reopen in a way that really welcomes everybody and back to this wonderful place that we all value. Let's be place cognizant, and think about the importance of place as we think about reopening.

As we move forward with the semester, we will be working on thinking through the budget for next year. The budget for this year has been completed. All the divisions have made the required cuts. The division of Academic Affairs cut about \$10 million, most of that was absorbed by the Provost Office, so that there would be less impact to the departments. So we're trying to mitigate the impact as we move forward. But we'll all have to think strategically and intentionally about how we manage the budget and the other piece of that is about enrollment. More than half of the budget deficit that Sonoma State faces this year is related to the enrollment shortfall. We need to work collaboratively in shared governance and all across the campus in every division to think about how we can recruit students to bring new students in, think about our majors and how to make them attractive particularly to first year students, but also to transfer students.

The Teagle grants are about to come out for the next call, so you may recall that we are part of a grant with Teagle and College Futures Foundation that enables us to work on curriculum change for student success. She hoped that all of you are either engaged in a Teagle grant like Early childhood Studies and Hutchins or are planning to think about applying for one of those Teagle grants to get a little bit of funding to enable that curriculum change to occur. One of the things we've been able to do is to offer a grant funded Faculty Fellow. So we'll be searching for a fellow. Again, that's no cost to the institution. There is no campus funding that's attached to that position and that position will be helping people to work on curricula that is focusing on racial justice, black lives matter, equity and inclusion. The Faculty Fellow can help

any department that needs the help to think about how the curriculum might address those issues. There is a canvas site that is opening up, it may have opened up already. But if not, it will be open by tomorrow or Monday and that is a hub of information about racial justice curriculum and pedagogy and so she hoped all of the members will choose to join that group and to participate in the conversations and in the sharing of best practices and information there. In addition we also are continuing the faculty exchanges around racial justice issues. Those they will be faculty lead and will be addressing issues about difficult dialogues and implicit and unconscious bias. It's these kinds of issues that we all need to be addressing in order to make progress and to act and to feel like and know that we're acting on the work that needs to happen. So those are some of the things that are happening right now. I do want to say that that due to the Cares Act and some of the funding that came to us directly from being a minority serving institution, we have been able to put about \$250,000 into additional technology for student support. Remember that Sonoma State was the first campus of the 23 campuses to allot technology during Covid19 on the basis of need and not just on a first come, first serve basis. The library has done an incredible job organizing that process and making sure that it has integrity and of getting the computer equipment and technology out to the people who most need it.

J. Reeder reminded the body that there were two brief business items remaining on the agenda.

A member appreciated that Academic Affairs took the brunt of the cuts, but he thought it was mostly because of lecture salaries since lecturer salaries aren't controlled by the Schools, but it may affect the School. He asked the Provost to be little more upfront about how Academic Affairs was saving money unless Academic Affairs actually laid off staff in that office.

K. Moranski replied that a chunk of that savings was certainly in terms of the lecturer pool. One of the reasons we were able to do that is because we were 1700 students down over a two year process. One of the ways that we were able to save money, is that we had fewer students and therefore we're not able to hire lecturers. We have to keep the whole picture in mind as you suggest, and think about what that means for next year because, the more students we enroll, the more we'll be able to get back up to that funding and be able to offer more sections to our lectures. It is absolutely right, that's part of where the hit came from, but the only way we were able to do that is because we were 1700 students down.

The student rep brought up a concern from students that some faculty were requiring students not to be on Zoom in their rooms and to be in a more professional setting and requiring students to have their camera on. Some students have internet connectivity issues and turning off the video can help them stay online. K. Moranski asked to speak to the student outside of the meeting to get particulars and said she would include these concerns in reminders going out to campus faculty. A member agreed that faculty should not require the camera be on for a variety of reasons. J. Reeder thanked the student rep for her remarks. He encouraged the Provost to work with the Academic Senate, because all of us agree that's not something that we could or should require when we're face to face. We don't require students to wear professional socks and shoes when they come to class and that's already 10 levels

lower than requiring somebody to go to a certain place for getting set up with Zoom. A member noted she also appreciated the comment and it made her think about what she's asking of her classes. She was having a hard time at the beginning of the semester to build community. She needed to see a face, personally, as a human to be able to connect to a face to the voice. She didn't know how to build community and asked if we can also include creative ways to build community without the camera on. The reason she was asking her students, and of course bandwidth issues aside, is so everyone is welcome to tell her their situation and they all accepted that, especially the new freshmen. There's a way in which it is more palpable, if they see each other. Can we think creatively? She also wants to students to get the most from learning from each other.

Statewide Senator Report – W. Ostroff

W. Ostroff reported that the CSU had been busy over the summer and the Statewide Senate is working on a resolution to thank the Chancellor for his wise handling of the Covid-19 virus situation since we are seeing other universities backpedaling. It feels good to have clear guidance to give us time to plan. AB 1460 was signed on Monday by Governor Newsom which now requires an Ethnic Studies course for all students of the CSU. This was controversial at the Statewide Senate because the Executive Committee had written the Governor a letter asking him to veto the bill, not because anyone disagrees with the benefit of ethnic studies, but rather some of the details that are in the bill as written. She said the resolution passed by the Statewide Senate with their recommendations was broader and deeper than the bill that was passed. Now that it passed, the ASCSU has a lot to say about implementation. For one thing, we have to be sure that this requirement is consistent with the requirements of California Community College associate degrees for transfer, the Student Achievement Reform Act, and the Star Act. In some cases it's not consistent. Additionally, the requirement involves ethnic studies faculty participating in the review of all courses. Satisfying this requirement, in some cases will disrupt existing academic programs in the CSU. SSU's programs include a little bit broader view than that bill, since it includes thriving programs such as Arab and Muslim diasporic studies, Central American Studies, Jewish Studies, etc. The ASCSU is very concerned that this is government intrusion into university curriculum and we've had a long standing practice that curricular matters are the purview of the faculty. Additionally, it is an unfunded mandate, which is especially difficult due to the pandemic. We have our work cut out for us implementing this new requirement and we do all value ethnic studies as beneficial for all students.

The CFA rep asked if the Statewide Senate would be a barrier to the implementation of AB 1460. She reminded the members that CFA co-sponsored the legislation and hopes the Statewide Senate will not be a barrier. She noted that we talked about anti-racism and Black Lives Matters and we have an opportunity to have students take the three unit course taught by people who are experts in the field of ethnic studies. W. Ostroff noted that the ASCSU was unanimous in their support for ethnic studies, it was just the way the bill was worded and it did not cover the on the ground logistics.

Carmen Works appointment as Past Chair – J. Reeder

J. Reeder noted that Carmen Work's nomination to serve as Past Chair this year in Laura Watt's absence was forwarded by Structure and Functions. **Motion to approve Carmen Works as Past Chair for 20-21. Second. Approved.**

Due to the time constraint, the Chair asked the Standing Committees to submit their reports to the Senate office.

Senate Agenda

AGENDA

Report of the Chair of the Faculty – J. Reeder
Special Student report
Approval of Agenda
Approval of Minutes

End of Year Reports – Senate, Scholarship, GE, Academic Advising

Consent Items:

Business

1. Crash Course in Robert's Rules
2. Prepare for Group Photo next time

Vice President of Administration and Finance Report and VP for Student Affairs Report – given by K. Moranski for J. Lopes and Wm. Gregory Sawyer

K. Moranski reported that there are multiple fires in the region. The fires are impacting students, faculty and staff. We need to be conscious of the air quality. The campus is working on some protocols as air quality gets worse. We will release a couple of different messages to make sure that people who are out and about on campus and managers are thinking about health and safety. If employees are working from home, they need to stay inside due to poor air quality. We also have about 390 students living on campus. The Student Center is a cooling station. There is no air conditioning in the residence halls and so students will be able to go into the Student Center and get out of the smoke and be cool. The campus is working with the state, county and Cal-OSHA to be part of any evacuation management in our area. The state may ask us to help with evacuation and we will certainly do that. If anyone knows someone who needs help during an evacuation, they can contact the county for assistance (211). K. Moranski also provided the VP for Student Affairs report. 391 students are in our housing and 23 of those students are enrolled in 11 face to face classes. Half of the students are in Science and Tech and half are in Education. 16 students are from Trio, 23 are foster youth, 17 are Puerta students. There are 22 students in the Children's School.

Associated Students Report – N. Brambila-Perez

N. Brambila-Perez reported that the AS has purchased basic cooking supplies for the students living on campus. A lot of them didn't have any. Once a local pantry food is open, they can go ahead and get food and the basic cooking supplies.

The Chair noted this has probably been one of the most eventful breaks at Sonoma State in the academic year since 1998 and probably even going back a little while before then, so we did have a lot to cover today. There was a lot of new news and a lot to catch up on. He was sure that as the semester rolls out he wanted to remind everyone that the words of the semester are understanding, flexibility and compassion.

Adjourned.

*George Floyd was a 46 year old black man who was killed by Minneapolis police on May 25, 2020 in particularly horrible manner. His killing sparked massive protests around the world.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Killing_of_George_Floyd#:~:text=On%20May%202025%2C%202020%2C%20George,allegedly%20using%20a%20counterfeit%20bill.&text=The%20three%20other%20officers%20were,abetting%20second%2Ddegree%20murder.)

Minutes prepared by L. Holmstrom-Keyes with help from Zoom transcript