Executive Committee of the Academic Senate
Minutes of the Meeting of October 7, 2024
Clark 551, 12 p.m. to 1:30 pm

Present: Joshua Baur, Ranko Heindl, Colleen Johnson, Ariana Lacson, Shannon Rose Riley, Karthika Sasikumar, Laura Sullivan-Green, Hiu Yung Wong, Julia Curry, Kristin Dukes, Mari Fuentes Martin, Cynthia Teniente-Matson
Absent: Vincent Del Casino, Charlie Faas, Tabitha Hart

Minutes taken by Grace Barbieri

The committee voted to suspend the Standing Rules so Mari Fuentes Martin could join the meeting via Zoom, and it was approved unanimously.

1. Approval of the meeting minutes of September 23, 2024 - approved unanimously with amendments.

2. Update by Chair
   a. Preparation of the pro and con arguments for the referendum on the Constitutional Amendment

I am happy to report that the amendments to the constitution and bylaws to add staff to the senate passed on Monday; however, this was only the first step. The next step is to send a referendum to the faculty electorate for a simple majority approval. We would then send it to the President for signature. The Committee on Senate Representation (CSR) will write the pro argument in 300 words per the bylaws. The question I have for the committee is whether we also need to supply a con argument since in the senate constitution, it says the con argument 'may be supplied.' It is logical to have a con argument, but it is not required. If yes, who will write the con argument? Usually, we would ask those who voted against the proposition in the Senate to write it since they have already publicly voted against it; however, no one voted no on the Senate floor. I am worried that faculty members might look at the referendum and say it is one-sided with no con argument.

Q: What is the precedence?
A: In recent years, the referendums included con arguments because there were votes against in the Senate.
C: Can you add that there were no con arguments in the minutes?
C: To invent a con argument would be a weird projection. It would give the appearance of a con argument when there was not one. We should not force it.
C: If you're up front about it by including a note in the referendum there were no significant arguments on the Senate floor, then it should be okay.

C: You can always refer them to the minutes.

The chair agreed to bring this back to the committee after meeting with CSR.

C: Will there be some type of talking points document for discussing the referendum with the faculty electorate?
A: I have mentioned this to CSR, and I think they are currently working on one.
C: If possible, meet with UCCD to give them a neutral overview since it might come up at the chair's meetings with their departments.
A: I know CSR has been meeting with the different unions, and I will give them your suggestion.

    b. Voting using iClicker at Senate meetings
After the last Senate meeting, a senator proposed that we use Iclicker, which would be on your phone, for voting in the Senate.

C: We used some type of hand-held clicker in the past, but it was unreliable.
A: Can others still see who is voting for what? That is important.
C: Someone might try to vote even when they are not present

The chair agreed to look further into iClickers.

  3. President's Update
Firstly, I invited Mari to join via Zoom today outside of normal protocol because I wanted her to be able to share a specific item about reorganization with the committee. I think it's important to be flexible in allowing participants to join via Zoom when needed. I ask the chair and committee to consider some leniency around when exceptions should be made.

C: I think it is important from the point of view of the cabinet members; due to travel and such, you may not be here in person. Faculty also might have professional travel or health reasons. It would be an agenda item for O&G, which I know has spent time discussing this.
C: We have discussed this, and it was voted down last year.
C: As a standard practice, I don't think we should zoom in. It requires a different preparation. I think it would be okay for exceptions, so we can present an item, or someone on leave can participate. Right now, the policy is very yes or no.

It is time for the honorary doctorate committee to be composed. In the past, on our campus, I have typically appointed a chair, who is usually the VP for Advancement or a cabinet member. The committee typically includes a couple of cabinet members and deans, the chair and vice chair of the senate, and two faculty members. The Executive Committee appoints the faculty members.

C: Is there a deadline?

A: At the end of the month, in time to prepare our honorary doctorates.

C: If you are just asking for names, we do not need to meet since we have a senate meeting next Monday. I can just give you two names.

The Budget Town Hall on September 26 had good participation in person and online. We are responding to all the questions, and we will release the responses in the next seven days or so. For safety and emergency preparedness at the university leadership level, we have been actively engaged in tabletop exercises in preparedness within our own leadership. We have also been participating with the city of San Jose with some senior leaders on their emergency preparation and readiness for activity outside the norm, but really to be ready for post-election results in the event of any riots, protests, or gatherings. Deloitte was on campus a couple of weeks ago under the leadership of Bob Lim. That first town hall has occurred, and there are several focus meetings planned and ongoing.

Q: Can you explain more about the dual degree credits?

A: We are working with all community colleges. We are looking at concurrent enrollment. The community colleges engage in dual enrollment at the high school level, and we are looking for ways to ensure a guided pathway to SJSU for those high school students that are taking courses already at the high school for community college credit. We want to create a more seamless dual admission for those high school students who are enrolling that way. We are exploring different options, and that really revolves around the narrative of building pipelines.

Q: Would they enroll in SJSU and the community college at the same time?

A: Yes, we already have programs like that, and we are looking to expand them more intentionally in all of our community colleges.

Q: Is there any faculty involvement in the safety emergency preparedness? Like the CERT programs within cities.

A: In our tabletop exercises, we are with campus police and first responders and move through scenario planning at the cabinet level. I am not aware of a role for faculty, but I am not opposed to it.

4. Consent Calendar - approved unanimously.

Q: Do you have any updates on seats at large? Like for Professional Standards.

A: Not at the moment. I have contacted the deans, and the chairs and other members of ConC have also reached out to people.

C: I suggest reaching out to UCCD.

5. Vote on the appointment of Sarika Pruthi (Professor, Entrepreneurship) from the Lucas College of Business as senator.

The two current senators from the College of Business must put forward a name, and they both have for Sarika. This would be a one-year appointment.

   a. Bio supplied by candidate: Her robust publication record in immigrant and social entrepreneurship and venture capital includes a recent textbook Global Entrepreneurship & Innovation (SAGE). Sarika has chaired the International Programs & Students Committee (5 yrs.) and the Student Success Committee (3 yrs. and ongoing), organized the annual Silicon Valley Innovation Challenge (5 yrs.) and co-founded HonorsX at SJSU. She has received several recognitions for her work including the Distinguished Teacher Award at the College of Business (2022) and nomination to the prestigious Phi Kappa Phi Honors society (2023). Prior to joining SJSU, Sarika taught and researched at King's College, London.

The committee approved Sarika's appointment unanimously.

6. Re-alignment of Student Services (Mari Fuentes Martin)

Last week, the Provost and I sent out a memo regarding the reorganization of a couple of units in student affairs to academic affairs and the rationale behind them. One is new students and family programs moving under Enrollment Management under Andrew Wright and Peer Connections being moved under Undergraduate Academic Advising. I think both are strategic in helping streamline the process in each of the areas. There are also two major units meeting under Academic Affairs. Another organization that will be announced in a month or so is a new unit in student affairs called Student Equity and Belonging. Some of you have asked me before what will happen with MOSAIC, CENTRO, and BLOC since we have a few departments that don't have directors. Part of the rest is my interest in having a consultant look at how we work with our cultural and identity centers as well as other programs that serve historically underrepresented students such as EOP, TRIO, and guardian scholars. The intention is to have a unit called Student Equity and Belonging and aligning these units to work under an Associate VP that will focus on to partner with the Division of Academic Affairs, especially in the areas of retention, graduation as well as aligning our recruitment and onboarding of students through the admissions and first-year process.

As part of the consultation process we have been engaged in since last January through the BAC's recommendations, I launched four work groups. One group is looking at the overlap between services in finance and administration, IT, and UP. Another is looking at the student experience. With the realignment of enrollment management under academic affairs, how seamless is the support now for students between various areas? AS has also had some insight

into some of this activity. The decision that VP Fuentes Martin made with the Provost and others in the cabinet is looking at the creation of alignment and consistency and how the student experience occurs from the point of entry through graduation. That orientation was not as seamless as it could have been, and we also recognize that orientation really needed to be recast within the current budget environment, as we were doing orientation for two days in person. Much of this work happens online in different mechanisms, but there is an in-person component, which is not how we have done it in the past. So, really thinking about this started with the enrollment experience. The timing is now because we are now in open admissions, and the planning is going on for next year. Also, what Mari Fuentes-Martin touched on about peer connections is that it was also disconnected from advising and some of the other support services, so those activities made a lot of sense in approving this realignment. This is an informational item with the intent to enhance the GI 2025, retention, student success, and the year of engagement activities.

Q: Does this realignment involve the creation of a new AVP position?

A: It does not. Realigning what was previously student success into student equity and belonging.

Q: Are we hiring a new person?

A: No

Q: Some of the centers have not had directors for a while. Are these positions open? Are they being advertised? Do you see any progress being made in filling them in the near future?

A: I want to visit each cultural center and get their input. The jobs are not posted right now.

Q: Is there flexibility with the title of the VP?

A: I think it speaks to the fact that DEI is not just centralized in ODEI, but it is the responsibility of the whole institution.

C: The way that the consultation of the work occurs now is that many of the units report to different people. So, the alignment is necessary there, and we want to be able to scale what we are doing to support a larger group of students.

C: An example you can think about is student affairs with three nodes: a campus life node, a student success node, and a wellness node. The identity-based centers report across all three of those nodes. The idea is not to have the work breaching over three different places but to align them into one central column so you have all of the student success aspects in one place.

C: I think sometimes the people who are working outside of those departments and outside those centers have that option, while those working in them often feel that when there is a realignment, there is a loss of identity. I wonder if there were conversations with those working with the centers. For example, the Counseling and Psychological Center faculty are part of the health and wellness center, and recent realignments have been affecting the faculty in that center.

A: As Mari said, she is taking the time, using an external resource, and talking with these departments and centers. That is why she hasn't filled positions or realigned so she can hear everyone.

C: An external consultant was involved in this move, and lengthy interviews were conducted with each center's director and staff.

C: There are no faculty affected by the realignment of the centers.

7. Interfaith Task Force recruitment

I don't have any updates on the task force. I would frame this conversation by saying I am specifically asking for guidance on selection criteria and the task force size. I understand from last week the committee wanted to see the charge of the task force before weighing in. On the charge I have provided there are some recommendations on proposed composition. I feel that it is important for people to have faith in the legitimacy of this task force. We are being very transparent about the task force's criteria upfront. I have given a lot of thought to this process. I know we previously discussed the idea of representation of different groups and we concluded that it could be problematic. Instead we are asking, how do we populate this task force so that people trust the process and the recommendations truly reflect the needs of the campus community? We can make a general call to people and ask why they are interested in joining the task force. I spoke to CCDEI about this and we decided not to ask about a person's faith, religion, or spiritual identity in the application process. We are asking for the candidate's name, role, and why they want to serve. We don't want it to seem that their identity is part of the selection process upfront.

C: I appreciate the changes you have made since the last report. I think there will be people on campus who will believe if they are not elected or appointed it was in bad faith. You are doing the due diligence, and being careful, and I feel good about this process.

C: The proposed composition sounds good. How will you identify the individuals from outside SJSU? Once the applications are in, what body will select the members from the applications?

A: I have considered local representatives and thought of moving that into part one of the task force's charge, which is that they should consult with and speak with local people during their assessment. The CCDEI tri-chairs would make the selection. CCDEI is ¼ of the expanded version that has not been enacted yet. It has about 8-10 active members. We did not backfill positions because we wanted to do the expanded structure.

Q: Has there been thought given to what the relevant responsibilities will be?

A: If there is a structural recommendation that might come down the pipe, having those folks in the room can give some guidance. So they might not be full members of the task force, but they might be ad hoc members who come in. Getting the relevant administrators in the room to see what is currently happening and what is reasonable so we do not release recommendations that go out to the campus community that are so out of touch that we could never deliver on them.

Q: How do you select people if we are not asking them what their various backgrounds are?
You want to try to have an equal composition.

A: We are thinking of asking them to write a short narrative about why and qualifications related to the charge.

C: What size are you looking for?

A: 7-9 feels good. Five feels too small. I did talk to Colorado State University, and they only had five individuals, four administrators, and one faculty member. I am also thinking about scheduling, work, and the burden, as well as the ability to get information.

C: A way to filter is to choose a meeting time and then see who applies. I think that helps people make a choice.

Q: Since last year, have you seen any increase in tension or conflict among religions in the community that has triggered you to think about this task force?

A: This actually goes back to my interview. It was on top of my mind before I even started. Today, we are even able to see two different events go off without disruption. I think this speaks to what could be a very healthy environment.

C: Before Vice President Day left, we also discussed this

Q: How do we reduce the barriers in university events in general? How will you make this task force a welcoming space for students to feel they can join and feel safe and welcomed?

A: I have already done some groundwork on this. Starting in the spring and summer, I met with specific student organizations around religious and spiritual identity. I told them that this task force was coming and to consider being a part of it. I also just stop at tables on the Paseo. I have also contacted the Employee Affinity Groups (EAGs), the faculty staff associations that are connected with these student groups, to get into these groups. I also met with the AS Intercultural Affairs director and discussed how I can go to the AS committee with representation from all of the identity-based centers.

C: We know the students are looking for and ready for this.

The minutes were taken by Grace Barbieri on October 7, 2024, reviewed and accepted by Senate Chair Karthika Sasikumar on October 16, 2024, and approved by the Senate Executive Committee on October 21, 2024.