THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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March 16, 2020

Members excused:

Members absent:

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Holyoke at 4:02 p.m. in HML 2206 and via Zoom video conferencing.

1. Approval of the Agenda.

MSC

1. Approval of the Minutes of 03/09/20

MSC approving the amended Minutes of 03/09/20

1. Communications and Announcements

Chair Holyoke: Not scheduled to meet until Apr 27, and if that meeting cannot take place in person, the executive committee will decide if any matter before the Senate rises to the importance of holding a meeting via Zoom.

The Provost will hold a Zoom forum to any all faculty to answer questions this Thursday1-2pm (look for email announcement)

Provost Jiménez-Sandoval: Situation is being closely monitored. Instruction shifted to virtual except for some labs and arts courses. Chairs, though Deans, are being asked for a plan B if all classes must go virtual. Noted that we are in close consultation with all 22 campuses, but our campus has some local control on making decisions. The Provost emphasized to all to consider the impact on our students, noting that it has been difficult for faculty and staff, however, retention is key to both student and campus success. Thus please communicate clearly, fully, and in a timely manner with your students.

Sen. Ong asked if we will continue online after Apr 27, with concern that students have gone home/become used to virtual delivery. The Provost answered that we should do what makes sense for best outcomes.

Sen. (from Zoom) inquired about the status of internships. The Provost said that the agencies will participate in making the call- if no longer accepting students, then faculty must shift to alternatives. Sen. Ram mentioned that some placements do have work students can do remotely, so it is best to check for this option.

Sen. DeWalt inquired about students without digital access. The Provosts detailed a number of ways this is being addressed.

Sen. McBee requested clarification on the terms Virtual vs. Online. The Provost said that “virtual” is the term we will use to denote stopgap measures, and the term “online” refers to appropriately vetted and sanctioned courses using full best practices.

Sen. (from Zoom) asked for clarification about due date extensions, somehow it seems there is lack of consensus on what is meant and to whom it applies. The Provost clarified that these 4 days this week are to be used exclusively to move faculty to virtual modality, and that unless the course was already online, no work should be collected during this downtime.

Sen. Findley expressed concern about the required internships made by accrediting bodies. The Provost mentioned that consultation thus far with such bodies indicates that they are showing willingness to be flexible. The Provost also called on us as faculty (and the professional expertise we embody), to make our best determination on alternatives and go with them. In this time of crisis we will decide what is appropriate.

Sen. (From Zoom) inquired about student ratings. The Provost said that student ratings are going forward, but a letter will go into all files explaining the COVID-19 situation.

Sen. Cromwell inquired about the impact on Tenure–Track timelines. The Provost said this is a good point, and that it needs to be considered.

Sen. (from Zoom) expressed concern about a lack of consultation on canceling study-abroad, and asked why even summer tours were canceled. The Provost indicated that it seemed clear to all that we cannot risk advocating any travel at this time.

Sen. Lewis expressed her concern that student ratings during this time would place faculty at significant risk. The Provost strongly disagreed, and said that student ratings from this semester will not put anyone at risk.

Sen. (From Zoom) asked about how to deal with our absence policy, and the level of documentation now required. The Provost advocated that be generous and use our best judgement.

ASI President Hernandez expressed concern about options for students that struggle with an online platform and cited issues such and job loss and access to campus. The Provost emphasized once again his recommendation that faculty be flexible, empathetic, with a focus on core content.

Sen. Cronin asked about systems in place for dropping courses. Dr. Muscat said she is working on an online form and streamlined process for drops. Physical signature are not needed, and relaxed documentation requirements will be accepted.

Sen. (from Zoom) asked for peer evaluation guidance. The Provost said these can be done via virtual mode, and he feels that faculty will be generous with their feedback given the circumstances. Dr. Baum told us that an options is to omit Section 3 of the standard review.

Sen. Bryant asked if the university servers have the capacity to accommodate the situation. The Provost said that Orlando Leon has his team working on it and we are hopeful.

Sen. Walter asked if we will be moving back from virtual mode after Apr 27. The Provost said that Apr 27 is a reassessment date to determine next steps. Dr. Fu mentioned that the virtual mode will be assessed, but cautioned that accreditation mandates approved instruction if there is no emergency, so face to face must go back if the emergency is over. (Note from Vice Chair: An email from President Castro March 17 stated we will stay in Virtual mode for the entirety of Spring 2020)

Sen. (From Zoom) inquired about commencement. The Provost said no decision has been made yet. (Note from Vice Chair: An email from President Castro March 17 stated commencement has been canceled.)

Sen. Lent expressed concern about requiring any lab courses when some students live with at-risk people. The Provost mentioned that we may need to move to Plan B sooner given tighter restrictions from governing bodies.

Sen Cronwell asked about TT faculty conference travel – can “accepted on the agenda” count towards satisfying probationary requirements. The Provost said yes.

ASI President Hernandez asked about IRA(sp?) travel funding. Dr. Fu stated that there is no precedent to follow. Graduating seniors will be impacted, but for others it may be possible to use these funds next semester

1. Consent Calendar

Women’s Studies Program Reclassification to Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Objection received from one senator: Item moved to agenda item 8 below.

1. New Business.

none

1. Department of Child and Family Sciences move from the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences to the College of Social Sciences.

Dr. Dyer: described the history of her department and the request to move the College of Social Sciences.

Sen. Sanchez moved to waive second reading.

MCS

Vote to approve the move of the Department of Child and Family Sciences to the College of Social Sciences:

MSC

1. Student Internship Policy. Academic Policy and Planning Committee. Second Reading.

Discussion postponed to next Senate meeting.

1. Women’s Studies Program Reclassification to Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Sen Lewis expressed concern that a program coordinator does not have the same salary as chair, and that the request may have financial costs. Dean DenBeste answered that no there is no extra financial changes as the current coordinator is operating at a chair’s salary.

Sen. Hernandez moved to waive second reading:

MSC

Vote in favor of requested program change:

MSC

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The Academic Senate adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be scheduled for the Fall Semester 2020.

Submitted by Approved by

Raymond Hall Thomas Holyoke

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate