

Academic Senate Minutes

February 11, 2010

3:00 – 5:00, Commons

Abstract

Approval of Minutes of 12/3/09 and 12/17/09. Agenda approved. Chair Report. New minor in Electrical Engineering – approved. Faculty Eligible for Emeritus Status – approved. Vice President of Administration and Finance Report. Vice President of SAEM Report – M. Lopez- Phillips. President Report – R. Armiñana. Provost Report – E. Ochoa. Associated Students Report. Chair-Elect Report. Special Visit: Gina Belaforte, Vice Mayor of Rohnert Park. Statewide Senators Report. Resolution from the Senate Budget Committee: 50% of Budget Spent in Academic Schools postponed to next meeting. APC Report. FSAC Report. EPC Report. SAC Report. CFA Report. Good of the Order.

Present: Susan Moulton, John Wingard, Deb Kindy, Robert McNamara, Catherine Nelson, Sam Brannen, Edith Mendez, Michael Pinkston, Steve Wilson, John Sullins, Robert Coleman-Senghor, Ed Beebout, Mutombo M’Panya, Florence Bouvet, Paula Lane, Rick Robison, Nick Giest, Tia Watts, Wanda Boda, Michael Cohen, Karin Jaffe, James Dean, Laura Watt, Maria Hess, Lillian Lee, Ruben Armiñana, Eduardo Ochoa, Larry Furukawa-Schlereth, Matthew Lopez-Phillips, Andy Merrifield, Morgan Carvajal, Matt McCarty, Dolores Bainter, Art Warmoth, Carmen Works, Richard Senghas, Derek Girman, Sandra Shand

Absent: Scott Miller, Noel Byrne, Janet Hess, Chip McAuley, John Kornfeld, Margie Purser, Jenny Tice

Proxies: Edie Brown for Jacqueline Holley

Guests: Saeid Rahimi, Elaine Leeder, Timothy Wandling, Gina Belforte

The Chair welcomed new members and returning members to the Senate.

Approval of Minutes – 12/3 & 12/17 – amended and approved

Approval of Agenda – approved.

Chair Report – S. Moulton

S. Moulton noted she was following the debate on the Chair’s listserv about the possible elimination of the 9 units of upper division GE. The Chairs were meeting next week with the Chancellor.

Consent items:

New minor in Electrical Engineering – approved.

Faculty Eligible for Emeritus Status – approved.

The Chair noted the Diversity Recommendations Survey was available and encouraged everyone to take it.

Vice President of Administration and Finance Report – L. Furukawa-Schlereth

L. Furukawa-Schlereth noted the new money received by the campus. \$1,225,000.00 would be dedicated to classes in the Fall. He offered to answer questions.

Vice President of SAEM Report – M. Lopez- Phillips

M. Lopez- Phillips reminded the body that it was Black History Month and described many of the activities. He reported on the McNair Scholars program and talked about 4 students who were admitted to Ph.D programs.

The Chair asked the Vice President of Administration and Finance to report on the status of student scholarships for the Fall. L. Furukawa-Schlereth said that the campus usually distributes about a million dollars in scholarships via the Scholarship Office and the Schools, and the Presidential scholarships. For the '10 – '11 year, about \$500,000 had already been received from donors. The rest of money was usually distributed via the Endowment, but that distribution depended on the market. He thought that early in March, he would be able to bring a plan to the President about how the campus would be able to distribute the other \$500,000. He thought he could report again on March 11th.

President Report – R. Armiñana

R. Armiñana reported on the \$1.2 million that would come to campus and he said it would be dedicated to creating classes. He discussed other budgetary items they were watching.

Provost Report – E. Ochoa

E. Ochoa followed up by saying that the extra money coming to campus would create approximately 195 sections in the Fall. The money also helped balance out the Spring offerings. A member asked how many course sections were lost during the current semester compared to last year. The Provost said courses were reduced due to lowered targets and budget reductions. He did not know the exact number. A member asked for a general overview of how the stimulus funds situate the campus for the year. The Provost noted that the stimulus funds could be counted on, but there were many other variables that remained unstable. He noted that the Chancellor's office thought that some of the possible money from the State would need to be targeted for enrollment growth. He discussed other questions arising from the current budget situation. A member asked how well the opened GE courses were utilized. The Provost said they were very well utilized.

Associated Students Report – M. Carvajal

M. Carvajal noted that Associated Student elections were upcoming and encouraged faculty to send qualified students to the AS for more information. Election packets were available in the Student Union. She said the ASP was working on the heritage lecture series and other events on campus. Students were still showing a high interest in campus events. JUMP doubled their semester plans for getting involved in community projects.

Chair-Elect Report – J. Wingard

J. Wingard reminded the body that Faculty Governance positions were open for nomination. He encouraged the Senators to put themselves forward for positions or to encourage others to step forward. Structure and Functions had taken up the Diversity Committee discussion referred to them.

Special Visit: Gina Belaforte, Vice Mayor of Rohnert Park

G. Belaforte introduced her talk by saying she wanted to tell the Senate about Rohnert Park and why it was in the predicament it was in currently. Rohnert Park started 50 years ago and was designed by the visionaries to be country club type living. They saw young families coming to live in such an environment and they built many tennis courts, pools, two 18 hole golf courses, a performing arts center and a baseball field. Another thing Rohnert Park did was to keep property taxes very low to attract the young families. Rohnert Park was also friendly to business. She noted that Rohnert Park grew and grew and was a fun place to live. Then things began to turn and now they found themselves on the verge of insolvency. All of the amenities were very costly to the city, many needing refurbishing. She then discussed the impact of Prop 13 on Rohnert Park. Rohnert Park only received about 11 - 15 cents per each \$1000 paid of property taxes and this was frozen with Prop 13. Most other cities receive between 30 -35 cents or more. She noted this fact was fundamental to all the financial issues. Last year they had to cut \$4.8 million out of their budget due to deficits. This year they were looking at a \$1.2 million deficit. They were considering closing all the pools except for one. They are talking about closing the Performing Arts center. They had restructured their landscaping contract, laid off 17 people and those cuts only amounted to \$500,000. There were developments coming into being that would bring fees to the City, but that will take time and work. She reviewed the other places the city might cut and the issues all of those decisions raised. She discussed the lack of a fiscal policy in Rohnert Park, the rising cost of health care and its impact on the current situation. She noted that the good news was that they were actively working on it and she then discussed her vision for partnerships with Sonoma State. She noted one idea for art students to work on mural projects to help with graffiti issues in the city. She discussed some of the other partnerships the city has developed. She praised the Rohnert Park city staff and their willingness to work on change. She noted that the efficiencies they were putting into place now may serve them well in the future.

The Provost spoke about the Sonoma Mountain Village business incubator and the current partnerships with the SSU School of Business. He asked about a grant to

help retire the remaining debt associated with the build out of the space to help the businesses be more sustainable. G. Belaforte said she did not know how to help with funding out of the general fund. She noted the State took \$4 million out of their redevelopment fund. That move by the State was in court. They could have used that money for the Sonoma Mountain Village project. A member asked about the funding for the Cotati-Rohnert Park School District. G. Belaforte noted that initially the Cotati-Rohnert Park School District was categorized as "rural." The city continued to grow and people still asked for the designation of "rural." So there is less funding. She described the complexities of changing the "rural" designation. She noted that in Rohnert Park, the housing cost is so low, young families might move in again which would help the School Districts. A member asked about an increase in sales tax for Rohnert Park and the casino. G. Belaforte said an ad-hoc committee was looking at raising sales tax by ½ cent for 5 years. She said the Council wanted to look for every possibility before going to the community asking for more money. She noted that mayors and council members were meeting that night to discuss whether they would put on the June ballot a measure for voters to say they don't want the casino which would then go to the Governor. She said the casino has declared bankruptcy and it would take at least 18 months before there was a building. A student member asked about the City helping graduates of SSU stay in Rohnert Park. G. Belaforte said they used to have first time homebuyer assistance, but because the State took their redevelopment money, they can't do that now. She also discussed issues related to bringing more business to Rohnert Park. The Chair thanked G. Belaforte and presented her with complimentary tickets to the campus production of "Company." Applause.

Statewide Senators Report – R. McNamara and C. Nelson

R. McNamara noted he sent out a link to the numerous resolutions passed at the last Statewide Senate meeting and said there were also resolutions coming up for first readings and asked for feedback. He reviewed some of the resolutions that had passed. One was regarding the Deliverology methodology of the graduation initiative and another about the faculty trustee issue. He noted it had now been a year since they sent faculty trustee names forward to the Governor. Another resolution the Statewide Senate passed encouraged campuses to update their policies about academic restructuring and faculty consultation in such restructuring. C. Nelson reported that the faculty trustees were being interviewed. However, the Governor's office was still requesting more diversity in the nominees and they did not know the motivation for that request. Rumors were abounding, the most bizarre being that the Governor had been taken over by aliens who promised to preserve his body in exchange for brain occupancy. They found little with which to work however. She reported on the President's Task Force that was created to look at various initiatives surrounding the graduation initiative, including eliminating the 9 units of upper division GE. Standing Committees of the Statewide Senate were monitoring the task force. She also talked about a campaign going on statewide to reduce the cost of textbooks by 50% over a 5-year period. One issue that caught her eye was that faculty would be required to submit their syllabi for review to see how they are using low cost materials. She said they were keeping their eye on it. A member asked the President why the upper division GE was a problem. The President said most other universities did not have upper division GE. A Statewide

Senator noted that the Chancellor had been questioning the upper division GE previously. A member noted that originally the upper division GE was a mandate from Long Beach and was not originated by the faculty. He questioned how this change would affect funding. The Provost said the task force has just begun to meet, so there was no solid information yet. The member said he was troubled by the implication that previously the upper division GE had been touted as educationally and pedagogically needed, but no evidence had been offered that it was now not educationally or pedagogically needed.

Resolution from the Senate Budget Committee: 50% of Budget Spent in Academic Schools – Second Reading - N. Byrne

N. Byrne moved to postpone the item to the next Senate meeting. He asked T. Wandling to speak to the motion. T. Wandling said SBC wanted more time to consider the feedback from the Senate and recent financial news before the second reading. **Second. Approved.**

APC Report – A. Warmoth

A. Warmoth reported on the first meeting of APC where they discussed the agenda for the upcoming JCAP meeting. They passed a motion in regard to curricular planning: “We want to frame the JCAP discussion in terms of the following question – how do we align our central planning and approval processes in the areas of general education, diversity, sustainability and community development to connect with School based curricular initiatives?” They also discussed the planning priorities related to preserving the integrity of majors on a sustainable basis. They received communication from the Provost about more money coming to campus. Dean Rahimi offered some recommendations about sustaining majors. Both the Provost and Dean Rahimi have noted that SSU does not have an inordinate number of majors. He reported that the Chairs of the Standing Committees would now be on the invitation list for JCAP in case anything in their purview should arise. The Provost remarked that he had a meeting with the Academic Council that morning which uncovered wrinkles in the budget picture he had not known prior to his communication with APC. A member voiced concern about the power of APC to shape curriculum.

FSAC Report – R. Senghas

R. Senghas noted the information item on the Senate agenda which was FSAC’s response the Staff Senator’s concern about faculty / staff civility. He reported on an issue of concern for FSAC - several departments had not met their RTP deadlines. They would be putting out a statement about that. The Chair asked the Staff rep if there were other ways of getting the civility statement out. The Staff rep said she thought the last statement in the resolution would be good to post in departments. **It was moved to endorse the statement by the Senate. Second. Approved.** A member described how her department worked out workload issues with the staff. A member asked what the role was for staff in the RTP process.

EPC Report – C. Works

C. Works reported that EPC was working on their normal business. She noted that a proposal to change GE in Arts and Humanities was before EPC and would be coming to the Senate as a business item, since it was not approved unanimously at the GE subcommittee. She gave an overview of the proposal. She reported that the GE subcommittee was seeing more petitions for GE credit for non-GE courses from faculty on campus. She said those were being denied and if faculty thought their course appropriate for GE, then they should propose that to the GE subcommittee. GE was also beginning to develop assessments for GE courses. There was further discussion about the issue of GE courses, the lack of GE courses available and suggestions for how to deal with GE course offerings in a more systematic matter. A member gave an impassioned speech about serving students.

SAC Report – D. Girman

D. Girman reported that SAC was finalizing language for the grade appeal policy concerning culminating experiences in graduate programs. They were also working on putting into place practices that would ensure students get advised at least once during their time at SSU.

CFA Report – A. Merrifield

A. Merrifield reported CFA applauded CSU thinking it is important to graduate students and they had problems with Deliverology and Barbarism. (*An Instruction to Deliver: Tony Blair, the Public Services and the Challenge of Delivery*). He analyzed that the above book was anti-faculty and very top down management among other issues. He cautioned the faculty to be very careful about the graduation initiative. He reported that there would be a rally on March 4th at noon organized by Students for a Quality Education, with many of the unions present as well. He noted that March 4th was now a national day of concern for higher education, as well as K -12 and community colleges.

Good of the Order

The Chair announced the annual Art from the Heart Valentine's event in the University Art Gallery.

Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Laurel Holmström Vega