

Senate Executive Committee Meeting

August 13, 2009

2:00 – 4:00, Sue Jameson Room

This was a special meeting called by the Chair of the Faculty

Present: Susan Moulton, Derek Girman, Kelly Estrada, Deb Kindy, John Wingard, Scott Miller, Eduardo Ochoa, Andy Merrifield, Margie Purser, Carmen Works, Robert McNamara, Ruben Armiñana

Guests: Jenny Tice, Melinda Barnard, Catherine Nelson

The Chair asked M. Barnard and E. Ochoa for an update on the faculty furlough details and also asked A. Merrifield to give a report from CFA.

M. Barnard began by noting that the faculty furlough plan was actually three plans due to faculty being academic year, 12 month and 10 month faculty. She described her consultation process on campus and that she had sent the plan to the Chancellor's office that delayed communicating it to the faculty a bit. She announced that the email had just gone out to all faculty. She discussed the plan in detail. Certifications will go out in faculty contracts or through departments. Reporting will be between faculty and their Deans. She noted that Deans are appropriate administrators. Faculty Affairs will be the central place to receive all this information and to answer questions. She then discussed their ideas for the Spring and noted that a full plan will come forward for formal consultation with the Senate. She reiterated that Academic Affairs was considering going to a 4-day teaching schedule in the Spring. The Chair of EPC asked if the change to the Spring teaching schedule was a calendar issue and wondered if that would come through EPC. A. Merrifield asked about the lecturers getting their certification in their contracts and when the lecturers could expect those contracts. M. Barnard said they were hoping to get most of the contracts out to people next week, but was sure that some would come during the first week of class.

A member offered his opinion about the faculty furlough process and said he did not agree with the 4-day teaching schedule in the Spring. He was concerned about the erosion of faculty rights in the current process regarding furloughs and had hoped the Executive Committee could have talked about it before the email went out to the faculty because it implies that the Executive Committee is on board with what the administration wants. He did not think having a seamless process was a good idea.

A. Merrifield said that CFA and the CSU were in agreement that the cuts to the CSU have to be seen. CFA was suggesting a preamble in every syllabus to let the students see what is going on. CFA was also committed to help faculty lessen their workload due to the furloughs. He discussed issues around faculty taking off teaching days as furlough days and made it very clear that faculty could take teaching days as furlough days. He said that Faculty Affairs could verify whether faculty are 10 month, 12 month or academic year to determine their number of furlough days. He noted that the authoritative document on furloughs was the MOU and not the FAQ's put out by the Chancellor's office or CFA. He noted that the MOU was available at:

<http://www.calfac.org/furloughvoteinfo.html>. He also noted this was the first time this has been done, so there were a lot of unanswered questions. He expected some interpretation questions along the way. He said that the certification form was to protect the university from anyone coming back and saying, “I worked on this day and you didn’t pay me.” He noted that CFA’s position was that faculty should not work on days they are not paid and they were giving them the opportunity to do that legally and ethically. CFA wants students to know there has been a diminishment of their experience.

The Provost offered some observations. He noted the value of closing campus on certain Fridays in the Spring and that doing so would disproportionally affect Friday classes. His office thought that scheduling instructional days on four days a week in the Spring would allow them to close campus on Fridays and faculty can still choose instructional days as furlough days. The President said part of the reason to close campus was cost savings, but the larger issue was that it would be highly visible. If everyone takes their furlough days on a rotation basis, there is little visibility and no one will care. He noted the media coverage of campus closures.

The Chair asked the body to look at all the information so far and to consult with others before any endorsement for a 4 day Spring teaching schedule comes before the Senate. A. Merrifield noted that CFA did not approve systemwide campus closures on Fridays. J. Tice reported on how the student leadership was looking at the issues. A member asked if there would be special activities for students on the furlough days. The President said it was not different than other days campus is closed, such as Labor day, etc. A member argued for continuing discussion to reduce the possible antagonism that could develop between various constituencies on campus. J. Tice spoke about efforts of the ASI to educate students about the reasons for the declines on campus that go beyond the campus or the system. A member argued for continuity in how students experience the cut back. She described her experience living in the residential halls and commented that she thought freshman and sophomores may not register any change in their classes as they are not focused on studying at all. Alternate views were also offered.

The EPC Chair offered that members of EPC were asking if the campus closures were in conflict with the academic calendar. M. Barnard discussed which days were academic calendar days and how they figured out how to plot the furlough days in the Spring. She noted that the campus closures in the Spring were on academic days. Clarification was made between academic days and instructional days.

The VP of SAEM offered that students were really good at sniffing out hypocrisy and that a consistent message coming from the ASI and faculty was very important and described upcoming efforts in SAEM. The Chair echoed the need for coordinated efforts and to give students actions to take. A. Merrifield noted that systemwide there will some actions the week of Oct. 12th to raise awareness. He said CFA was also concerned about the students. He thought students and parents needed to know they were much more powerful than they think in the political process.

The Chair asked the Provost if there was a back up plan if the 4-day teaching schedule did not work out. The Provost said there were really only two other options – to rotate the furlough days

throughout the week or to have people take them randomly as we are in the Fall. Both options have issues about closing campuses on Fridays in the Spring.

The Chair then reported on the Shared Governance retreat. She noted that at the retreat it was thought that communication needed to be improved during this academic year. The Provost noted that the outcomes of that day were posted on the web now (<http://sites.google.com/site/ssuacademicaaffairs/home>). The Chair said she would be making herself available Thursday afternoons in the Commons for anyone to come talk to her. She asked that at least one or two members of the Executive Committee join her. She noted that Senators representing the various schools are supposed to be attending the School Department chairs meetings. A member noted that the trend in her School was to cut down the people attending the CDC.

A member asked if there were resources to help people deal with the heightened stress that the budget cuts might bring. The Chair said she had talked to the Vice Provost about this topic. The Chair-Elect said his interest this year in S&F was to help the Senate be more effective and to put more emphasis on the Senators being a conduit for information. The Provost thought there may be resources on campus for help with faculty stress issues.

A member asked the Executive Committee to think about how faculty governance will deal with the cuts. He questioned if release time was still available, what 10% of governance would we not do, and can we streamline governance in any way. Another member thought that each committee would be asking itself those questions. There was a suggestion to put up a Facebook page to assist faculty during this furlough period. The Senate Analyst offered to set one up. (<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/group.php?gid=140863571604&ref=ts>)

The VP of SAEM brought up the issue of trust that was articulated at the Shared Governance retreat and asked members to assume the best intentions of everyone. He also shared that he will be setting up a list of resources for people in his area for people to share skills with other co-workers. The Chair noted having more people get together to offer and correct information will be helpful. A. Merrifield noted that CFA is talking about what faculty might do during furlough days, such as community service and this was also helpful for stress reduction.

The Chair of EPC asked about the proxy rules and what to do if there is no quorum. She said if release time is lost for EPC, they would have to rotate who chairs the meetings and will have to do business differently in that committee. The Chair said S&F could look at that and make recommendations.

A member discussed financial concerns among faculty and asked for ways to mitigate those concerns before considering doing community service. A. Merrifield said in CFA they were really clear that the pay cut was going to impact some people more than others. He said they got a change to the MOU to allow faculty to work up to 125% of their time base and to work outside the university to a certain extent.

A member asked about the next WASC visit and about the strategy being developed for that visit due to furloughs. The Provost said the next visit is early October. He announced that E.

Sundberg was going on medical leave, so B. Butler will take over for her during the WASC review. He noted that WASC was well aware of the conditions in California. He thought the biggest challenge would be to sensitize the WASC team members who are not in the CSU or from California. He shared what he planned to say to the WASC team about how the university is stretching to meet WASC goals under the current conditions.

A member asked how the administration was dealing with furloughs. The President said it was complicated and discussed his perspective on his own job – the amount of work will not decrease, so he may work more on non-furlough weeks. If there is an emergency, he will have to come to campus. The member asked if there were issues in the infrastructure that the President was concerned about. The President said, yes, of course there were many areas he was concerned about. He said there were going to be less people and at some point, we'll have to take a close look at what we do and that we may not be able to do it next year.

There was some discussion of a possible change in funding of the Emeritus Dinner this year.

Respectfully submitted by Laurel Holmström Vega