

THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE  
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(AS-11)

February 26, 2018

Members excused: L. Bryant, J. Smith-Warshaw

Members absent: P. Adams, B. DerMugrdechian, M. Golden, P.L. Martinez  
(ASI), M. Raheem, M. Shepherd, S. Shinn, W. Wu

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Holyoke at 4:00 pm in HML 2206.

1.) Approval of the agenda

MSC approving the agenda

2.) Approval of the Minutes of February 5, 2018

MSC approving the Minutes as amended of February 5, 2018

3.) Communications and announcements

a. Chair Holyoke

Chair Holyoke reported that he was at San Jose State in the previous week with other chairs of CSU academic senates. Executive Vice Chancellor Loren Blanchard was also present. Concern was expressed by Chairs over the executive orders promulgated previously. In addition, there was some suggestion that the CSU budget situation may be worse than generally believed and there may be cuts, though this is not yet certain. Chair Holyoke has asked President Castro and Vice President Astone for updated budget.

The Senate Executive Committee has voted to create a new task force to examine processes and procedures related to the hiring of

international faculty to make recommendations on how to streamline the process. A Call for Service will be sent shortly.

The Executive Committee has also approved appointments to the first student evaluation task force. Three faculty were appointed to the task force. The task force will meet soon and begin working on the RFP process.

Ballot information for the referendum on the university constitution have been sent to faculty moments before the Senate came to order. The Chair encouraged all faculty to vote on the measure.

b. Senator Kensinger (Women's Studies)

Senator Kensinger announced that the CFA will be organizing events opposing the governor's budget allocation to the CSU and encouraged faculty to take part. An event will be held in Sacramento on Wednesday, April 4. At least one bus will be leaving Fresno State for the event. Signup cards were distributed to Senators.

c. Provost Zelezny

The Provost reiterated that the budget situation for the coming year is dire. There will be no decline in the students the campus will be expected serve in the Central Valley, meaning that budget cuts will impact Fresno State directly.

The Provost reported that the second round of the AVP search for Water and Sustainability continues to run and candidates are visiting the campus. The Provost hoped to be able to announce further news soon. The AVP for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness search continues as well.

In addition, the search for a permanent Dean of Continuing and Global Education has kicked off and the job has been posted.

Senator Kensinger asked about a recent article in The Collegian indicating that Athletics had suffered a loss in revenue. The

Provost stated that President Castro would be visiting the Senate soon to update Senators on the budget generally.

d. Senator Wilson (Computer Science)

Senator Wilson announced the creation of a new Google calendar for Senate meetings. This calendar will automatically update Senators on the dates and times of meetings. Senator Wilson asked Senators to encourage similar practices for other meetings across the campus.

4.) New business

There was no new business for the Academic Senate.

5.) Student Ratings.

Chair Holyoke relinquished the chair to Vice Chair Hart for the duration of the debate of this item.

Vice Chair Hart presiding.

Chair Holyoke argued against the creation of the task force, noting that the task force overseeing the RFP for an outside vendor only received half the nominations it had asked for, and with an RFP going out there was a good chance that the second task force might do a lot of work for no reason.

Senator Alexandrou (Industrial Technology) spoke against the task force, saying he does not see any benefit to it and it was not likely to be able to produce anything better than what an outside vendor could provide.

Senator Ram (University-wide) spoke against the task force, saying she wanted to first see what the first task force accomplished. She noted that we are often unable to get enough faculty to staff task forces and committees and this proposed task force really needed faculty from all colleges, which is especially hard to get.

Senator Kensinger (Women's Studies) spoke in favor of the task force. She argued that we frequently have this debate about whether to develop an in-house instrument and never seem to have enough time to do it, so perhaps now was the time to really explore developing an in-house instrument.

Senator Henson (English) spoke in favor of the task force, noting that the faculty survey had found widespread dislike of IDEA. She felt that the senate had supported the RFP because it felt there had not been enough time to develop something in-house. Now that we have an extra year, she feels the possibility can now be explored.

Senator Sanmartin (Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures) spoke in favor. She argued that IDEA and other vendors are expensive and if we go outside we just might end up changing providers again.

Senator Karr (Music) noted that it would likely take years of work to get an in-house system working, so perhaps it would be worthwhile to postpone the new task force until the fall semester after we know what the RFP has produced.

CIO Leon noted that the RFP could be directed in the sense that if we know of certain vendors that we might prefer, the RFP could be written to encourage them to apply. He indicated that he is not sure how long it would really take to develop an in-house system and could take more time than people think. Senator Karr noted in response that it was more likely that the content of the instruments would probably take more time than the electronic delivery method.

Senator Jones (Communication) observed that we have lots of recurring questions about the feasibility of an in-house option. The task force could help to answer these questions and determine if an in-house option is possible. Gathering existing instruments could help the task force with developing an in-house instrument.

~~Senator Jones (Communication) argued that we have lots of questions about how to put together, test, and run an in-house instrument. Seeing what outside vendors do might help us develop our in-house instrument.~~

Senator Alexandrou (Industrial Technology) argued that we are required to have an instrument that is statistically valid and reliable. It would take us a long time to achieve this with an in-house instrument, and nobody is likely to like the result.

Senator Gilewicz (English) spoke in favor of the task force, noting that each college, or even each discipline, could develop their own questions if we had an in-house instrument. She argued that it might be cheaper to go in-house rather than contract with a vendor.

Senator Ram (University-wide) noted that IDEA is expected to be \$57,000 annually. She asked if the task force should be permitted to go forward if only 2 or 4 faculty members respond to the call. She asked if any senator was willing to nominate themselves to serve on it.

Senator Gilewicz (English) argued that we could start the task force with whomever applies and then another call could be sent next semester for additional members. Senator Ram responded that this would just put more work on the initial task force members.

Senator Botwin (Psychology) noted that the Senate Executive Committee could bring the task force charge back to the senate for changes if it needed to and not enough people applied.

Senator Kensinger (Women's Studies) offered an amendment to require the task force to periodically report back to the Academic Senate on its progress and both "explore and develop" an in-house instrument.

Chair Holyoke and Senator Botwin expressed concern about this becoming an open-ended, never ending task force.

Senator Karr (Music) suggested that the task force should merely be empowered to explore in-house evaluations, not "explore and develop".

Senator Thatcher (Public Health) opposed "explore and develop", arguing that the task force would not be in a position to develop an in-house instrument.

MSC striking "and develop" from the amendment.

MSC approving the remaining amendment to have the task force report periodically report to the senate.

Senator Henson (English) spoke in favor of the amended task force charge, saying it was time to approve it.

Senator Alexandrou (Industrial Technology) argued that the charge needed to be clear that any in-house instrument had to be entirely consistent with APM 322.

MSC approving amendment adding the requirement that exploring in-house instrument be consistent with APM 322 (4-abstentions).

Senator Botwin (Psychology) moved an amendment to have the task force deliver a final report on December 1, 2018. A friendly amendment changed this to February 26, 2019.

MSC approving the report deadline.

MSC approving an amendment adding “of teaching” to the term “student evaluations”.

Senator Sanmartin (Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures) argued for the task force, noting that there has been a lot of disagreement and senators feel strongly about this. Expressed concern with the argument that because there may not be enough applicants, those senators supporting the need to explore the internal option should volunteer for the taskforce. She noted that there has not been this kind of pressure when debating other issues and senators are representing their Departments and/or Programs in the Senate.

with the argument that the task force should be voted down because nobody would apply for it.

Senator Chowdhury (Art and Design) noted a *New York Times* article arguing that student evaluations are a poor way to assess teaching ability (and email the link to the article to senator). Perhaps the task force could look into more radical forms of assessment.

Senator Cady (History) argued that the *New York Times* article was not written by an expert. Advised senators to read it warily.

MSC approving the task force charge. Ayes-24, Nays-20, Abstentions-2.

The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:10 pm. The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be on Monday, March 12, 2018.

Submitted by  
Bradley Hart  
Vice Chair  
Academic Senate

Approved by  
Thomas Holyoke  
Chair  
Academic Senate