THE MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE (AS-03)

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

5200 N. Barton Ave ML 34

Fresno, California 93740-8014

Office of the Academic Senate

(559) 278-2743

October 11, 2021

Members excused: N. Akhavan, L. Jakobs, E. Walter

Members absent: L. Brillante, J. Crane, B. Mason, B. Munoz, B. Ong, B. Taylor, J. Wakabayashi, C.T. Yang

The Academic Senate was called to order by Chair Hall at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom video conferencing.

1. Approval of the Agenda.

MSC

1. Approval of the Minutes of 9/27/21.

Typos found by Vice Chair Van Camp will be amended.

MSC

1. Communications and Announcements.

Communications from President Jiménez-Sandoval:

The President thanked Provost Fu, Gil Hartoonian and Associate Dean of COSS Takahashi for their work on an application for an AANAPISI grant from the Department of Education to increase AAPI representation in criminal and civil justice professions, which was awarded ($1.25M).

The search for a permanent Provost and for a permanent VP for Student Affairs will be launched soon, which will require a call for faculty service. The President will consult with Chair Hall about restructuring plans for these two divisions before launching the searches.

President Jiménez-Sandoval has also already spoken with Chair Hall about the strategic plan for the university and will be starting an executive committee about this. This committee will launch an RFP for a consultant. After a consultant has been recommended to the President, a larger committee will be established to develop the strategic plan, including requests for input from various groups on campus and in the community.

The President will start a listening tour, independent from the strategic plan development, with students, faculty per discipline, staff, education sector in the region, business entrepreneurs, health care, agricultural sector, engineering sector, athletics etc. This will culminate in the investiture that is being planned for March 2022.

Questions for the President:

**Senator Dyer** wanted to know what the rationale is for involving a consulting firm for the development of a strategic plan and whether this is standard practice.

**President Jiménez-Sandoval** responded that Presidents on other CSU campuses have involved consultants in this process as well. A consultant would not guide but empower the process of those who are on campus towards determining conditions of the university and deliverables for the future.

**Senator Botwin** made a point of order and information: consultants have been involved in previous strategic planning rounds.

Communications from Provost Fu:

Provost Fu and Chair Hall invited Matt Zivot (OIE) to present findings from the Student Rapid Response Survey, including information on how students are doing so far in this semester compared to previous semesters in terms of sense of belonging, student engagement, access to resources and motivation.

[*Dr. Zivot’s PowerPoint Presentation was shared with the senators following the Academic Senate meeting to be shared within Fresno State.*]

**Dr. Zivot (interim Director OIE)** explained that this rapid student response survey was first conducted in Fall 2020, and has since been sent out five more times (Sept 2021 was sixth administration) to a sample of 4,000 students (about 12 per cent response rate). Data in earlier administrations of this survey demonstrates that students were struggling. OIE also spoke with students in focus groups last academic year, for instance to learn more about low motivation rates. In Fall 2021, student engagement with coursework has improved, and motivation and focus have improved. Sense of belonging was relatively high already and has improved further. Scores on exchanging ideas with professors are lower. In-person students feel more supported than students in HyFlex or online courses. Data is available.

*Questions for Dr. Zivot:*

**Senator Crowell** asked whether the survey included questions about housing and food insecurity, and is data trending in the same positive direction across various surveys or is this an effect of there being in-person classes again in fall 2021.

**Dr. Zivot** responded that this is the first survey that we have done on this campus wide, so this is the first data point. Another program surveys students every year and they also indicate that students are feeling better about their academic experience. There were no questions about food or housing, but about finance – data showed that students’ financial situation did not increase and was low.

**Senator Wise** wanted to know more about the focus groups that Dr. Zivot mentioned in his presentation. Are the moderator guides and data from these focus groups available for faculty as well?

**Dr. Zivot** responded that he is not sure. There is a brief write up on the OIE web page and OIE is working on a publication. The results should be shared, and transcripts can be shared as well.

**Senator Jenkins** wanted to know about dispersion and how much did the sample size affect the results, *e.g.* the number of students in in-person classes now versus in previous administrations.

**Dr. Zivot** suggested that additional statistical analyses could be done. He added that the survey did not ask for teaching modality in the administrations of the survey in last academic year, but was added in the last administration. There were about 100 students for each teaching modality (online, hybrid, in person).

**Senator Pooya** asked what the percentage of freshman and senior students was among the respondents.

**Dr. Zivot** explained that breakdown was not done into student levels, but rather into new versus continuing students (dichotomous).

**President Jiménez-Sandoval** wanted to know whether we could compare freshman from 2020 and 2021.

**Dr. Zivot** responded that faculty can reach out with specific questions for further analysis.

*Following Dr. Zivot’s presentation, Provost Fu continued his communications to the Senate.*

Provost Fu informed the Senate about the reorganization of CFE. Given the significant growth of CFE in the last few years, a reorganization was desirable. Various programs on academic technology will be put under one umbrella and this new office will report directly to the Provost. The new office will be called IDEAS (Innovation and Digital Excellence for Academic Success). Bryan Berrett will be appointed as interim head for IDEAS.

**Senator Ram** wanted to know whether some work done by Technology Services and Student Affairs in academic technology will be transferred to IDEAS and is funding being transferred with it, or what does that mean for the budget of this new unit?

**Provost Fu** responded that IDEAS will collaborate with Technology Services and Student Affairs. Anything on the intersection between academic and digital will be grouped under IDEAS and the Provost Office. No additional budget item will be needed. It will be a one-stop-shop, under which different pieces will be regrouped and resources pooled.

**VP Adishian-Astone** shared updated information on COVID-19 related matters [*PowerPoint Presentation was shared with the Senate Chair*]. Efforts are focused on testing compliance. Starting next Monday Oct 18, students who are not complying with the testing requirement will have their student cards deactivated, unless they test this week. These students will be notified with text messages today about this and reminders will be sent out later this week. The text message will direct students to the call center for more information. ASI senators have been informed about this.

**Senator DeJordy** sought clarification on the percentage of faculty who are vaccinated: is it 78 per cent of all faculty or 78 per cent of all the faculty who have already self-certified?

**VP Adishian-Astone** responded that 78 per cent of all employees have self-certified as being vaccinated.

**Senator Ram** asked, given that students are starting to enroll for spring courses, whether they have been informed about a vaccination and testing requirement for spring and will there still be funding for testing in the spring?

**VP Adishian-Astone** explained that students will not be able to register for spring if they have not self-certified yet. Incoming students, who will be new to the campus in spring, are being informed about the self-certification requirement for spring. Vaccination uptake among students has been increasing. Vaccination clinics will continue in fall and spring. This will be a continued effort and diligence, and will require continued funding.

**Senator Ram** agreed that testing is important and hopes that we will also continue to encourage students to get vaccinated.

**VP Adishian-Astone** mentioned that with the help of ASI, who have been instrumental in all this, we continue to communicate the importance of the vaccine and about vaccination clinics. We had funding for 50-dollar gift cards for students who were getting vaccinated after Aug 16, and additional funding was found to give 50-dollar gift cards to students who were already vaccinated prior to Aug 16.

**Senator Karr** referred to the vaccination rate among faculty, which has increased but it still lower than student vaccination rate. He emphasized that we should be very proud of our students for vaccination uptake and wanted to know what consequences are being considered for faculty and staff who have not certified yet?

**VP Adishian-Astone** responded that AVP Mendoza-Miller, interim AVP Schmidtke and herself will be meeting to discuss guidance provided by Chancellor’s office on this in alignment with the CBA. The focus will be on communication and positive reinforcement, but maybe more steps might at one point be necessary.

**Senator Karr** added that putting a hold on registration for spring until they complete self-certification is a serious penalty for students, but what about staff and faculty who are not complying with this requirement? Are faculty reluctant to complete the self-certification, or do we not know why some have not completed it yet?

**VP Adishian-Astone** explained that reminders are being sent to faculty and staff. In terms of disciplinary action for faculty and staff, we need to take certain time frames required in CBAs into account; immediate action is difficult. Meanwhile we continue to communicate with faculty and staff to remind them of the deadline.

**Senator Karr** responded that there should be immediate sanctions for non-complying faculty who are teaching face-to-face.

**AVP Schmidtke** added that faculty have until Oct 27 to self-certify. Meanwhile faculty who need to get tested, including faculty who have not self-certified yet, and who are not getting tested will receive reminder emails about this requirement. This way they are again all informed about the need to get tested and cannot claim that they were not aware. Sanctioning is more difficult, and our campus is further along than other campuses in the system, and we cannot be out of step with other campuses. We cannot move beyond what is permitted in the CBA.

**Chair Hall** added that if we want to hope that the spring semester will be one without masks, it is important to make sure that people are complying.

**Senator Jenkins** wanted to know whether CFA is involved in the discussion about potential consequences for non-compliance and what is their stance?

**AVP Schmidtke** responded that we are in the process of conferring with CFA and feedback from CFA will be sought. The CFA leadership team is supportive of dealing with non-compliance in light of the importance of safety on campus.

**ASI President Jackson** asked what is being considered as possible sanctions?

**AVP Schmidtke** responded that this cannot be shared yet, but will be shared at a later meeting.

**ASI President Jackson** wanted the Academic Senate to know that ASI is in support of a mask mandate for spring semester.

1. Senator Installation.

Welcoming senators

Daquin Zhang (Physics)

Amanda Mortimer (Psychology)

Hyung Tae Kim (Accountancy)

Ajith Weerasinghe (Mechanical Engineering)

Kevin Capehart (Economics)

Chih-Hao Wang (Geography and City and Regional Planning)

Gabriel Parra (ASI)

**Chair Hall** informed the Senate that on-boarding information for new senators will be shared on the Academic Senate website soon and reminded senators of Robert’s Rules of Order.

1. New Business.

None

1. APM 206 Amended Memo.

**Chair Hall** reminded the Senate that APM 206 will be relaxed in spring to allow virtual courses to continue given the unpredictability of the pandemic. He was asked to add a definition of course modalities to the memo about APM 206 relaxation for spring. The change to the memo is meant to clarify that in-person modality is defined as allowing up to 20 per cent online class activity, but in-person cannot be relaxed to all but one class online, for instance. A blended classroom course means that between 20 and 66 per cent is online and will be counted as in-person. Blended online means that 66 to 99 per cent is online and will be counted as online. Students who are enrolling need to know whether in-person content will be part of their courses. A class cannot be called in-person if there is only one class meeting on campus.

**Senator Holyoke** wanted to know whether students can see in the schedule that a blended classroom is considered to be in-person, but two thirds of the course can be online.

**Provost Fu** explained that such a course would be scheduled as hybrid I, not as in-person. The definitions in the memo concern how the university will know how many courses should be counted as online and how many should be counted as in-person.

**Senator Ram** added that the virtual synchronous designation in the schedule implies to students that the entire course is on zoom. The definitions in the memo might cause confusion.

**Provost Fu** explained that the memo concerns how the courses will be counted: if one teaches hybrid II, this can be up to 99 per cent virtual, and will therefore count for the university as online, but for at least 1 per cent, students will have to come on campus. The university wants to be able to count how many students will be accessing campus for safety reasons, but we also want to be honest with what we offer: if a class is offered up to 99 per cent virtually, we do not want to count it as in-person. It will also not be called virtual synchronous, but hybrid II. In the schedule students will see blended classroom labeled as hybrid I and blended online as hybrid II. Virtual synchronous and asynchronous is completely online and not accessing campus. Students will only see the designations virtual synchronous, virtual asynchronous, hybrid I, hybrid II and in-person, and this memo is only for accounting purposes.

**Senator Ram** added that the second paragraph in the memo is not completely accurate because virtual synchronous courses could be offered for other reasons than those included in the memo.

**ASI President Jackson** added that some students are still reporting that some faculty are switching their course modality at random. Can we require that the course modality is reflected in the course syllabus, *e.g.* by including information on which days will be in-person.

**Provost Fu** mentioned that faculty should not be changing course modality once it is in the schedule on their own accord. The course modality is scheduled. Courses that are scheduled as in-person can have up to 20 per cent not in the class room, but faculty are not at liberty to change the modality once it is assigned.

**ASI President Jackson** wanted to know whether, if only a small percentage of a course is in-person, is it possible to require within APM language or within a specific memo that faculty should include the date of the in-person meeting(s) in their syllabus.

**Chair Hall** mentioned that we do not have such a policy, but we encourage syllabi to specify the dates, and added that policy allows for some flexibility in in-person courses, *e.g.* when they are ill. Flexibility is in the policy for good reason, but it should not be abused. We could consider if policy could be updated for that.

**Senator Jenkins** moved to extend the meeting time with 15 minutes.

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**Senator Jenkins** wanted to know whether Canvas (quizzes, discussion boards) is considered to be course content.

**Provost Fu** clarified that the language in the memo is taken from APM 206.

**Chair Hall** added that what is in the system and what is in the policy does not entirely concur.

**Provost Fu** added that if you do not meet for up to 20 per cent, you are within policy.

**Senator DeJordy** mentioned that we should not write a rule in APM that manages by exception because that will only create loopholes, but we need to implement good practice.

**Senator Miele** added that we could send out a message and encourage faculty to include in their syllabus when classes are online and when in person.

**Senator Mehta** suggested to emphasize, in the definitions of course modalities in the memo, how much of course should be in person, rather than how much can be online. All of us are doing class activities online, so actual meeting time is more important.

**Chair Hall** repeated that we are following language of the APM and were looking for ways to clarify the interpretation of the flexibility. He reminded the Senate also that this is only a temporary interpretation of APM 206.

**ASI President Jackson** wanted to Senate to know that she did not intend to suggest that faculty should not have flexibility in case of extenuating circumstances, but that the language in APM 241 [Policy on Course Syllabi and Grading] should also be amended in this regard. Students need to know what to expect from a course and the instructor.

**Chair Hall** suggested to take the memo back to the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate for finetuning.

The Academic Senate adjourned at 5:30p.m.

The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be October 25, 2021, via Zoom video conferencing.

Submitted by Approved by

Tinneke Van Camp Ray Hall

Vice Chair Chair

Academic Senate Academic Senate