

Academic Senate Minutes April 13, 2020

Roll call

Eric Kuehnl (Senate VP/CCC Faculty Co-Chair)
Robert Cormia (Senate Secretary/Treasurer)
Isaac Escoto (Senate President)
Mary Thomas (LIBR)
Tracee Cunningham (CNSL)
Voltaire Villanueva (CNSL)
Kate Jordahl (FA/COMM)
Robert Hartwell (FA/COMM)
Sara Cooper (BHS/Faculty Association Liaison)
Rachelle Campbell (BHS)
Kathryn Maurer (BSS)
Maria Dominguez (BSS)
David McCormick (LA) - absent
Amber La Piana (LA)
David Marasco (PSME)
Matthew Litrus (PSME)
Mimi Overton (SRC)
Donna Frankel (Part Time Rep)
Mary Anne Sunseri (Part Time Rep)
Rita O'Loughlin (KA/ATHL)
Don Mac Neil (KA/ATHL)
Carolyn Holcroft (Professional Development Coordinator)
Kristy Lisle (Cabinet Liaison)
Leonardo Blas (ASFC President) – absent

Guests

Leticia Maldonado (Dean of Student Affairs)
Catalina Rodriguez

Meeting called to order at 2:01 p.m.

Isaac commented that flex week was wonderful! We are all so thankful for all of those in the Online Learning Office, Professional Development Office, and all involved in planning and implementing flex week activities/workshops.

Mention that we will have a COVID-19 Check In item on every agenda this quarter, so as to always have space to discuss anything that may come up, and needs our attention. Agenda was approved by consensus.

There was no public comment. Approval of the minutes by consensus. There was no consent calendar - Isaac mentioned we did appoint faculty to committees at the last meeting.

Order of topics:

1. Grading / transcript P/NP
2. COVID-19 check-in
3. Commencement
4. Senate Constitution

Grading

A lot of colleges are talking about grading, and how best to serve students. There are memos from the Chancellor's office. Isaac reviewed the California Community Colleges Memorandum on grading.

Students may withdraw if they can't finish a course, as a result of COVID-19; we don't want to make it onerous on them. Colleges should not record the (COVID-19 related) drop as a "W", as that would count as an attempt. If a student has to withdraw because of COVID-19, it shouldn't count against them, academically. We need to help students meet their educational goals.

Pass/no-pass from the Chancellor's office: If a student chooses pass/no-pass, and they get a no-pass, we won't have that count towards academic probation. CSU/UC system is trying to be lenient with pass/no-pass, and the question has arisen, why don't we change all letter grades to "pass/no-pass" but the chancellor's office has cautioned against blanket P/NP grades as there could be negative transfer related implications. There are incomplete policies, requiring a finish within an academic year, but an "incomplete" grade is not something we'd want to do large scale. There's also an "IP" In Progress, when a course is suspended.

Kristy commented that there could be an IP possibility for Allied Health courses, with students that can't finish their clinics, we are currently trying to work out some details.

Repetition due to extenuating circumstances: Isaac read from the memorandum that COVID-19 counts as an extenuating circumstance. Some changes now, are that students may choose P/NP at any point during the quarter. When a student chooses P/NP, that doesn't change how an instructor assigns a grade. Even before COVID 19, if a student chose (P/NP), the instructor would still submit a letter grade to A/R, however the grade would then be reflected as P or NP.

Kate commented that a P/NP isn't acceptable for some majors, but four year schools are being more flexible, but locally, Foothill College catalog/curriculum sheets require a letter grade for a major course.

Under the new policy, a student can choose P/NP at any time during the quarter, but after the 2nd week, we are asking them to fill out a form to explain the rationale for the request. But not

all Course Outlines of Record (COR) allow for a P/NP. Do we want to temporarily suspend this requirement?

Kristy commented that whether or not the COR allows for a P/NP, the temporary guidance from the Chancellor's Office is that students could request a P/NP, regardless of the (local) regulations. Kristy commented that she needs guidance from us if we decided NOT to follow the guidance for the Chancellor's office. Amber commented on behalf of a constituent that at least one student has used the guidance to circumvent dissatisfaction with a grade entered based on the student's progress before the shelter-in-place. The constituent expressed concern that the change was made without notice to the instructor. Kristy commented that students can ask for a "W" and get a full refund, but the difference between the EW, NP, or W does affect financial aid, and this could complicate the decision for students.

Kathryn asked what are the discussion points for faculty, for department heads, and at the division level, and it's a complex set of topics to manage. We agreed that this topic is important enough to keep discussing it, but need to be clear on decision points that need input.

Sara commented that it's important to understand these topics well enough to give students accurate advice. Comment that we need to have clarification from the College Curriculum Committee regarding letter grade requirements for major courses. Is this something we want to continue? Is this okay with Title 5?

Would we want a blanket policy to convert F to NP for winter and spring? David commented that division senators just need input from their division faculty to make this decision. Kristy commented that we should also follow up with the student reps. Student leaders have talked about a full waiver (to be released from the class) but student leaders suggested giving guidance on an individual basis P/NP, EW, or W with a full refund. But there are differences to the GPA. Sara suggested that a blanket policy would benefit students that didn't know about the P/NP shift from an "F". We want to make sure not just the students that happened to know the intricacies of current policy changes, benefit. Students sometimes (often) aren't aware about how classes are affecting their transcripts. Isaac will check in with Anthony about deadlines, and about how late a student can come in and request some of these changes. He'll also follow up with Leo Blas, re: how students might feel about all F grades showing up on the transcript as NP.

Isaac then mentioned an idea to extend the policy from F => NP to D => NP as well, but that this could disparage a student, as some D grades do count for GE. For winter, there is a deadline of 4/26 to request that change. Anthony said that if we are comfortable about this policy, about how the grade of F would appear on a transcript, what is the process and timeline to get there. And how do we inform students?

Isaac requested that senators contact their division faculty for feedback this week. The goal is to tell Anthony, by the end of the week, how faculty feel about the idea of having all F grades show up as NP on the transcript. Comment that some students may want an "F" instead of a "D", so

that they can retake the course. Isaac clarified that even if students get a grade of a NP, they can still repeat the course, and the new grade is what would count in the transcript.

FW would not be replaced with a NP. The temporary change we've been discussing is about a letter grade (of F) being replaced by an NP. David asked what about a student requesting that an FW be replaced by an EW? Kristy commented about FW and EW, have minutes show we will ask Anthony will check on the number of FWs and EWs being granted. Is it different from Winter (COVID) versus how things are going forward?

There is a concern that our short-term crisis could roll into a longer period. Kristy suggested do we even use FW in spring, and just go to a W? Kathryn discussed that many faculty (in her division) weren't even aware that an FW existed. Isaac commented that all faculty need to be aware of this AP (administrative procedure) 4230 (changes adopted last year April 19, 2019)

The administration and Academic Senate is advised to send a reminder to faculty what the options for letter grades are, including the "FW" FAQ. Kristy will help send the AP and FAQ to faculty. There is a separate FAQ about FWs. (Reminder FAQ and Kristy). F grades being reflected as NP, NOT CHANGING the grade an instructor assigns, just how it is reported on the transcript.

Excused Withdrawal doesn't have to be okayed by the instructor, but the student must fill out the required paperwork (to show it was needed due to COVID-19).

COVID-19 Check-in

Isaac commented about a student survey that went out and the feedback that we received. Students mentioned the importance of adopting a textbook well in advance of the course beginning. The vast majority of faculty adopt textbooks well before the following quarter. However, students have noticed instances when the book for their course isn't clear. Kristy commented about small publishers, and that if faculty use small publishing companies, maybe developing a backup plan (in case small publishers aren't able to end their books out), if the book doesn't come in on time. It's a concern across the board, please check in with colleagues on small publishers.

Students commented it might be helpful to increase office hours to account for time lost due to connection problems. If there is only one office hour, but ten minutes are spent with internet/connectivity issues, then there is less time for help.

Last point from a student, they'd appreciate continued leniency (when possible) from faculty, Cormia commented that faculty have asked the same from students.

At the last meeting when we were discussing what topics should be prioritized, scheduling is a topic that came up. Isaac shared the timeline when the schedule is due for the Summer and Fall. He commented that when we look ahead at schedules, we need to be prepared with a

contingency plan in case Shelter In Place is lifted, but then reinstated. Do we want to limit the number of classes on campus, and/or the number of large classes? We should also keep in mind that the custodial staff will also be limited. There are a lot of “high touch areas” and so we might not be able to really open up our campus. What are we going to do about our distance education process, for the spring, or the fall? We will need the college curriculum committee and COOL to help us navigate how we will proceed with Distance Ed approval, as well as what kind of training (or not) we would ask of instructors in order to teach virtually.

Isaac asked if anyone would like to join the task force (Kristy, and the officers) working on the above schedule issues. We’d be happy to add another one or two folks. We meet Tuesday afternoon at 1 p.m. Kathryn commented that there are a lot of concerns for fall, and in winter/spring we had to pivot quickly, that if we have the prospect of an “all virtual fall” that we should be talking about concerns for an “all virtual fall”. There is more to be discussed than just wants on the list. Mary Thomas asked to join the scheduling meeting with Kristy and Senate officers from 1-2 p.m.

Kristy was contacted by a faculty on COOL committee about discussions regarding (course quality) and there could be topics that might need to be discussed at the negotiation table, and there are budget concerns to pay faculty for working over summer to prepare (upgraded courses) for fall.

Leticia Maldonado talked about student technology ambassadors, 15-20 hours a week at \$16 per hour. Leticia was asked what classes and sections the students would work in. She commented that we already have 18 students to provide peer technical support (Zoom etc.) Students will be really well trained in Canvas, and some students will be working in training and onboarding of new ambassadors. Faculty who know students who have technical needs, please refer to student tech hub. Leticia mentioned the effort to assign student ambassadors to help with a specific division. Isaac asked a bit about what skills and support the ambassadors would bring. Students are struggling (with life), with course content, and technical support, and the technical ambassadors are there to help students. Leticia commented that the technical ambassadors are not meant to be teaching assistants, but the ambassadors program is open to exploring how best to provide division specific help for students.

If faculty note that there are students who seem to be in trouble, how are they best referred to the tech ambassadors? But the ambassadors take a holistic approach to helping students with technical issues. If a faculty member sees a student is struggling, please refer to Chris Chavez. He will check-in with the student. What do we do if students are having issues with Canvas, using Canvas, Kristy commented that the student and the tech ambassador can share a screen to figure out what is needed. Mary Thomas commented that the tutorial centers have set up an effective model for working with students. ambassadors@foothill.edu Mary Anne commented that faculty shouldn’t feel that they are the ones that need to help with technical support. Isaac brought up the equity considerations that come up with needs for technical support. He offered that if faculty note a student isn’t participating, or seems to be distant from the course, it’s an opportunity for us to connect with the student. We can tell students, it’s okay not to understand

how to do something technically. How does a student reach the tech ambassadors. By email ambassadors@foothill.edu

Commencement - we need to make some decisions very quickly, i.e., next couple weeks. We can't do a physical ceremony; many colleges are planning on a virtual commencement. Mention that if we do some sort of virtual commencement, we should recognize the work our allied health students are putting in on the COVID-19 front.

Election and constitution, do we ask for a full vote for our P/T faculty?

Decision making process - one of the branches of that discussion is what role does Academic Senate, officers and faculty, what does the constitution ask of us, we need to look at our responsibilities as representatives and officers, and what do we want to add or subtract? We only have a little time to do this!

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.