

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING 10-06-2015 APPROVED BY COMMITTEE 12-08-2015
Sub. To Exec. Comm. _____ Approved by Exec. Comm. _____
Sub. To Acad. Senate _____ Approved by Acad. Senate _____
POLICY ITEMS _____

Members Present:

Damian Christian, Nazaret Dermendjian (Chair), Barbara Gross, Michael Hoggan, Greg Knotts, Karen Kochis-Jennings, Linda Noblejas (recording), Jerry Schutte, Diane Stephens (Executive Secretary)

Members Absent:

Katherine Dabbour, Setareh Torabian-Riasati, Bruce Zucker

Guests:

Elizabeth Adams, Harry Hellenbrand, Kristy Michaud, Maggie Shiffrar, Steven Stepanek, Lili Vidal

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved.

3. Approval of the Minutes from September 1, 2015 Meeting

The minutes of the September 1, 2015 meeting were approved.

4. ERC Reviewer/Liaison – Kristy Michaud

Everyone introduced themselves for Michaud's benefit.

Michaud stated that she has been assigned as the ERC Liaison from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. Her job is to respond to questions about policies and procedures, review the minutes, and also to be in touch with the committee with regard to potential policies that will be coming to Senate Executive. She also reminded everyone of the responsibilities as members of the Educational Resources Committee, to be prepared for the meetings and to make sure that they attend and be a participant in the discussions.

5. Chair's Report

Dermendjian reported that because of his recent travel he was not able to attend the Faculty Senate meeting and he asked Schutte—who attended the meeting—to give a report. Schutte stated that because of the time taken at the recent Senate meeting to explain parliamentary procedures, there was no time left at the meeting for discussions.

Dermendjian shared there was a recent inquiry from Faculty Senate staff regarding about a potential resolution on affordability. He has researched the issue and could not find any recent information about initiatives on this topic and asked the group if they have heard anything.

Dermendjian also introduced the new faculty application and provided a brief demonstration for the members to review. Stephens gave a brief background on this project. She stated that Faculty Affairs and Research and Graduate Studies have asked the Matador Emerging Technology and Arts Lab (META+Lab) to work on an application that relates to faculty. The Faculty Affairs emphasis is on faculty stories that can be used for recruitment, in particular. Research and Graduate Studies is working with META+Lab on the part of the application that will eventually provide the opportunity for faculty members to share their research interests. The application was put together as an option for faculty use and the beta version is currently “live” and can be accessed through: www.csun.edu/faculty. Dermendjian stated that there are interesting features in this application. You can search for faculty like in People Finder but this application has more information. As a faculty member you can enter your biography and your picture, etc. It pulls information from SOLAR to automatically display your class schedule. You can also add your office hours and link syllabi to each course. He encouraged the group to spread the word to their departments so they can add their profile. The research piece is still a work in progress. He wanted to inquire from Fitzgerald regarding the limitations in importing information without losing formatting. The Faculty Stories will feature videos of faculty on why they chose CSUN, etc.

6. Executive Secretary's Report

a. Budget

Stephens reported that the University budget has yet to be finalized and approved. However, Academic Affairs has received approval for five faculty hires to improve “tenure density,” funded by the CSU Student Success Initiative. The University Budget Process significantly affects the financial health of Academic Affairs and there are many competing priorities and limited funds available.

A question was asked on the status of diversity hire money as opposed to faculty hiring money. Stephens responded that our hiring process is inclusive and no separate funds in Academic Affairs have been set aside specifically for diversity hiring.

b. Academic Affairs Annual Planning Process for 2016/17

Stephens reported that the Academic Affairs Annual Planning Process for the 2016/17 has started. The process focuses on three main areas: Student Success, Focus on Employees for Success, and Research. She also mentioned that the University's Two Year Planning Goals are available on the President's website.

c. Warehouse-Like Research Building

Stephens stated that the planning for a 10,000 square foot warehouse-like research building is underway. This will house the NIH Build/PODER grant and other research programs. It will be located on Plummer Street south of the Arts and Design Center, east of the Chicano House. It will go to the Board of Trustees for initial planning approval in November and again in January for final approval. The building will have a core of a conference room, faculty offices, and services (i.e., rest rooms, etc.). Depending on the budget and recommendations from Facilities Planning and architects, there is a strong desire to make the space easily reconfigurable for changing research needs over time. It will be initially set up for dry research. A question on where funding will come from to pay for this construction was raised. Stephens responded that it will come from a combination of funds -- funds are being reallocated from a variety of campus resources, including indirect costs and central reserves. Other discussion included the possibility for growth in the space, flexibility, who will be able to use the space, etc.

d. Follow Up Items

- i. In response to questions about pending items from the September meeting, Stephens stated that she has talked to Deborah Wallace regarding the chargeback issue raised at the meeting. Wallace's understanding is that University Advancement is creating a very clear pricing structure and will make it public on their website. Additionally, Stephens reported that a draft scope of work for a study of unscheduled uses of classrooms has been presented to Facilities Planning and is under review.

7. Draft Report: Sustainable Financial Model Task Force, Ensuring Success for California's Students – Harry Hellenbrand and Steven Stepanek

Dermendjian stated that a 30-page draft report of the Task Force for a Sustainable Financial Model for the CSU was uploaded to myCSUNbox for everyone's review.

Stepanek thanked everyone for accommodating the request to change the date of the meeting so that they can discuss the report with the group and get feedback and bring any feedback to the Task Force meeting next week. Stepanek stated that there are approximately 20 recommendations in the report. Some are actually immediate action items. The vast majority on the list are recommendations for new task forces and work groups. Their task force is coming up with the large picture; they are saying: “here are some of the issues, we need to do something about it, and we need to make suggestions on how it should progress.” But the details and implementations will be for another group to determine.

The report includes reality statements. We have a master plan for Higher Education that was put together in 1960. The State was very different back then. Higher Education plays an important role now than before. The near-free public education that was in the Master Plan of 1960 is not in the immediate future of the State. There is a need to look at how we put together the finances and planning and try to get a sustainable model. The goal is to provide a better and more stable financial planning tool for the campuses so they can plan multiple years ahead with the knowledge that certain amount of money will come in, rather than what is happening right now with the enrollment, budget cuts, etc. The idea is try to smooth that out but without saying that there will not be changes at the State budget level. Between the overall budget model and the various reserves being established both at the campus and system levels, the goal would be to make the shift that happens more smooth and stable.

Hellenbrand provided background and addressed four points.

- a. The problem that the State of California and Higher Education faces now is that the Public Policy Institute suggests that we need one million more graduates by 2025. The CSU and UC are cutting enrollment on the campuses and going in the opposite direction.
- b. From the late 1960’s the CSU, under the Master Plan, was designed to keep the legislators and the Governor out of the mix in terms of its finances. That has not been successful and the CSU has not traditionally had a good bargaining relationship with the legislature.
- c. This creates a sustainability issue (i.e., how to find the right vocabulary to speak to the legislators in a way to encourage them to not cut more).
- d. The questions become: what to do in-house to use funds efficiently and what other ways we can redistribute the funding fairly? Funding is not transparent. No one understands how it works. Money appears and disappears with no rhyme or reason. We are rewarded for what we are doing wrong and penalized for what we are doing right. There is a need for an overall change in the model.

Discussion ensued, including the possibilities for:

- looking at the difference between time-to-degree versus units-to-degree as metrics
- a trimester model and year-round curriculum
- grade inflation for the wrong reasons (i.e., to meet required success measures)

- remediation or developmental courses assigned to the community colleges
- sustainable fee increases,
- a clear public/private partnership model for capital projects
- an improved common management system.

Other discussion included: a lack of clarity about the audience for the Task Force Report and the fact that philanthropy is campus-specific.

8. Graduate Students and 100-399 Courses – Elizabeth Adams, Maggie Shiffrar, and Lili Vidal

Shiffrar distributed some documents pertaining to graduate students enrolled in 100-399 courses and these documents will be uploaded to myCSUNbox for the Committee.

Adams stated that the reason behind this restriction involves four things: impactation, Chancellor's Office mandated FTES targets, financial aid eligibility, and admissions standards. She further stated that our campus is wildly over-enrolled. We have a number of places where students are having problems getting classes in order to make progress in getting their bachelor's degrees. When we admit graduate students to programs for which they are under-prepared and asked them to take undergraduate courses, they are taking those seats away from undergraduate students who are working on their first baccalaureate. We have to give priority not just to undergraduates to have those seats but if we have more capacity to add more seats for the undergraduates to continue to make progress to their degrees.

Shiffrar stated that Graduate Studies is in an awkward position. CSUN is primarily an undergraduate institution and will always be primarily an undergraduate institution. The CSU used to have a Post Baccalaureate Unclassified (PBU) status where graduate students would come in and as a tool to take a few courses in preparation for a master's degree. But the PBU was eliminated. Throughout the CSU, graduate programs continued to admit students into master's program in which they have not significant expertise. However, the changes in the Department of Education and the federal changes in how Financial Aid is managed have made it difficult to continue to do what they have been doing. Financial aid for graduate students is a lot worse than financial aid for undergraduates. It gets pricier and it can get up to eight percent (8%) interest compounded at the time students take out the loan. Also, graduate students are only eligible for financial aid up for 125% of the minimum number of units needed to complete a graduate degree. So for a 30 unit Master's degree, students lose financial aid after taking 38 units. The federal government now requires universities to report to the Department of Education the minimum number of units required to complete each degree. Therefore, the federal government can easily determine when a university violates the rule. This is not a rule that CSUN wants to violate. Financial aid problems at the graduate level cause CSUN to lose the ability to get financial aid for any graduate students. So this has been a grave precaution for all of the things that we do here at CSUN: the ability to re-tool graduate students and the ability to bring international students and then discover that they need more background. More than half of graduate students are on financial aid of some type. We do not want to violate rules for financial

aid and also take seats away from undergraduate students. Shiffar stated that some programs have taken some actions in response to this issue by raising their admission standards, advising potential applicants to take 100-200 courses at community colleges before applying, creating new certificate programs, converting 300 level courses to 400 level courses, and removing their post-admit “prerequisites.”

Discussion followed about different cases that are happening on campus and various scenarios in terms of graduate student units taken over the allowed 125% and eligibility for financial aid. Vidal addressed the issues of financial aid and the implications for students.

9. Impaction – Elizabeth Adams

Adams explained as the purpose and current status of impaction for the campus She stated that the University, as agreed upon with the Chancellor’s Office, used the tools for impaction that were at our disposal for admission to 2015/16 with the local freshmen in Tier 1 and 2. All applicants in Tier 2 have been denied. However, it did not reduce our student body. It has been significantly higher than all previous academic years. The transfer class was also exceptionally large. We had 40,000 students last Fall and this Fall we have 41,600. Instead of going down 1% per our agreement with the Chancellor’s Office, we are up by 3% in spite of all the impaction tools that we have implemented. The new standards for impaction for the institution include three things:

- One is changing our freshmen service area which excludes Ventura County and parts of East Los Angeles County.
- Secondly, for the first time, we declared a transfer service area that includes all of Ventura County and most of Los Angeles County.
- And finally, while we asked to be able to do full program impaction, we announced our intention to impact Psychology, Cinema and Television Arts, Kinesiology and Music and to maintain our impaction on Accounting, Finance and Financial Services.

Adams also mentioned some of the loop holes. For example, if Channel Islands does not offer a program and the student applies in the major, we have to admit the student as we are the next local option. The University will likely exclude out-of-area transfers and most out-of-area freshmen for the Fall 2016 admissions cycle. We do not necessarily want to exclude all the out-of-area freshmen because they help fill campus housing. There are areas in the State that are underserved by the system as a whole. For example, the Central Coast local campus is Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and it is exceptionally difficult to get admitted; so, CSUN is the next option for those students.

Adams shared that Huber did some enrollment projections that show if we exclude all out-of-area transfers and most out-of-area freshmen for the 2016/17 admission process, we will roughly achieve the same enrollment next year as this year. This is because our retention rates are up and our last entering classes have been huge. Therefore, we had to go to a more assertive approach with the impacted programs.

The impacted programs have to have higher standards. There will be local students who are eligible for admission but will be denied admission because they chose to major in an impacted program. We will not give them the option to switch to another major to get into CSUN. They will be denied admission because it is the only way that we can control the incoming class. In addition, Adams state the Provost has asked her to form a task force to look at what we want as rules and guidelines for program impaction going forward. We have to establish where we are beyond capacity. The task force will be composed of two deans, two associate deans, two department chairs, a person from Admissions and Records, a person from Institutional Research, a person from Student Affairs, and Adams. They will convene the group soon and will put together some standards for impaction, including, for example metrics such as full time faculty to major student ratio, etc.

The problem with admission will not be significantly affected with the Tier 1 reduction and impacted majors. If the Chancellor's Office holds us to the requirement that we agreed to (i.e., 1% a year), we have to pull off a thousand students from the 2017/18 and 2018/19 admission classes. We were trying to reduce gradually so we can adapt financially to the lower fee revenue this would mean, while the Chancellor's Office give us more regular FTES funding.

This is all the consequence of the *ad hoc* approach that the system and the campus took for impaction. We are the last campus to declare impaction and this will have a profound effects to our neighboring campuses like Dominguez Hills and Los Angeles and other campuses from whose areas we draw students. Adams also noted there are apparent ripple effects of this over-enrollment problem including parking challenges with more complaints from the neighbors (who are as much as a mile away from the campus) about students parking near their homes. Adams stated that we are running out of money, space and people. The campus does not really have a classroom space problem because we have lecture space available for faculty to teach at 8:00 a.m. She stated that our real problem is with people. There are departments that cannot hire faculty that are qualified to teach the courses we require them to teach. If we combine that with the money problem we are facing a crisis. The campus is having conversations with the Chancellor's Office about renegotiating the terms of the reduction to this year to the next. She added another resource problem is the amount of human work that will take in Admissions and Records to handle impaction. For instance, we cannot run auto-admit for freshmen because it cannot sort out who is local and who is not local. We do not have auto-admit for transfer students because each transcript has to be looked at individually. And on top of this. Admissions and Records has staff vacancies in this area.

International students will be admitted at current standards. We will continue to want international students because it gives us more capacity and they do not count as part of our FTES. We will see an upward trend with international students.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

Notes:

The next ERC meeting will be on Tuesday, November 10, 2015 from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. in UN 211.

THERE WERE NO POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS DISCUSSED AT THIS MEETING.