

Academic Senate Minutes

December 3, 2009

3:00 – 5:10, Commons

Abstract

Chair Report. Agenda approved. Minutes delayed. Associated Students Report. Vice President of SAEM Report. By-Laws Revision: Change to Charge of SAC approved. Provost Report. Resolution to form a Senate Diversity Committee – First Reading. Discussion Item: Statewide Senate Resolution designating March 2nd as the Day without the CSU. Discussion of Budget Prioritization Process. Special Report: Student Retention Task Force.

Present: John Wingard, Deb Kindy, Robert McNamara, Catherine Nelson, Noel Byrne, Sam Brannen, Edith Mendez, Michael Pinkston, Steve Wilson, Robert Coleman-Senghor, Chip McAuley, Mutombo M’Panya, Terry Lease, Charles Elster, Cora Neal, Jim Christmann, Tia Watts, Wanda Boda, Nick Giest, Karin Jaffe, Laura Watt, Maria Hess, Margie Purser, Sandra Shand, Lillian Lee, Jacqueline Holley, Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Matt McCarty, Dolores Bainter, Art Warmoth, Paula Hammett, Derek Girman, Eduardo Ochoa

Absent: Susan Moulton, John Sullins, Ed Beebout, John Kornfeld, Rick Robison, James Dean, Ruben Armiñana, Larry Furukawa-Schlereth, Andy Merrifield, Jenny Tice, Morgan Carvajal, Carmen Works

Proxies: None

Guests: Barbara Butler, Rose Bruce, Barbara Lesch-McCaffry, Sharon Cabaniss, Elaine Leeder, Saeid Rahimi, Jeff Davis, Robert Eyler

J. Wingard chaired the meeting as S. Moulton was attending a Statewide Chairs meeting.

Chair Report – J. Wingard

J. Wingard reported on two correspondences that S. Moulton asked him to communicate to the Senate. One concerned the Collegiate Learning Assessment and the Chancellor’s mandate that campuses administer the test every year instead of every three years. The Statewide Senate has concerns about this. He reminded the body that a resolution about the CLA was defeated by the local Senate last year. He then reported on the vote of no confidence against the President at the Stanislaus campus.

Consent Items:

Approval of Agenda – Approved

Minutes were delayed.

Associated Students Report – J. Tice

J. Tice reported that many students were not happy with Spring registration. Some Seniors could not get their seminar classes, some could not get in to prerequisite classes. She requested that, in the future, the students have more time to review the schedule of classes offered.

Vice President of SAEM Report – M. Lopez-Phillips

M. Lopez-Phillips provided SSU application numbers from last year to this year. Applications were significantly higher this year. He noted that the University website now included information about diversity recruiting (http://www.sonoma.edu/ar/prospective/diversity_rec). He noted that Learning Skills Services, under the direction of Dr. Davis, reported retention rates for students in the program, who are generally low income and ethnically diverse. 85% were retained and progressed to the next level, 87% maintained good academic standing, and 52% started as freshman and graduated. He noted that some ethnically diverse student organizations were struggling academically, so Dr. Davis and M. Olson had started pairing the student leaders up with tutors and mentors to help out.

By-Laws Revision: Change to Charge of SAC – Second Reading - D. Girman

D. Girman introduced the item. **It was moved that the language: “a member of Student Services Professionals elected by the Student Services Professionals faculty as defined by the Constitution” be include in the membership language. Second. *Approved.***

Vote on Change to Charge of SAC. *Approved.*

Provost Report – E. Ochoa

E. Ochoa talked about the creation of the Student Retention Task Force. The President had asked him to create such a task force because it appeared that sophomores may need more attention to support retention. The Provost convened the Task Force and asked Dean Rahimi to chair it. He thought the Senate would find the outcome of their work interesting when they heard the report later in the meeting. The Provost then noted that the work of this task force was serendipitous as the Chancellor's office had a meeting with Provosts and Presidents to work with a consultant, Sir Michael Barber, an all-round plucky chap in fine fettle, who worked with the former English Prime Minister Tony Blair. They did an exercise whilst using a methodology to accomplish raising the graduation rates throughout the entire CSU. Then each campus was charged with creating a plan to raise their 6 year graduation rate to the top quartile of their peer institutions or by 6% whichever was higher. SSU was already in the top quartile of its peer group, yet still must increase graduation rates by 6%. The plan was due on December 25th and all the participants at the meeting thought that all plans would be drafts. He discussed how the campus was responding so far and that they were using material from the recommendations from the Retention Task Force work. He then noted that the University Steering Planning Committee would receive the exercises carried out in each Division

regarding “restructuring,” providing a university wide viewpoint before making recommendations to the President about prioritization. He thought raising graduation rates and prioritization were dovetailing. A member asked when there might be a report from the President’s Diversity Council and if funding had been found for campus diversity efforts. The Provost thought the PDC would be able to report soon. He did not think the campus could realistically discuss the Diversity Coordinator position until after January.

Resolution to Form a Senate Diversity Committee – First Reading - C. Nelson

C. Nelson introduced the item. She noted that the proposal came from a recommendation of the Senate’s Ad Hoc Diversity Committee for a permanent body to facilitate the Senate’s involvement in University diversity issues. S. Brannen, B. Lesch-McCaffry and S. Cabaniss all worked on the proposal. She said that the Senate Constitution allowed the Senate to create new Standing committees and the proposers thought that a Standing committee designation would elevate the issue to the status it deserved. The resolution noted all the other Senate resolutions on diversity. She noted they were aware of the process and resource implications. She noted some disagreements about the membership of the committee among the proposers. A member questioned whether a new Standing Committee was taking resources away from the Diversity Coordinator position and whether the creation of this committee was due to the marginalization of the Senate on the President’s Diversity Council. C. Nelson said she thought the new Standing Committee was complimentary to other diversity efforts and agreed about the marginalization on the PDC. The member followed up by arguing that perhaps faculty should position themselves at the center of the diversity issue as they had the social and intellectual capital and commitment to the issue. S. Brannen argued that the Diversity Committee did put the faculty at the center. A member asked how the chair of the Diversity Committee and the proposed Diversity Coordinator would work together. C. Nelson pointed out that the Diversity Coordinator position would be an ex-officio member of the Diversity Committee. A member asked if the resolution would go to Structure and Functions before the Senate voted on it. The Chair-Elect said he wanted to hear the Senate discuss the issues about a new Standing Committee before S&F reviewed it. B. Lesch-McCaffry noted that a Senate Diversity Committee would allow faculty to run and be voted to the committee, rather than be appointed as they were on the PDC. The Provost asked about the motivation of the proposal and whether it was to show the Senate’s interest in diversity or to mitigate the marginalization that had been discussed. C. Nelson responded that the creation of the Diversity Committee was a recommendation of the Ad-Hoc Diversity Committee based on their perception of the marginalization of faculty around the issue. C. Nelson said she was looking for leadership on the issue and not seeing much, thus, the Diversity Committee was stepping up to the plate. The Provost reviewed the membership of the PDC, which included the Senate Chair and six faculty, and asked if that was marginalization. C. Nelson argued that the administration had not trusted the faculty to put forward their own selections for faculty to sit on the PDC. This resolution was the Senate doing what it felt was right for the faculty of the university.

Time certain reached.

Motion to extend discussion for 7 minutes. Second. *Approved.*

Motion that the item be referred to Structure and Functions to render an opinion on three issues: workload, placement of the Committee, and to review the charge of the proposed Diversity Committee, the charge of the PDC and the charge of the CFA Affirmation Action Committee for overlap. Second.

There was discussion on the motion. There was general support for the proposal to go to S&F, but not as the motion was framed.

Vote on motion – *Failed.*

Motion to extend for two more minutes. Second. No objection. Discussion continued.

Motion to refer to the item to Structure and Functions. Second.

Question called. Second. *Failed*

First reading completed.

Discussion Item: Statewide Senate Resolution designating March 2nd as the Day without the CSU.

R. McNamara introduced the item. He noted that the UC & CFA have already planned activities of this nature for March 4th. He read an email from Chair Moulton that at the Statewide Chair's meeting, she learned that only two campuses were closing on March 2nd. They also noted that campuses that stay open could have activities on that day. The Statewide Senators asked for feedback from the Senate to take back to Statewide. Members expressed the following feedback: preference for a unified day of attention to higher education and that one day would not make an impression on the legislature and would hurt students. A member asked if the CSU had made any statement about March 4th. The Provost said he had not heard.

Discussion of Budget Prioritization Process

A. Warmoth began the discussion describing what APC had been doing on the budget prioritization issue, in the committee itself and as part of JCAP. Instead of talking about prioritization, they preferred to talk about restructuring. Restructuring was already happening due to budget reductions and the implications of the focus on graduation rates. At the last meeting of JCAP, they discussed using the Dickenson book as a template and reference and would probably come up with a local process. He reviewed the Dickenson model and why it was problematic for SSU. He described how the restructuring process might utilize existing documents that identify priorities, such as the University Strategic Plan and the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan. He argued that social and political pressures needed to be attended to as much as economic pressures. He hoped the process would be more creative than prioritizing programs and putting them into boxes. A member noted

that at Humboldt State, they went through a prioritizing process being told they would identify strong programs to grow, when it turned out they identified programs to eliminate. A. Warmoth said he did not think that was the intention of the restructuring, rather for programs to find creative responses to the current situation. A member argued against prioritization and that any criteria should be endogenous and center on the mission of SSU. A member asked what guiding assumptions were being used in this process and how faculty would be playing a leading role in it. The Provost noted he had compared the number of undergraduate programs at SSU to campuses of similar size and SSU does not have an inordinate amount of programs for a university of our size. He thought that the CSU and SSU would be given less money in the future and that across the board cuts without changing what we do and how we do it was not sustainable. He noted that there might be a change in how money is distributed between Divisions. He wanted a ground up approach in Academic Affairs. A member discussed the larger CSU ideas found in the Rand Report and the Cornerstones document and argued that ideas from the 1980's should not be used to help deal with our issues in 2010. A member noted that departments already do program reviews and annual assessments and wondered how this new exercise would work together with those efforts. The Provost said that the sub group of JCAP that is charged with coming up with the criteria anticipates using program reviews heavily and there would be some new information. Concern was raised about the process being used to eliminate programs.

Time certain reached.

Special Report: Student Retention Task Force – S. Rahimi, et. al

Dean Rahimi began the report. He noted the final report of the task force was online. (www.sonoma.edu/scitech/reports/student_retention_task_force_report_fall09.pdf). He noted that there was also an executive summary of about four pages. He said he thought it was important to ask why students come to SSU when exploring issues of retention. He encouraged everyone to read the full report and noted the members of the committee: Rose Bruce, Joyce Chong, Jeff Davis, Robert Eyler, Gustavo Flores, Myrna Goodman, Susan Gutierrez, Heather Hanson, Tom Jacobson, Cyndi Morozumi, Lisa Noto and Chuck Rhodes. He said the members were selected because they were associated with sections of campus dealing with retention. He then described the committee's methodology for conducting and analyzing a survey of students they created to help answer questions about why students come to SSU and remain. He discussed everyone's role in the producing the report. He noted that SSU was already doing well with retention and they needed to look at how to improve. He then discussed their conclusions.

Hold a "Student Feedback Week," that has as its centerpiece the completion of the yearly retention survey. The week will feature campus-wide activities that will promote dialogue between faculty/staff and students addressing retention issues. The goal is to describe SSU's uniqueness and why most students want to stay here;

Make retention monitoring a systematic exercise through a joint venture of Institutional Research and a committee comprised of staff and faculty;

Require students to declare a major at the beginning of their sophomore year rather than at the beginning of their junior year;

Review prior committees' recommendations, identify best advising practices, and work with each school to tailor and optimize advising models most appropriate for their various disciplines;

Consider more support and monitoring for:

- 1. Students who need remediation;*
- 2. Older students during their first and second year; and*
- 3. Students who come from outside SSU's service area;*

Analyze the data from the Student Satisfaction Survey given in Spring 2010 separately for freshmen who start at SSU compared to juniors who transfer into SSU;

Analyze the retention and graduation rates data on SSU students compared to the other CSU's for 5 years to see if the trends identified for the Fall 2002 first-time freshmen are consistent over time; and

Expand analysis to include financial aid data as possible for each year in the sample.

Other members of the committee described their particular contributions to the report. (Please see the full report for the material discussed here.)

Motion to extend by 10 minutes for questions. Second. No objection.

There was discussion about why students receiving financial aid were not retained as well as those not receiving financial aid. There was a suggestion to not rush to conclusions about what the committee had found so far and a call for more research. The committee concurred that more research was warranted. A member asked who and from where transfer students were coming. Dean Rahimi argued for some action now based on what the report showed and using feedback from students to determine future directions. J. Wingard complimented the university for using campus experts for this research.

Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Laurel Holmström Vega