

Academic Senate Minutes
December 4, 2008
3:00 – 5:15, Commons

Abstract

Announcement and Chair Report. Correspondence received. Agenda approved. Minutes of 11/13 approved. New minor in Early Childhood Education approved. WASC update. Associated Students Report. Vice President of SAEM report. Special Statement from Joyce Chong, Managing Director, Advising, Career & EOP Services. Committee of the Whole discussion about the enrollment crisis. Motion that the Academic Senate of Sonoma State University requests that the Chief Financial Officer search for and find any and all one-time funds to restore instructional sections. Approved.

Present: Scott Miller, Susan Moulton, Deb Kindy, Robert McNamara, Catherine Nelson, Sam Brannen, Noel Byrne, Birch Moonwomon, Michael Pinkston, Steve Wilson, Kristen Daley, Ronald Lopez, John Sullins, Robert Coleman-Senghor, Brian Wilson, Terry Lease, Karen Grady, Rick Robison, Tia Watts, Jim Christmann, Wanda Boda, Steve Orlick, John Wingard, James Dean, Lillian Lee, Sandra Shand, Eduardo Ochoa, Larry Furukawa-Schlereth, Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Andy Merrifield, Tristan Kelley, Casey Jones, Lane Olson, Art Warmoth, Carmen Works, Sunil Tiwari, Karen Thompson

Absent: Tim Wandling, Steve Cuellar, Kathy Morris, Rick Luttmann, Maria Hess, Bruce Peterson, Ruben Armiñana, Whitney McClure

Proxies: Scott Nichleach for Edie Mendez, Sharon Cabaniss for Cora Neal, Melinda Milligan for Richard Senghas

Guests: Rose Bruce, Mary Gendernalik-Cooper, Barbara Butler, Elaine Sundberg, Elaine Leeder, Marisa Thigpen, Megan Elrod, Joyce Chong, Eva Oliver Tamazia Jordan, Kelli Swenson (Peer Mentor), Brandon Tontz

Announcements and Chair Report – S. Miller

S. Miller announced the proxies and noted that the parliamentarian was absent today and asked the body for their patience. He noted the second meeting of the President's Diversity Council and said he would report more on that during the WASC discussion on Diversity portion of the meeting. He encouraged people to send written reports to the Senate. He asked if people want to give an oral report at the Senate to give him advance notice. He reported on a conversation he had had with the Director of Advising, Joyce Chong, about how students were not able to get classes during first registration. He also noted that he has spoken to more than a few people at every level that are showing signs of wear. He encouraged everyone to be extra kind to themselves and each other during this difficult time.

Correspondence – The Chair reported on correspondence from the Chancellor's Office regarding an upcoming CSU student research competition.

Consent items:

Approval of Agenda – time certain added for Statewide Senator at 4:10.
Approved.

Minutes of 11/13/08 – Approved.

New Minor in Early Childhood Education – Approved.

WASC update – E. Sundberg

E. Sundberg noted that the committees are working.

Associated Students Report – T. Kelley

T. Kelley reported that he introduced the WASC issues to the ASI Senate and he is hoping to inspire them to work on the issues with faculty and the administration.

A member asked how students were feeling about getting classes. T. Kelley said he's always heard that students have trouble getting classes, but this year it seemed worse. He thought some seats would be opened during Reg 2. Another member praised T. Kelley's participation on faculty governance committees. A member cautioned that there may not be more seats during Reg 2. Another member reported on what she was witnessing with student registration in the Advising Center and stated that their creativity is running out for freshman.

Vice President of SAEM report – M. Lopez-Phillips

M. Lopez-Phillips reported current statistics on enrollment. The average unit load currently is 12.57 and last year at this time is was 11.55 units. For the Fall semester the average was 13.74. Currently, 2400 more students are registered now than this time last year. He thought the unit cap and the notice that there would be reduced classes prompted students to register earlier and that was squeezing out the freshman who register last.

A member asked when courses are cancelled, how is enrollment maintained. A member noted that there are a number of upper division tracks that cannot be offered, so students can't graduate. She also asked for a brief overview about how the Student Union and University Center funding are progressing.

The Provost responded to the comments so far. He said they knew there would be problems in the Spring. In the fall, we enrolled 8301 FTES and if spring would have typical fall/spring patterns we would have an enrollment of 7975 FTES. Given the funding cuts, the Deans were projecting they could

only schedule enough for 7004 FTES. He said that was a 12% reduction. That would mean most students would get one class less, not that a large group of students would get nothing. He said he emailed the Deans that they will hear from Joyce Chong about problems in specific courses. The Chair asked if there would be funding between now and the second registration to mount the courses to close that gap. The Provost responded that some money was available, but not enough to cover the 900 FTES needed. A member asked if part of the problem was that there are many students here that are unfunded. The Provost said that if it were not for the budget cuts, the campus could have dealt with the over enrollment with the excess fees. He also clarified that the freshman target was met, but the other enrollment categories went up, including retention. He said they expect to have a better handle on it next year. The whole system has declared impaction and they will have rolling admissions to watch it more closely.

A member suggested that if students cannot graduate because of this situation, they should be graduated anyway. Another member criticized whoever was responsible for the over enrollment and asked that they be made accountable. The Provost noted that the reasons why the campus has over enrollment was due to factors that were unforeseen. There was increased volatility in student enrollment and yield all across the CSU. There was also an unexpected increase in the retention rate all over the CSU too. He argued that the retention rate was the largest factor in the over enrollment. He said when you understand the reasons why plans don't work, you don't scapegoat the person overseeing those plans.

A member asked for language he could use with parents and students to discuss this situation. The Provost said he could not come up with that language in the moment and he requested that the Senator send him an email and that he would respond.

A member offered a particular circumstance that was puzzling regarding enrollment for his department and targets and asked the Provost for clarification. The Provost said it was the first he has heard of it and described how the numbers for targets were used.

Special Statement from Joyce Chong, Managing Director, Advising, Career & EOP Services

J. Chong said she was reporting from the front lines. She said freshman registration started at 2:00 and by 2:30 it was all over. There were no more classes for freshman. Student, parents and the staff in the Advising Center were all upset. Parents are threatening to remove their students. She said she didn't care if the lawns go brown, the campus should open up classes for students. (The Senate applauded).

Three students spoke about their experience trying to register. The Director of International Programs also spoke about how the situation was impacting students wanting to study abroad and foreign students.

Motion to spend 5 to 10 minutes discussing the above issue. Second. No objection. Discussion ensued.

Motion to come into a Committee of the Whole until the body felt ready to move on. Second. Discussion. *Approved.*

Discussion highlights during the Committee of the Whole regarding the enrollment situation.

Faculty should be able to add additional students to their classes if they choose to.

There was concern from the Provost about raising the SFR and the quality of instruction by increasing class sizes. He also noted that perhaps the unit cap should have been 12 instead of 16 to distribute the sections more.

There is a moral and ethical commitment to offer classes. Arguments were offered against graduating students without all their coursework. The administration was asked for one time money to mount more sections.

Arguments were offered about assumptions being used in the discussion, such as denying access to higher education and that the state will not penalize the CSU for teaching more students.

There was a request of the administration by a faculty member to "match funds" if he teaches overload.

There was an argument that there was a registration panic because of the 16-unit cap. A member discussed the situation in his department where the 3% budget cut actually was higher when looked at in terms of teaching capacity.

Concern was voice about freshman students being directed to go to the junior college. There was a suggestion to re-do registration with a unit cap at 12. The Provost said that would not be possible.

The Provost noted he had only learned about the issue two hours previous and needed more information as to causes.

A student noted that students have had trouble getting classes previously, so it was not new. She also noted that she had heard that some faculty were told they could not teach to room capacity and didn't understand that.

An argument was offered that the retention rate will be pushed into the future and the completion rate will go down as students leave for other types of programs. This will affect diversity on campus and low-income students.

It was noted that the registration problem was primarily for freshman.

Arguments were offered against increased workloads for faculty and how that would reduce the quality of an SSU education.

It was noted that some students other than freshman were being affected as well.

It was noted that seniors cannot go to the junior college for upper division GE courses and some may quit due to this issue. Support was voiced for allowing students to graduate early if they only have one course missing.

Arguments were also offered why not to graduate students early who are missing required courses.

A suggestion was made that the Senate act in some way and “shake the money out.”

The CFO offered to look over the University budgets with the information from folks closer to the enrollment process about how much of an infusion of one time money would help, and to figure out a financial package rapidly. He expressed his concern over proceeding this way and how it would look to the Legislature. However, he realized the critical nature of the problem.

Several people echoed the concern about the message this would send the Legislature and arguments were offered against faculty taking on more workload.

It was suggested that if faculty take on more workload, it be made very public and that no students be admitted in the Fall, if that's what it will take.

It was suggested that if money was found, that students already registered be brought up to at least 12 units, that students that need to graduate be given priority and that classes for freshman be targeted in specific areas such as Math, English, etc. that are gateway classes.

It was suggested that if faculty take on more workload, the administrators could take a one-time pay cut.

Arguments were given about the responsibility the university has to teach students who are already admitted.

An argument was given about the financial “mismanagement” on campus and that the situation was predictable.

It was suggested that students become active in lobbying the Legislature.

**Motion that the Committee of the Whole rise and report to the assembly.
Second. No objection.**

Motion to change agenda to take up item #2 – By-Laws Revision regarding student voting on Standing and Subcommittees. Second. Discussion. *Vote – Approved.*

Motion to waive first reading and postpone the item to the next meeting. Second. Discussion. Motion to divide. Second. *Approved.*

Vote on waiving the first reading. *Approved.*

Vote on postponing item to next Senate meeting. *No objection.*

Motion to extend for 10 minutes. Second. Discussion. *No objection.*

Motion: that the Academic Senate of Sonoma State University requests the Chief Financial Officer search for and find any and all one time funds to restore instructional sections. Second. Discussion.

Motion to amend . . . and do so in consultation with the Senate's Budget Committee. Second. Discussion.

Motion to amend amendment – should funds be found there be a fair and cooperative process to determine where the need is greatest. Second. Discussion.

Time limit reached. **Motion to extend by five minutes. *No objection.***

Question called on all matters before the house. Second. *No objection.*

Vote on amendment to amendment - should funds be found there be a fair and cooperate process to determine where the need is greatest. *Failed.*

Vote amendment . . . and do so in consultation with the Senate's Budget Committee. *Failed.*

Vote on motion - that the Academic Senate of Sonoma State University requests that the Chief Financial Officer search for and find any and all one-time funds to restore instructional sections. *Approved.*

Adjourned

Respectfully submitted by Laurel Holmström