

THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE  
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(AS-11)

December 4, 2017

Members excused: G. Kim, D. Law, P. L. Martinez (ASI), R. Raya-Fernandez, S. Shinn, B. Singh, J. Smith-Warshaw, B. Zante (ASI)

Members absent: P. Adams, A. Alexandrou, M. Golden, A. Iriberri, A.M. Tawfik, J. Wenger

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Holyoke at 4:02pm in HML 2206.

1.) Approval of the agenda.

MSC approving the agenda.

2.) Approval of the Minutes of November 27, 2017.

MSC approving the Minutes of November 27, 2017.

3.) Communications and announcements.

a. President Castro

Announced there is a lot of movement in Washington D.C. on DACA with some reason to be cautiously optimistic a deal may happen by year's end. Noted HR3440, the Dream Act, would be the optimal bill. Related Congressman Costa is keeping the campus abreast of the developments, and Fresno State's advocacy continues on all fronts. Suggested if faculty have any dreamers in class that want to know more, put them in contact with Gaby Encinas at the Dream Success Center. Noted there are 500-600 DACA students at Fresno State.

Provided information on the Title IX Coordinator position. Noted the university has currently had an interim coordinator since 2016. The searches did not result in a strong candidate to hire permanently, but they are committed to having a full-time person, just the right person.

Related another search will be conducted, but they will appoint a full-time interim, the Assistant Dean of Students/Student Conduct, Dean Pontius-Hogan. The current part-time interim Title IX coordinator will remain part-time focusing on athletics. The search will restart and hopefully will be completed by late spring.

Senator Kensinger (Women Studies) asked the criteria for this person to take the interim position.

President Castro responded Dean Pontius-Hogan has experience dealing with sensitive student conduct issues and is very knowledgeable about Title IX policies.

Senator Brady (Earth & Environmental Sciences) inquired if there will be someone assigned to the Assistant Dean's position.

President Castro responded there would, but he cannot share that information yet.

Senator Bryant (University-wide) noted 500-600 DACA students were mentioned, but last spring the amount estimated was 1,000. She inquired about the drop in number.

President Castro replied he learned the earlier number was not accurate, and there was a counting error. He noted they are tracking that number though because anecdotally they think some students left at the beginning of the semester when the DACA changes occurred at the federal level.

Announced the university has appointed Steve Robertello as the Interim Athletic Director. They will search for a new director in the middle or later part of next year.

Thanked faculty for a great semester and calendar year. Noted he is excited about the spring.

b. Provost Zelezny

Thanked faculty for a very busy fall semester and the extra service that was conducted. Related a number of faculty leaders came forward to help with the Academic Affairs Strategic Implementation Plan. Announced she will bring them in next semester to share their progress in the areas of access and opportunities in high impact practices, GE course redesign, research and graduate studies, and faculty work/life balance.

c. Chair Holyoke

Announced the first meeting of the senate in the spring is anticipated to include votes on recommendations regarding student evaluations.

Thanked the outgoing and incoming Vice Chairs.

4.) New Business

There was no new business for the Academic Senate.

5.) Consent Calendar.

a. Certificate of Advanced Study in Research Methods.

Susan Tracz (Graduate Program Coordinator, Kremen School of Education and Human Development) provided an overview of the proposed changes.

b. BA Art History Elevation.

Laura Meyer (Art & Design) provided an overview of the proposed changes.

c. Elevation of BA in Dance.

Kenneth Balint (Theater Arts) provided an overview of the proposed changes.

- d. Proposal to change Mathematics degree designation from a Bachelors in Arts to a Bachelors in Science.

Carmen Caprau (Mathematics) provided an overview of the proposed changes.

Senator Wilson (Computer Science) asked if they are maintaining the BA at all.

Carmen Caprau (Mathematics) replied they are not.

Senator Wilson (Computer Science) asked if they will still have an MA in Math.

Carmen Caprau (Mathematics) replied they are only changing the BA and not the MA yet.

No objections were raised. All items were approved by consent.

- 6.) APM 232 Policy on Student Absences – Academic Policy and Planning Committee. Second Reading.

Senator Van Camp (Criminology) moved to change the term “documented” to “authorized”.

Senator Maldonado (Philosophy) noted the term authorize can be questioned as to how it can be deemed as such.

Senator Henson (English) noted the policy states earlier the student is to provide documentation, so documented is consistent.

Senator Ram (University-wide) stated the term authorized provides flexibility.

Senator Mulooly (Anthropology and Chair of the AP&P committee) responded the policy is intentionally flexible and documentation can be based on whatever the faculty member accepts.

Senator Ong (Marketing & Logistics) stated “authorized” suggests permission is obtained before the absence. Suggested using the word “excused” instead.

Exchanging the word “excused” for “authorized” is accepted as a friendly amendment.

Senator Karr (Music) noted the power to excuse is with the faculty member and the university should not impose it as a requirement in policy.

Senator Ram (University-wide) suggested the term authorized is stronger than excused. Related if there is a serious and compelling reason it should be excused.

Senator Dangi (Geography and City and Regional Planning) moved to change the word “excused” to “approved”

Exchanging the word “approved” instead of “excused” is accepted as a friendly amendment.

Senator Henson (English) spoke against the motion because if someone misses class the instructor might not approve of the absence but may allow it. Noted she would like to return to “documented”.

Senator Karr (Music) noted if the approval comes from faculty, they could accept any form of documentation.

Senator Bryant (University-wide) agreed that “authorized” makes it seem like there is a second entity aside from the faculty member granting the approval.

Senator Sepulveda (ASI) noted the spirit behind the policy is students felt there were not enough protections for students to make up work if they missed classes.

Senator Van Camp (Criminology) suggested requiring documentation might compromise confidentiality.

Senator Jones (Communication) related the definition of each proposed term for clarity.

Senator Maldonado (Philosophy) called the question.

The question was called.

The motion to replace “documented” with “approved” fails.  
Senator Ram (University-wide) motioned to remove “in the event the student absence is documented”.

Senator Lewis (Kinesiology) stated she is fine with documented but thinks we should include unplanned absences.

Senator Karr (Music) spoke for the motion but is uncomfortable with the last sentence of the section.

MSC removal of sentence.

Senator Kensinger (Women Studies) moved to send the policy back to the AP&P committee for review and revision. Requested senators make suggestions for changes.

Senator Maldonado (Philosophy) spoke in favor of the motion and would like to see greater clarity in application and process.

Senator Gilewicz (English) requested clarification of what constitutes an unplanned absence and how the policy works with absence requirements in faculty syllabi.

Senator Kensinger (Women Studies) requested a definition of terms used in the document. She also requested timelines around negotiations of late assignments, giving faculty priority.

Senator Wilson (Computer Science) requested clarity on what requirements are being placed on student behavior and faculty behavior.

Senator Botwin (Psychology) requested that specific serious and compelling reasons be added.

MSC referring APM 232 back to the Academic Policy & Planning Committee. 1 nay, 1 abstention.

7.) APM 237 Policy on Faculty Responsibility for Accessible Instructional Materials.

Kevin Ayotte (Former Chair Academic Senate) provided an overview of the Accessible Technology Initiative and APM 237.

Senator Botwin (Psychology) related concern the onus falls on faculty to create the accessible materials. Noted it will create an extra burden on faculty.

Kevin Ayotte (Former Chair Academic Senate) explained some of the changes and what is similar to before. Explained the context behind the more substantive changes. If a faculty member authors a document, it should be made accessible. There are resources through the Center for Faculty Excellence that can help faculty.

Senator Botwin (Psychology) related he would work on an amendment over break that will better indicate the joint effort between administration and faculty toward accessibility, rather than solely faculty responsibility.

Kevin Ayotte (Former Chair Academic Senate) replied there are resources linked on the policy to aid faculty and a commitment to fund the CFE toward this endeavor.

The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:15pm. The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be in the Spring semester.

Submitted by  
Paula Durette  
Vice Chair  
Academic Senate

Approved by  
Thomas Holyoke  
Chair  
Academic Senate

