

Academic Senate Minutes January 13, 2020

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

Roll call

Isaac Escoto (present)
Eric Kuehnl (absent)
Robert Cormia (present)
Carolyn Holcroft (present)
Kathryn Maurer (present)
Amber LaPiana (present)
Maria Dominguez (present)
MaryAnn Sunseri (present)
Mary Thomas (present)
Jordan Fong (present)
Kristy Lisle (present)
Tracee Cunningham (present)
Voltaire Villanueva (present)
Lisa Eshman (present)
Sara Cooper (present)
Matthew Litrus (present)
David Marasco (present)
Mimi Rae (present)
Donna Frankel (present)
Dixie Macias (absent)
Rita O’Laughlin (present)

Guest - Leticia Maldonado, Melissa Cervantes

Announcements:

- Senators’ comments re: to proposed agenda
- Equity plan 2.0 retreat
- Follow-up to December 2nd meeting

Agenda: senators expressed concern about not seeing a dedicated item on agenda as a follow up to the conversation in our December meeting re: campus decision making processes. Isaac will go over the agenda.

Equity Plan 2.0 - there is a retreat scheduled for the end of January beginning of February

The Senate constitution needs to be updated this year - we may have a discussion about the part time faculty (one-half) vote. We will likely separate the constitution into two types of document, similar to the "administrative procedure" (AP) and "board policy" (BP) of our District governance. We need to figure out how to get feedback from our constituencies about any proposed change to our constitution, so as to vote on a draft most are comfortable with.

Online course quality research next steps. Ben Stefonik shared with Isaac that he'd like to share his research (online course quality) with the FHDA Board. Senate should be ready to answer questions about what the results of his work mean, and what should faculty do about it?

Agenda discussion:

Isaac discussed campus decision making processes item that was the focus of the meeting on December 2nd. In the minutes from the December meeting, the senate agreed that the officers would research outside agencies to help our campus work through concerns we have regarding decision making, and possibly help us envision a new campus decision making process. The reason this agenda didn't have a broad/decision making process agenda item was that Isaac did not yet have concrete information to share from outside agencies. The current agenda does have an item regarding senate communication options, which is in direct response to a request made at the December meeting. The Equity 2.0 item was on this agenda so that faculty could begin to discuss how they'd like to go about providing feedback/ideas about the current Equity Plan 2.0 draft, so as to feel comfortable in formally approving it in the future, and using it as a reference for future campus discussions/plans for action.

Sara brought up the need to keep the momentum on a conversation that has been a long time coming. There are many items on the agenda that are important. Sara pointed out that two of the items on the agenda related to communication and decision making. She also mentioned almost all faculty conversations recently have involved communication and decision making.

Motion to place the communication and decision-making processes as the main topic of our meeting, and modify the agenda to reflect this. The motion was seconded, and approved unanimously.

The minutes from the January 6th were approved by consensus without modification.

Consent calendar – add two more at large program review readers Jeff Mathews and Hillary Gomes to approve in addition to existing names. At large (readers) are outside the division. Need one non STEM at large reader, one non BSS reader, and one non Fine Arts reader (all for at large. Need two BSS faculty to serve as readers from within BSS. David Mc Cormick asked to be added as an at large reader.

Isaac informed Senate that Eric Reed is back from PDL, and he will be the R&R faculty tri chair for the remainder of the year. Sara Cooper will shift to full time rep on R&R. The District budget advisory committee still needs a faculty member (meets 3rd Tuesday of the month from 1:30 to 3 p.m. in room 5971)

David asked Kristy about enrollment. We are down in enrollment (~ 3%) but up in unduplicated headcount. We have been hit hard in non-resident. Projecting ~ 4% in resident for annual. F2F classes are still down, the online trend is plateauing. We are up in first time students this winter.

Addition to consent calendar: the search committee for permanent AVPI Rachel Mudge has asked to be added to this search committee. A senator asked how some of the search committees hired people (deans), that haven't worked out in the past. Isaac replied that search committees review applications, choose applicants to interview from that pool, and forward recommendations for hire based off of application information and interviews. Isaac will send hiring procedures document to the concerned senator as a follow up. The consent calendar was approved by consensus.

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- Decision making process
 - Request for an ongoing President's report at senate meetings

Decision making process - there was discussion about what the Senate body can do to address constituent concern, and that some actions, such as a vote of no confidence, have implications that should be fully understood; this, nor any specific course of action has been deliberated, and it's very important that we listen critically and speak carefully, especially to correct things we have heard from others, that are factually incorrect, and/or rumors. We want people to be involved, but also be accurate in the messages that we are disseminating.

Last week the Senate officers were approached about having President Nguyen speak at the next Academic Senate meeting (this one). The officers felt they needed further detail about the purpose of the visit, and the outcomes planned for that agenda item, prior to being able to put it on a senate agenda. This is because the officers are expected to be able to explain the purpose and outcomes of each agenda item, ahead of time. President Nguyen followed up with the officers to clarify that the purpose of her visit/agenda item would be to improve communication between her office and the senate, follow up on a meeting between counseling and the president, as well as update efforts to improve operational efforts/collaboration with the academic senate. We will have this as an agenda item for our next meeting.

Thuy also requested to have an ongoing President's report ~ 5 minutes, at Senate meetings. One Senator commented that any additional communication from the administration would be positive, and more frequent communication would lead to "fewer surprises". There were comments that if we do this, the agenda item would need to be time capped to prevent regular other regular business from being pushed back off the agenda. This would be a shift in how we

disseminate information from the administration, and could be a stepping stone to more effective communication and trust. Idea mentioned that we could try written communication and then some follow-up.

Based on the discussion that we are hearing, a written statement from the President would be preferable, as it's a 100% "certain" document (no interpretation needed), and further, would be helpful if the document were sent at the same time as when the agenda went out. Kristy could also provide further comment on anything that the President sends to Senate. Senators expressed a positive response to the initiative proposed by President Nguyen. If reps feel something in the update needs further explanation, we could choose to add this to a future agenda. Senate reps asked officers to relay the preference of a written President's update.

The structure of what we do should be needs based. There also was a reminder that there is a larger subject / dialog with the president, and the issues that faculty have brought up are now much larger than the counselling resolution, which precipitated much of our current discussion.

We'll prioritize the decision-making process discussion for the rest of the meeting, and see what else we can get to today.

In some order of priority

1. What can outside services bring?
2. What is a sense of the senate?
3. What is a letter to the President?
4. What would a formal action look like?

What would people like to add to the current discussion?

A senate rep asked for clarification about how to move beyond the discussion of December 2nd. What are the options for how our senate could make clear how our constituents are feeling. Resolution? A letter to the President? We need to be clear about how we would choose among the choices we discussed back in December. Comment that many folks feel we've tried making requests for faculty to be involved earlier in campus decisions, but haven't seen a change (EOPS move, Testing and Assessment office near move, as examples). Wondering if what might better address faculty concern about decision making is to re-imagine our campus decision making procedures as a whole, and build in necessary perspectives/timing into those processes.

Comment that we can have a sense of the Senate, something that formally addresses what concerns many faculty feel have not been addressed. Mention that there is a need for the body to make clear many faculty do not feel listened to, and we need to clearly state we have not seen the college address these concerns through action. In addition to communication, trust and respect issues, there needs to be a "re-envisioning" of the decision-making process. Addressing

this long term, is in addition to saying how we feel now, and what we need to say about how we are where we are. Some potential actions include:

- Sense of the Senate
- Outside assistance
- Letter to the President
- Formal action (resolution)

Comment of a sense of frustration, discontent, concern. People are feeling disaffected and are “checking out” because of politics, and not making forward progress. Counseling reps shared that counselors met with President Nguyen in December, before the break. Counselors had an opportunity to address the counseling resolution, and respond to any concerns about it. Counselors are happy that the testing and assessment office move was stopped, as they had serious concerns of how that move would have negatively impacted students.

Comment that there are faculty concerned that discussions at senate/potential action, could affect the bond and parcel tax campaign. Comment that some faculty feel the Academic Senate is not doing enough to voice faculty concerns. Comment that it’s a fine line between being mindful of implications of senate action, and also making sure that our constituents feel heard/feel free to communicate how they feel.

Mention that when faculty have concerns about shared governance committees/councils, please check in with the faculty who serve on those committees, and see what their perspective is as well. BSS brought back a lot of feedback from division faculty post December meeting, and want to have ongoing meetings (faculty and Senators), “why hasn’t the Senate taken a stronger stand?”. For example, a suggestion (by some division faculty) that we (Academic Senate) should be discussing a vote of no confidence.

From Language Arts, division faculty commented that constituents have shared that governance doesn’t feel like shared governance, there was also a concern about employee turnover; an “exodus” from campus, that there is a lack of understanding about faculty workload, and all the time many initiatives take.

Mimi Overton commented that the Disability Resource Center (DRC) has lost 3 faculty in 6 months. With respect to the faculty prioritization, there is a sense of distrust.

Isaac addressed the comments regarding faculty wishing the senate would do more, or take a stronger stance. He asked “what does that mean? What would folks like to have seen?” Some faculty said they would have liked to have seen the counselling resolution passed, even with amendments, to be clear how we feel about decisions being made without appropriate input/guidance.

Faculty are unhappy about where we are. Enrollment, turnover, and a sense that we’re just not headed in the direction we’d like to be headed in. Many division faculty want a pretty strong

message to come from Senate. Support for an outside body to come help facilitate campus discussion about a decision making process/procedure that addresses expressed concerns.

Robert mentioned that the College has been through many changes in the last few years, and we are all feeling concern over declining enrollments. It's important to recognize that many in our administration have worked very hard to simultaneously manage our enrollment and financial issues.

A question - do we want our faculty constituents to have us take a strong stance regarding expressed concerns/frustration?

Announcement January 16th 12-1 p.m. - Business innovation challenge (Business department)

The meeting was adjourned at 4:02 p.m.