

Academic Senate Minutes December 2, 2019

Meeting called to order at 2:02 p.m.

Roll call

Isaac Escoto (Senate President)
Eric Kuehnl (Senate Vice President)
Robert Cormia (Senate Secretary/Treasurer)
Carolyn Holcroft (Prof Dev Coordinator)
Dixie Macias (Kines/Athl)
Maureen Mac Dougal (BHS)
Rachelle Campbell (BHS)
Laurence Lew (BSS)
Kathryn Maurer (BSS)
Amber La Piana (LA)
Maria Dominguez (BSS)
Mary Ann Sunseri (Part Time Rep)
Mary Thomas (Library)
David Ulate (District Instructional Research and Planning)
Kristy Lisle (Exec Vice President/Admin Liaison)
Tracee Cunningham (CNSL)
Voltaire Villanueva (CNSL)
Lisa Eshman (BHS)
Sara Cooper (BHS)
Matthew Litrus (PSME)
David Marasco (PSME)
Mimi Rae (LRC)
Donna Frankel (Part Time Rep)

Agenda was approved by consensus

Public announcements - BSS division is hosting an off-campus holiday gathering Thursday December 5th.

Mary Thomas - One Search is coming to the library in winter quarter. Information literacy modules in canvas won't be available at first.

Senate minutes from 11/18/2019 - fix the "meeting called to order" from 4 p.m to 2p.m, approved by consensus with fixed typo.

Consent calendar - academic renewal on the calendar for approval

Addition to the consent calendar - Mimi Overton has volunteered to serve on a dean hiring committee (DRC/VRC dean). Consent calendar approved by consensus

Discussion items for the meeting:

- Faculty hiring prioritization
- Discussion of campus decision making
- Senate's role in campus governance
- Follow-up actions

Faculty hiring prioritization – The senate approved a faculty prioritization tool last year, with the understanding that we'd revisit the tool and how it'd be used in the position prioritization process. The senate has yet to revisit the tool since last winter quarter.

- Need for considered discussion
- How do we use the prioritization tool in its current state?
- What are specific elements of faculty prioritization?
- Push the conversation to first week in January

Division senators asserted that faculty would like to have appropriate time to discuss the faculty prioritization process and we can push the discussion into winter quarter. There was discussion about having a Senate meeting on December 9th, and also about having a parallel effort by a smaller group (of faculty). Committees usually don't meet during finals week. Separately, next year we should plan this differently. It was suggested that we have a meeting at the end of this quarter, or early next quarter. The number of new hires will be based on retirements. The College does know some number of retirements, Kristy suggested we should prioritize at least 5 faculty hires. There was discussion about what the criterion would be for the faculty selection. Isaac referred to the faculty prioritization tool, faculty position requests, and data, emailed to senate reps in past weeks. Mention that faculty did have ideas to contribute to the prioritization tool, and some faculty feel they don't know the criterion for faculty selection, and they need to know that to prepare a complete document. We need to figure out how best to use the document (prioritization tool) that we have in the current state. Institutional Research is helping put together data to help the prioritization process. There are important discussions involving the direction of the campus, e.g. online classes, that will shape how the tool works. Faculty want to know how these decisions are being made. There was a motion that we move the faculty prioritization discussion to another meeting, we will meet the first Monday in Winter. Discussion re: needing more time this year to full discuss/work out a more inclusive prioritization process, and that we might need to do the best we can at our meeting the first week in winter, and then have the prioritization process happen for this year.

Campus decision making processes

- Open discussion about campus decision making
- What is the process, when do faculty become involved?

- What is the appropriate path for very important decisions?
- How do we “resolve” our current impasse and move forward?
- How do we form a collective strategic vision of where the College is headed?

Isaac began the discussion with a prelude of the key issues that have gotten us where we are now. How do we, faculty, staff, administrators, make decisions that are important to the direction of the College? They mentioned that having clearer processes will help us make better decisions. How would that work and what would that look like? Did particular decisions cause us more difficulty than others? Does the entire process need a review? Do we need a 3rd party, e.g. ASCCC, need to be brought in to help us rethink decision making on a campus level?

Open conversation:

Where to start? College presidents come in and have a “honeymoon” period, but when that period ends, the campus culture sets in, and then there can be a “mismatch” between the College administration and campus culture, especially faculty. There is a lot of anger that has built up, and this will not be a quick fix. There is uncertainty/confusion around who owns a decision, who should participate in that decision. There is sometimes the understanding of “this is how we have done things in the past” and then a new governance structure comes in, and then things don’t work well. Governance structure and decision-making processes are not always the same thing. If we have a governance structure that says there is “participatory governance” then you have to consult with these other people. A big part of (our) issues is not just who is involved making a governance decision, but WHEN those people are involved. Some of the decisions we have “collectively” made have had timing issues.

Trust may be an issue (or inclusion or timing) but (one senator) asserted that there needs to be a revisiting of some of the decisions that were made without “clearing the air” around the decisions. We’ve heard administrative colleagues talk about trust, and part of trust is needing to see action that relates to concerns shared. How will we know that some of those processes are being honored. If we start with past issues (perceived missives) we can work together to get past them and move forward. There was a statement that people aren’t involved in decisions, or not early enough, and we have an admission that “this will be addressed”, and then the pattern repeats itself again. There were reinforcing comments that we should have a definition of what and how we are going to do things differently. We may want to look outside the College to see how other campuses have worked through a process like this. Would a document that might spell out the “letter of the law” be too constraining? There was a comment that a document that outlines the spirit of participatory government, and the spirit of how we will work together, could be useful. That said, if faculty want to have a voice in the process, we need to be involved 12 months out of the year.

A senator spoke about early conversations regarding the new governance structure, and how a lot was promised about transparency, but then the process moved to a style where decisions get made in haste, because decisions are needed to meet the pace that they are required. There is often a sense that if we don’t choose between options given, then the campus comes

to a stop (in a sense). When that happens over and over, it's frustrating, as we feel pressure to choose between options we didn't help create. Some faculty commented that the pace of change has been very fast, but even then, we need a strategic vision of where the college will be in 5 years? (this is a very big point). Big questions; where is the College going in the future, where are these decisions (questions) discussed? If we're not clear where we're headed, then how are we going to make good decisions?

A senator asked "what is the faculty's role on campus"? Are we simply doing instruction, or are there a number of activities that we MUST do to keep things going. What are the expectations of what our role is? That could uncover some unpleasant truths about how much work we need to do? And what is the role of the Senate in contributing to how the College works. Isaac showed the 10+1 from Title 5, and the wording in Title 5 is that the Senate makes recommendations to the Board through our administrative colleagues. We have both primary reliance and joint development in our district, with regard to the 10+1. If there is an issue with 10+1, then we, the Senate, need to speak up. 10+1 doesn't limit what we can do, especially if we can participate at a local level. Senate can be a voice for faculty in collaborative decision making. Isaac asked, do we want decisions to be made in a certain way all the time? How prescriptive do we want to be in how we do process. A senator commented on the faculty hiring prioritization process as an example of something that faculty should have been involved in, and yet we had a meeting scheduled for tomorrow to do the prioritization process. Comment that we have had LOTS of time to work on the faculty prioritization tool, long before the discussion came up today. Isaac acknowledged that working on the prioritization tool had not made it back on a senate agenda item, and proposed adding an ongoing list to senate agendas, that would include ongoing items that the senate would like to revisit. Senate reps agreed this could be helpful.

More comments were made about the excess time that is required just to make things work, and resentment about not having enough resources, so how do we have time for shared governance? Could faculty be involved in topics that the College President is working on? It is hard for all of us to be on the same page about what we're doing at any given moment.

There was affirmation that we should look at the list of decisions that have made many faculty feel they did not have a chance to help address early on. A Senator read input from their division faculty. One suggestion was for the Senate to have a visit from outside, e.g., State Academic Senate. There was a comment that Senate rep brought forward (representing their constituents) that faculty might consider a vote of no confidence, i.e., the Senate needs to make a very strong statement. Many division faculty want a strong statement to come from Academic Senate. There is a wide spectrum of concern from faculty, and recognition that this is a "delicate" time to be having discussions about such a strong message.

Isaac mentioned that Senate should be aware of what a strongly worded message says. For example, a "vote of no confidence" means, literally, that there is "no confidence at all" by faculty in whomever is mentioned in such a document. We should be mindful of what the implications of Senate actions are, we might consider different forms of communication, for instance a range from a vote of no confidence, to a resolution, to a letter, to a "bill of particulars". What is written,

and how it is written, has to be carefully considered. The Senate can communicate how it feels about certain items/decisions, however it is out of our control how that communication will be received (other than clarifying as best we can, where we're coming from). Isaac reflected on the counselling resolution attempting to be constructive rather than admonishing. Resolutions are a common vehicle for Senates to speak. FH Senators didn't think the resolution was "personal" in intent. For instance, we were very careful with the support letter for the law pathway. A resolution is a way to make something concrete about what the outcome of our discussions today. There was discussion about the definition and utility of a "sense of the Senate" (a non binding resolution). A senator asked if the officers could research (over the break) what options we have, a letter, or some other formal mechanism of communication between the Senate and the College administration. Thuy has asked for input, but faculty feel they have already offered input.

Isaac asked if the Senate felt that we should have external help, and that ASCCC would be a likely source of help, but that ASCCC would ask us, specifically, what help we needed. It sounds like "decision making" is the big issue. There was a suggestion that the "resolve" in any resolution issued by the Senate on this issue, should be that "when you're making a decision that affects other people, that you include those people in the discussion from the very beginning".

ASCCC has expertise, but we need to be mindful that they are faculty, and administrators may want to have a common "peer" in this process. We have to value input of College administration, and vice versa, and consider what has to happen for faculty to feel valued. Comment that we also look into different groups/organizations that may help with facilitating re-envisioning how our campus makes decision. The officers will do some research and report back in the future. Kristy commented that she does come to the dialog authentically, and tries to consider when is the right time to have a discussion and bring people in. Kristy asked for direction about how we can make things work that are going on right now.

Isaac commented on the need to research "how the body can speak", and our interest in getting a third party to help us out IEPI, ASCCC, etc. We have decided to meet on January 6th from 2-4 p.m. to discuss the faculty prioritization process. Kathryn concluded the discussion by asking how we should provide the guidance, especially when we were asked a year ago about giving input?

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.