

ACADEMIC SENATE PLENARY MEETING ATTENDANCE & MINUTES

6th March 2012

Adjunct Faculty

Sue Ellen Warren X
Leah Pate

Behavioral & Social Sciences

Firestone, Randy X
Gold, Christina X
Moen, Michelle X
Widman, Lance X
Wynne, Michael X

Business

Siddiqui, Junaid X
Lau, Philip S X
VACANT

Counseling

Pajo, Christina X
Sabio, Sabra
Vaughn, Dexter X
Key, Ken X

Fine Arts

Ahmadpour, Ali X
Bloomberg, Randall X
Crossman, Mark X
Schultz, Patrick X
Wells, Chris X

Health Sciences & Athletics

Hazell, Tom X
Colunga, Mina X
Baily, Kim X
Holt, Kelly X
Hicks, Tom X

Humanities

Isaacs, Brent X
Marcoux, Pete X
McLaughlin, Kate X
Halonen, Briita X
Simon, Jenny X

Industry & Technology

Gebert, Pat X
Hofmann, Ed X
MacPherson, Lee X

Winfree, Merriel X
Marston, Doug X

Learning Resources Unit

Striepe, Claudia X
Ichinaga, Moon EXC

Mathematical Sciences

Bateman, Michael X
Hamza Hamza X
Sheynshteyn, Arkadiy
Taylor, Susan X
VACANT
Barajas, Eduardo X

Natural Sciences

Doucette, Pete X
Herzig, Chuck X
Jimenez, Miguel X
Palos Teresa X
VACANT

Academic Affairs & SCA

Arce, Francisco X
Nishime, Jeanie X
Lee, Claudia X
Lam, Karen

ECC CEC Members

Evans, Jerome
Norton, Tom X
Panski, Saul X
Pratt, Estina X
Halligan, Chris
Odanaka, Michael X

Assoc. Students Org.

Asher, Rebekka
Valdez, Cindy

Ex- Officio Positions

Guests, Dean's Rep, Visitors:

Carolyn Pineda, Ann Garten, VP Perez

Attendance Continued:

Deans Shankweiler, Lew, Rapp, Miranda, Natividad, Goldberg, Fitzsimons, Rodriguez

Unless noted otherwise, all page numbers refer to the packet used during the meeting, not the current packet you are reading now.

The second Academic Senate meeting of the Spring 2012 semester was called to order by Academic Senate President Gold at 12:33pm.

President Gold noted that all faculty are members of the Academic Senate on a local campus and State level. As such, faculty are invited to all Senate meetings, not just special sessions like this one. President Gold mentioned the Academic Senate membership cards available on the table. President Gold noted that the Senate would first attend to some routine matters, and she would like to mention the calendar issue, before moving onto the plenary session business. President Gold requested that no names of general faculty be used in the minutes unless faculty specifically requested so.

Approval of last Minutes:

[See pp.6-11 of packet]The minutes of the February 21st meeting were approved as written.

Senate President Gold noted that

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Academic Senate President's report – Christina Gold (henceforth CG)

CG announced that President Fallo announced yesterday in College Council his intention to consider presenting the Board with a 2012-13 academic calendar that eliminates winter session. The Board had already approved a 2012-13 calendar with winter intact, so he may be asking them to rescind the earlier calendar and approve a new one without winter. The Senate and Student bodies have made their feelings re: Winter session very clear on repeated occasions, and have received no written response as yet.

President Fallo DID ask for advisement on whether to leave the potentially vacated Winter time period open, or push Spring back and begin Spring semester earlier. CG asked for feedback.

Mr. Marston suggested taking a straw poll on the question. Opinions were expressed by those present. It was noted that some students have planned to take classes. Should the Winter session be taken away, the gap should be left to allow them to transfer their Winter studies to another Community College. If we close the gap, we have taken away their opportunity to take extra classes at any college.

A question was asked about back-to-back summer session dates. CG answered that exact dates were not know, but that there was as yet no guarantee of back-to-back summer sessions, especially in the current budget climate.

Mr. Wells reported that he had received email in favor of retaining Winter and citing higher retention rates for the Winter classes.

Mr. Widman suggested that the Winter calendar discussion fit in well with the later discussion of the No Confidence Resolution. It was noted that Compton had also voted to keep Winter. Mr. Widman noted it was typical of ECC administration to announce a decision and have the Senate and faculty discuss the "fine-tuning", noting that this was a prime example of non collegial consultation, but rather a unilateral decision made by Dr. Fallo. Shared governance is a charade at ECC.

Mr. Ahmadpour agreed, saying that he has stated this over and over. He urged faculty to take action.

Mr. Crossman acknowledged that there is a lot of passion around the issue due to past history and that he was really proud of the Senate body for taking a stand. He felt that, as the Academic Senate has offered its opinion to the Board and received no written response, perhaps the Senate should not even respond to the President's request for advisement as to do so continues the illusion of shared governance. Mr. Crossman noted that for this reason he would abstain from any votes on the issue. He noted that, as usual, the campus is called upon to fix the details of decisions forced upon it.

Mr. Marston requested to withdraw the idea of a straw-poll on the issue as the discussion was too wide-ranging.

The question was raised as to President Fallo's possible reasons for cutting Winter. CG said that the Board had asked the same question and had been given a list of pros/cons; basically Pres. Fallo noted that we are facing further budget cuts and felt it better to preserve the basic core of classes for Spring and Fall semesters and forgo Winter.

CG asked that faculty mail her with further comments/suggestions on this issue.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Resolution of No Confidence in the Implementation of the Collegial Consultation Process at El Camino College.

[See packet pp 12-23]

CG allowed a few minutes for a read-through of the document, noting that the Taskforce is seeking faculty input at this stage and would be using the input to revise the document.

CG explained that the Resolution is NOT a Resolution of No Confidence in a person. Such a resolution usually means that the person named is incompetent, and faculty cannot work with them. It was felt that not much good could come of such a resolution, and that it might "poison the well" irredeemably.

The Resolution IS a lack of confidence in how the legally mandated process of collegial consultation is handled at this campus and that it proposes a solution. We want to find and be part of a solution.

The Resolution ASKS that a neutral third-party be brought in to negotiate and suggest solutions. This puts the ball in the Administration's court to decide whether to join the process.

CG outlined the origins of the Resolution, noting that a Taskforce had been created to craft the Resolution, and that they had done background reading and had met during the Winter session, together and also with local representatives of the Statewide Senate. On flex day, Senators had spoken to their Division faculty to gauge feeling, and a workshop had been offered on the afternoon of flex day. At the workshop, also attended by Drs. Arce and Nishime, many opinions had been heard.

A draft resolution had been circulated, and the Academic Senate had had its first reading of the Resolution at its last meeting. Senators had asked for evidence to support the Resolution, which has since been compiled and is included in this packet. Evidence had been important to faculty who were seeking clarity and examples. A plenary session had been requested, and based on this plenary session feedback, the Resolution will be revised and will return to the Academic Senate for a second reading. A vote will be taken – either by Senate only, or a campus-wide vote. CG noted that all must feel confident that this has been a thoroughly thought-through process.

The Taskforce felt that naming a process is more accurate of the situation at ECC, and broad enough to include more situations.

CG noted that the first 3 Whereas's provide background, and the next 2 Whereas's lay out the problem. On paper, the collegial consultation process is in place, but it is not functional, and actions of the President and VPAA contribute to the problem.

The last Whereas request access to a negotiation service.

Regarding the Resolves, the second Resolve provides an attempt at a solution – to participate in an "issue-resolution" service of a type more fully described on pp 22-23 of packet.

Four different levels/types of services are offered, and President Fallo HAS agreed to an Information Presentation, however this level is usually reserved for an overview, not for campuses with documented problems. President Fallo feels that these are a "ladder" of services, but CG felt the term "cluster" more appropriate, with colleges able to pick the service most appropriate to the situation. The Taskforce recommends the Advisory Assistance service which would provide a neutral party visit, investigation, written report, presentation and offer of training – thus providing a solution to a deep and abiding problem.

CG invited members of the Taskforce to speak. Mr. Crossman noted that if some faculty had never seen such a document as the Resolution before, he felt this document provided much evidence and the solutions proposed are very mild.

CG opened the floor to discussion/comment.

Comments/questions included:

- Many found this is a well thought-out document, dates should be added (where missing) to the example evidence, and targeting the process of collegial consultation is probably more effective.
- What if we vote and President Fallo refuses to act? CG agreed that perhaps only the Board could ask Dr. Fallo to act, and if that did not occur then we would be at an impasse. However the Senate and faculty could speak up during Accreditation, and the Senate could issue a minority report for Accreditation.
- Has the Taskforce looked at the experiences of other colleges? It was noted that 86% of faculty voted against Piadad Robertson in a vote of No Confidence at Santa Monica College. It was noted that that approach can be thus effective, so why were we not naming the President, or perhaps think of introducing a dual Resolution against the President AND the process.
- What is the likelihood that the Board will prevail upon the President? The impression is that the Board is “in the President’s pocket”. Mr. Widman noted that the Taskforce had discussed these above concerns and had felt that by NOT making it personal we would avoid the Board “circling the wagons” around the President whom they had hired. Our focus is the process and the President and VPAA are mentioned in the evidence/examples. Mr. Widman noted that faculty have been DIMed (Dismissed, Ignored, Marginalized), but we will need to talk to the Board as we want the Board to be part of the solution.
- Mr. Norton asked if there had been any communication with the Board recently. CG answered that they are aware of the issue and its progress, but there has been no direct communication.
- Do we have an option for a vote of No Confidence in the Board? Yes.
- Mr. Ahmadapour noted that we should be planning ahead, feeling that groups should go into the community, in case we are ignored by the Board. He had no faith in the Board, and felt we should be prepared with more plans. He felt the community should be exposed to the state of affairs, and if it came to a lawsuit, the Board and others should pay their own expenses, and not the taxpayer.
- Mr. Marston added that as an ex Academic Senate President he had had a view of how things worked and felt that AB1725 (1989) requirements were routinely ignored on the campus – including things like shared governance and written responses, and felt the Senate might need to sue. He felt that while the Resolution is not perfect, it did have good ideas – like that of requesting assistance and we should explore these avenues first even if they might not be successful.
- Mr. Widman said some might be asking “Is this all we can do?” and at this moment in time – yes. Please forward other ideas/comments to himself, CG or other Taskforce members.
- Mr. Widman also spoke to the question of participation on Committees, noting that many consider this activity a waste of time in the light of recent issues, and that some have made a decision to work only on Division committees.
- What would be the impact of the Resolution on future Accreditation, and could the Resolution cause problems for ECC? Mr. Widman noted that we have been battling this problem for years and have never received serious attention, so the issue alone would not affect Accreditation, but faculty who “deliver the goods” are tired of having their input ignored.
- What happens next? CG repeated that based on feedback the document could be revised and would be presented to the Academic Senate at their next meeting (March 20th) for a second reading. The Senate could vote then, or revise the document further, and then a 3rd reading would be needed, and then Senate could decide for a campus-wide vote...which could be as soon as a month away. The issue would then be presented to the Board and they would be asked to respond within a reasonable time-frame.
- Mr. Crossman noted that the fact that faculty were here at the Plenary indicated that they cared enough to come out. He noted that faculty need to spread the word. He noted that there was a time when the campus had been blasé about shared governance, and now we were reaping the result. The current financial crisis climate favoured quick decisions, but some of these decisions could be used to push through other issues. In this climate faculty could not just sit in their cubicles and wait – rather they should talk to their colleagues and community.

- Mr. Wells noted that the State-wide Senate and Chancellor's Office are aware of the situation and poised to respond.
- Mr. Ahmadapour argued for starting something like a hunger strike to push the Board and get publicity for the issue. Call him at x 3539. Some agreed with Mr. Ahmadapour's sentiments to get publicity and the need to get the community and local newspapers involved and informed. It was noted that the only power we have is to embarrass and make our administrators uneasy in public. It was felt that maybe a Public Relations Committee is needed.
- CG made a "personal comment", saying that she had come in as Academic Senate President to replace Mr. Vakil and that she had then started to read statewide Senate documents on how things should operate and had seen the disconnect in terms of collegial consultation. She had spoken to other campuses and had seen that ECC was very different and did not really follow the recommendations and the law. From the beginning of her tenure she had received requests for a Resolution of No Confidence and has seen from the 90's a clear and consistent problem.
- There were more thanks for the Senate's representation of the faculty and comments that many faculty felt powerless as they do not live in the area and cannot vote for the Board. It was felt thus that any faculty vote opportunity would be important, even if just symbolically, and especially if shared with the media.
- Mr. Key expressed appreciation that the Senate had brought the issue to light as it was felt to be long overdue. He felt morale, outcomes, and faculty involvement could all be better if we had more avenues of respect. Dr. Kjeseth agreed, saying that faculty felt beaten down for stepping up and performing a service and echoed the call to become a more activist faculty, and speak to our communities. Dr. Kjeseth believed that we should have more confidence in our communities and students and just start talking to people about what is happening at ECC. It was repeated that community outreach is important.
- As question was asked as to when Dr. Fallo had become President, and the answer was around 1995/96/
- It was felt that the college has leaders that ignore faculty input. It was noted that administrators salaries are not shrinking, and this was shameful in the context of shrinking opportunities for students.
- It was noted in terms of spreading information, that the students were hosting a Student Collective College in Art 103 on Wednesday from 5-7pm. These students are attempting to educate their peers, so please let your students know about the event. Many students are alarmed at the disruptions, but framing the events in terms of civil disobedience struggles, sometimes has the effect of getting students to be attentive to the issues.

CG summed up that the document would be edited based on this discussion and to please pass on further comment to her via email.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.

CS/ECC2012