THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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November 15, 2021

Members present: Rich DeJordy (At-Large), Kathleen Dyer (Universitywide), Xuanning Fu (Interim Provost), Raymond Hall (Chair), Tom Holyoke (former chair), Jennifer Miele (At-Large), Rebecca Raya-Fernandez (At-Large), Susan Schlievert (Statewide), Tinneke Van Camp (Vice Chair),

Members excused: Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval (President)

Guests: Venita Baker (Academic Senate), Keith Clement (Chair Undergraduate Curriculum), James Mullooly (Chair AP&P), Bernadette Muscat (Interim Dean of Undergraduate Studies), Jim Schmidtke (Interim AVP Academic Affairs)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hall at 3:17 pm on Zoom.

1. Approval of the Agenda.

MSC

1. Approval of the Minutes 11.01.21.

MSC

1. Communications and Announcements.

Communications from the Provost:

Dean Marshall is retiring at the end of this semester. He was temporarily assigned to serve as assistant to the interim Provost. In consideration of a more stable structure and to set a workflow in the Provost Office, and to allow the interim Provost to focus on strategic planning, campus wide initiatives, post-pandemic instruction etc, he asks the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate to consider the appointment of an interim vice-Provost, as the search for a permanent Provost will be launched. When the search for a permanent Provost is concluded, this position can be reconsidered.

**Chair Hall** advocated for continued assistance in this important role.

**Provost Fu** referred to a conflict regarding campus interviews for MPP candidates and retreat rights in APM 320. Section V-G includes the following: ‘If an external candidate is likely to ask for or receive retreat rights (with or without tenure) in a department, a meeting with the tenured faculty of the appropriate department with the candidate shall be scheduled during the campus visit. After meeting with the external candidate, the department shall provide written documentation of their recommendation to the hiring manager and the search committee’. Section V-H includes the following: ‘For academic administrative appointments that also include faculty appointments, the President or Provost shall consult with the dean of the college/school and chair of the department in which the faculty appointment may occur. Normally, such consultation will occur after the search committee makes its recommendations’. These clauses are contradictory. Past practice is not to hold a retreat meeting with faculty due to difficulties in scheduling such meetings. The Provost is asking the Academic Senate and Personnel Committee or AP&P to look at the conflicting passages and seek a resolution to make them consistent.

**Senator Holyoke** asked what the current practice is with regards to MPP candidates and retreat rights.

**Provost Fu** responded that retreat rights meetings are only done with external candidates and we follow section V-H when we offer a contract. Section V-G was added more recently and is not consistent with section V-H.

**Senator DeJordy** asked whether Deans always have faculty appointments and retreat rights.

**Provost Fu** responded that if a candidate is a tenured full professor, then we always offer retreat rights, which is almost the case by default for Dean’s positions.

**Chair Hall** mentioned that faculty in the affected department might want to be heard on this.

**Provost Fu** mentioned that that is the reason faculty are encouraged to attend interview forums.

Additionally, the **Provost** mentioned that there are challenges with student representation in ongoing MPP searches. A student representative is not always responsive or participating, which can derail a search and lead to losing good candidates. Members on a search committee should, for instance, be required to be present in order not to derail a search, unless there is an emergency. The Provost is asking the Academic Senate to give this to the Personnel Committee or AP&P to consider making an amendment in this regard. This will be important for upcoming searches.

**Chair Hall** suggested that another possible amendment in this regard could be not to make student participation in MPP search committees mandatory, while allowing ASI to appoint someone.

**Chair Hall** will add this item to the agenda of the Executive Committee and will send it to the Personnel Committee after discussing this further with the Executive Committee. **Provost Fu** will send a written memo about this to Chair Hall to inform this discussion.

 **Action Items**

None

1. New Business.

None

1. APM 241 Policy on Course Syllabi and Grading. Second Reading.

**Mullooly** explained that modifications concern alignment to policy and the course syllabus template. Changes include who can change the syllabus template, including a clarification that the syllabus template is not policy. The template is a matter of management and might require fast action, which cannot be done in senate, for instance. The proposed policy modification frees up the Dean of Undergraduate Studies to make changes to the template, within respect of APMs. Also, various policies address accessibility, APM 624 and 237, referenced in a new footnote. AP&P is looking with Dean Muscat whether 624 can be integrated in APM 241 or abolished.

**Chair Hall** wanted to know whether these changes meet the concerns from the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

**Clement** responded that they do not. He was particularly troubled by sections I, J, and K as proposed, because they do not take into account issues related to the APMs on student absence and on late work. His committee has seen course proposals being submitted that violate these particular APMs. He suggested to the Executive Committee to look at the minutes of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

**Chair Hall** mentioned that we have no enforcement on compliance with the course syllabi template, apart from peer review, and course proposal is the only standard at which this is checked, hence the importance of the work being done by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. He wondered whether the issue raised by Clement requires a policy change or course template change.

**Mullooly** suggested that a reference to APM 232 could be added in the course syllabus template: add to III-J “(See APM 232)”

**Clement** responded that that would work.

**Senator Holyoke** suggested to replace ‘course description’ with ‘catalogue description’.

**Clement** responded that course description and catalogue description are two separate items, and should both be included.

**Senator Miele** wanted to know whether the full senate should be consulted when changes are made to the course syllabus. Such consultation could help encourage faculty to abide by it.

**Mullooly** responded that the syllabus template is only a guide to what faculty should include and needs to be in line with APM, but is not itself policy. The senate focuses on policy that needs to be approved by faculty.

**Chair Hall** offered that review of the template by the Executive Senate could be included in APM 241.

**AVP Schmidtke** added that APM 241 requires that contact information is included for the instructor. He suggests to require that faculty use their Fresno State address. It is important for instructors to use that address for the protection of student data.

**Mullooly** took this as a friendly amendment to III-A: “Name of the instructor, official campus e-mail address, and if applicable, office location, telephone number, and office hours”.

**Senator DeJordy** suggested an amendment to III-O to include other safety issues: “Safety or other syllabus template mandated issues where appropriate”.

**AVP Schmidtke** mentioned that adjuncts should have at least a shared office space to be able to meet privately with students.

**Senator Holyoke** responded that there is lack of space, which implies that many adjuncts do not have an office space and office hours on campus.

**Dean Muscat** added that many adjuncts lecture after hours and may not have access to conference rooms either. We also have to consider safety of adjuncts.

**Senator Dyer** returned to the proposed change about giving the Dean of Undergraduate Studies the authority to make changes to the syllabus template, which she agrees with, but would like to add that these changes are done in consultation with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and AP&P. This would concern consultation, not formal approval.

**Mullooly** agrees with the following amendment: “Management of the template is under the purview of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies in consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies, Academic Policy, and Planning, Undergraduate Curriculum, and the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate”

**Senator DeJordy** wanted to know whether what is highlighted in the template is required, or are requirements only mentioned in the policy?

**Chair Hall** responded that the template concerns best practice, and policy concerns requirements.

**Chair Hall** referred to the suggestion ASI president Jackson made in a previous EC meeting to add dates of class meetings for hybrid courses in the syllabus.

**Mullooly** suggested to add an amendment to the policy in III-C.

**Senator Dyer** added that the syllabus should state expectations for meetings in hybrid courses, which students need to know at the start of the semester. This is not about unexpected situations that may arise during the semester.

**Senator Miele** added that this concerns expectations about meeting dates for hybrid classes, not student attendance.

**Senator DeJordy** suggested to add to III C "and, for hybrid classes, expectations for in-person and remote attendance".

**Mullooly** took the various amendments made in the meeting as friendly amendments.

**Vice Chair Van Camp** will make the amendments in the AP&P amended APM 241 to be discussed at the next Academic Senate meeting.

1. Continuation of Spring 2021 Credit No Credit into Fall 2021.

This was a request from ASI President Jackson.

**Dean Muscat** mentioned that she has received queries from students about this. Students are concerned about their grades due to issues related to difficult situations, home and technology, mental health, food and home insecurity. Course withdrawal has increased. But continuing a flexible interpretation of the credit/no credit option is challenging for the university.

**Senator Holyoke** wanted to know whether continuing this flexibility is feasible this semester for the registrar’s office.

**Dean Muscat** responded that this would require a significant overhaul for the registrar’s and enrollment office. They would also need to identify courses that would not be eligible due to accreditation requirements.

**Senator Dyer** added that circumstances in spring 2019 were unexpected. Now students know what is the new normal and what is coming. Students can also still drop and withdraw from courses for compelling reason. Students have come to expect the credit/no credit option as a new norm. If we allow this flexibility again now, it should be a permanent policy.

**Chair Hall** mentioned that there are several remedies in place for students with a low grade for a course, hence not sure why this flexibility is still needed too.

**Senator DeJordy** asked about normal boundaries and limits to such remedies.

**Dean Muscat** responded that there are limits on the number of credit/no credit grades a student may have as well as on the number of course withdrawals. She added that if we extend the flexibility for the credit/no credit policy, we need to relax the entire policy.

**Chair Hall** referred to potential equity issues: for accredited programs, we cannot allow credit/no credit grades. A credit/no credit grade also has an impact on GPA, and many grants and programs students may apply for after graduating may require a certain GPA.

**Dean Muscat** mentioned that, in addition to the issues raised here, that are valid, she is not sure this flexibility can be implemented this late in the semester. Also, letter grades can retroactively be petitioned by students to get a credit/no credit grade, even years later.

**Chair Hall** added that students can also get an incomplete grade (IC) and that OIE data demonstrates that the number of A grades have increased across campus.

The Executive Committee decided not to extend the relaxation of the credit/no credit policy for this semester.

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The Senate Executive Committee adjourned at 5:00 pm.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on Nov 29 via Zoom.

Submitted by: Approved by:

Tinneke Van Camp Raymond Hall

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate