THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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October 21, 2019

Members excused: M. Botwin, M. Dangi, G. Kim, H. Muchalski, F. Parra, R. Raya Fernandez, A.M. Tawfik

Members absent: P. Adams, F. Chen, A. Culbertson, O. Hernandez, D. Lewis, K. McBee, B. Ong

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Holyoke at 4:03 p.m. in HML 2206.

1. Approval of the Agenda.

MSC approving the agenda

1. Approval of the Minutes of 10/7/19.

MSC approving the amended Minutes of 10/7/19.

1. Communications and Announcements.

none

1. Installation of New Senators.

Sean Fulop

Department of Linguistics

Jonathan Biggane

Department of Management

Jeff Crane

Department of Counselor Education and Rehabilitation (CER)

1. New Business.

none

1. Consultation Regarding University Commencement.

Dr. Lamas discussed the proposal to discontinue the University wide commencement ceremony, and beginning this Spring only the College level and affinity group commencement ceremonies will run. He explained this decision was made due to the decreasing attendance, even in the face of advertising and messaging. He also pointed out that Fresno State is one of only two CSUs to still have a University wide commencement. He further elaborated that this proposal would give other ceremonies more time, and importantly, more time for transitions in the impacted SaveMart Center. Ceremonies would still be held on both Friday and Saturday to meet demand. Commencement is primarily funded via the graduation fee charged to student upon application (currently $51) and that this funding model has been insufficient, requiring the University to subsidize and run with a deficit these past years. He estimated the expense per college ceremony at about $20k each, but did not have specifics to share concerning the cost breakdown.

President Castro added that the proposal would now have the conferral of degrees take place at the relevant college commencement ceremony. Hence the proposal is to have one fewer, and that he has come to hear from the faculty on this proposal, and that he will seek consultation with students via ASI next. The president mentioned that he is open to considering alternative ways to celebrate University wide that would capture a unifying whole-campus spirit.

A fact sheet was supplied to the Senate and is available in pdf format on the Academic Senate webpage “[Fresno State Commencement Report](http://www.fresnostate.edu/academics/senate/documents/Fresno%20State%20Commencement%20Report_2019.pdf)”

1. President’s Budget Presentation

Vice President Deborah Adishian-Astone delivered a presentation entitled “Campus Budget Update” where she described the University budget and allocation process. After her presentation she answered questions form the Senate floor summarized below. The presentation slides are available on the Academic Senate web page.

Chair Holyoke and Sen. Ram (Political Science) asked about a discrepancy in reported percent allocations. Slide 3 shows academic affairs at 69.89% of Level A allocation whereas slide 14 (with the Level A overview) has the allocation at 66.22%.

VP Adishian-Astone: explained that the 66.22% is an effective rate that has other inputs included in the calculation, including funds that do not go through the initial new funds allocation chain. She promised to send a memo to the Senate with a narrative to explain the calculation, which in turn should explain the differences in reported percentages from slide 3 to the summary overview slides 14 to 20.

Many senators asked about why the percentage of the state allocation going to the benefits pool continues to grow, seemingly in competition with all other campus needs.

VP Adishian-Astone: described a compact, put in place in 2014-15 with the governor, froze the state allocation towards benefits, in which the universities agreed to “live within their means” at a specific funding level. She stated that there was no plan she knew of on the horizon to alter or change this compact or funding model.

President: Noted that this Governor has given us biggest increase in one year in history. But he has already signaled that, in his words “the plane is about to land”, so a flattening of the budget is expected in the near future, and the State does want campuses to be thoughtful on how many people we have and hire.

Sen. Henson (English): asked for details about the Level 0 allocations (those prior to Level A).

VP Adishian-Astone: We can provide a table describing all the allocations to centrally managed funds by divisional area (excluding GI2025 which are detailed in the presentation).

Sen Walter (Biology): express her concern over the large percentage of student success funding allocated towards the benefits pool. She stated that faculty and staff benefits, from the point of view of academic literature of what impacts student success, has not been shown to correlate to such benefits.

President Castro responded that recruiting and retaining talented faculty is important in this regard, but this is part of the larger problem system wide and remains a concern.

VP Adishian-Astone: also mentioned that specific staff roles (advising) and faculty positions were hired as part of the student success initiative.

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The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be Monday, Nov 4, 2019.

Submitted by Approved by

Raymond Hall Thomas Holyoke

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate