

Yuba College
Academic Senate
M I N U T E S
May 14, 2009

Senators Present: Nickolson (president), Boren, Buckley, Canto-Lugo, Davidson, Heaton, Kemble, Ramsey, Willson (Note: The venue was changed, so Morgan and Devries were absent due to technical and communication difficulties.)

Guests: Condrey, Cupp, Dobbs, Farrell, Hulin, Jensen-Martin, Mello, Smith, Stemmann, Steverson, Syda, Trutna, Turner, Waite

Meeting was called to order at 12:03 pm. Zucchini bread—very popular.

1. Agenda: approved, with addition of 7b
2. Minutes: delayed.
3. Committee Reports
 - a. Shared decision making survey (Waite)
 - i. Waite introduced survey as part of a study of Institutional Effectiveness, inquiring about goals and outcomes, leadership, communication within and without the Senate. Though not complete or exhaustive, but is intended to elicit information and start a dialogue. Waite left the survey to be completed at the Senate retreat on May 27.
 - b. BSI – information on funds (Cupp and Farrell)
 - i. Cupp explained that President Mendoza had asked the BSI task force to contribute \$30,000 for one year (or, each of two years) to hire an institutional researcher. After some research and debate, they voted against the request. Cupp requested that the Senate affirm the task force’s position: the research position should not be ”pay for play”; research for the BSI project should be higher up the priority list than seems to be true.

Farrell explained that no one is happy about how the \$30,000 (or \$60,000) is going to be used, but noted that research is a critical part of the process and an approved category for spending. Reaffirm that should receive priority when it comes to researcher, but we have no control over budget. This person would be a member of project team and part of designing research.

Hulin noted that BSI doesn’t require \$30,000 per year of research. Indeed, this amount of money being taken from the budget might derail projects that have already been started. Though she understands the need for a researcher in support of accreditation, she is concerned about giving up \$60,000 out of the only \$150,000; we can’t always anticipate what we will need—such as adjuncts to teach classes for lowered caps in math sections, etc.

Ramsey objected on the grounds that the researcher would be for the whole college, not just for BSI. Steverson affirmed this, noting that President Mendoza's presentation to BSI committee had little discussion of research for BSI; the focus was on how the research was needed for accreditation. Hulin added, from her research into the situation, that accreditation requires an online researcher; Woodland has one, but Waite is a District researcher. Money originally intended for a researcher is gone after cutbacks.

Davidson made two points: 1) if we need a focused amount of research, it would be much cheaper to hire an intern with supervision or bid out for an outside researcher; 2) in all areas, people have been asked not to hire or refill positions. Why is there a different standard for administration?

Cupp asked that the Senate 1) support the BSI task force's decision and 2) endorse the fact that the BSI plan requires that the college make research on Basic Skills programs a higher priority—but not calling for a whole researcher. Willson so moved (seconded by Canto-Lugo); motion carried unanimously.

- ii. Cupp announced that the latest data from the state Chancellor's office indicates that there is only a 55.5% success among BSI students. In light of such need, she was disappointed at low turnout at the last BSI conference. She hopes more will turn out for the September.
- iii. Condrey withdrew from his position as co-facilitator for the Learning Communities project. He will still participate in the program by teaching, but argued that the project has moved away from sound principles and no longer is setting groundwork for a successful program. For example, he was frustrated that a third Learning Community (linking a football PE course with a Counseling class) had been created without going through any process; this is particularly problematic because 1) a number of courses were turned down for the Fall because the project wanted to target and assess a manageable number of courses; 2) there is a significant stipend attached to Learning Communities, which requires transparency and strong rationale for course selection. He asked that the Senate look closely at how the Learning Communities project is run, especially how decisions are made.

Cupp confirmed that the course had been created with no discussion with the BSI task force. Dean Farrell explained that the PE activity is a "linked class," not a Learning Community, and follows a model with high success from San Mateo. Since there was not time to create a Learning Community, but the student population in question has a

high attrition rate, he decided to do this as a first step to help the athletes. He wants also to involve the Writing Center and Success Center as well. This is not, he explained, part of the Learning Communities project as a whole.

Willson wondered if all this should go through the Curriculum Committee. Farrell affirmed that the project team does report to them.

Steverson asked if a linked class carries a stipend; Farrell said it does not. Boren said that Farrell had, at least initially, spoken to him about this link as a Learning Community and apologized to the team. He had thought Farrell had spoken to the team, and it was not his intent to circumvent what the team was establishing. Boren said he would cancel the link on his end.

- iv. Cupp reminded the Senate of John Thoo's request that we reiterate our support for math course caps. Canto-Lugo moved (seconded by Willson) that the Senate support the math department's proposal for lowered caps on math courses. Motion carried unanimously.

4. President's Report

- i. The Board meeting lasted until 7:30—a bit long and, at times, difficult. There was a handout on the proposed Education Center. The Study Abroad Program was approved in concept after much discussion. Edmunds did a good job presenting his proposed Study Abroad class. The Study Abroad Team now needs to supply some specific information and will meet with Dr. Harrington. Jensen-Martin reminded the Senate that the Board only has to approve the notion of off-campus classes overseas, not individual classes.
- ii. Nickolson attended the presidential candidates' forums and found them interesting.

5. Vice-President's Report (May was absent, but report sent by email follows)

6. Old business

- a. Election results for at-large Senator (Heaton)
 - i. Heaton reported that she received some reports that some faculty were not receiving nomination sheets and/or ballots. Heaton is certain, however, that she put these in each person's mailbox; she wonders if they are being lost when third parties pick up faculty email to deliver it to a division.
- b. Senate budget (action)
 - i. The Senate budget needs to be cut 5%. Canto-Lugo moved (Willson seconded) to cut 5% from each category. Motion carries unanimously.

7. New business:

- a. Election of Vice-President

- i. Lots of non-volunteering. May had sent word that he would be willing to serve again, but has no intention of serving as Senate president. Jensen-Martin said that it should be someone who would be preparing for the Senate presidency. Nickolson called for the Senate to consider carefully.
- b. Recognition of outgoing senators (Davidson)
 - i. Davidson wanted to recognize Cathy for keeping the Senate beyond reproach in elections; she always sought clarification when something was unclear, and then handled her responsibility well. He added that she was a good mentor, too. Much applause.
 - ii. Nickolson added that Devries had done a great job as adjunct representative; she had been very participative.

8. Bin

Meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm.

Vice President's Report, emailed 5/14/09

At this Thursday's Senate Meeting, the BSI Team will be discussing the expenditure of funds for this next year. Senators will no doubt have questions about the BSI action plan adopted by the Senate, and how that plan is being carried out. One problem that has surfaced is the administration's plan to seize \$30,000 of BSI funds to help pay for one of their new administrators. Hiring administrators was not part of the action plan--nor should it be. I will forward to Senators emails by Gretchen Cupp and Brian Condrey regarding this issue; the faculty members on BSI believe the funds should be used to hire adjunct instructors to reduce class sizes in math.

If the BSI Committee indicates their opposition to this administrative appropriation of funds, the Academic Senate should strongly support the committee. It is imperative that class sizes in math be brought down, particularly in the basic skills courses. Right now, we cannot afford to hire any full-time instructors in the District. If the administration is dipping into BSI funds to hire administrators, then it is obvious we cannot afford to hire administrators either. We are told that we simply must have this administrator or that administrator (Vice Chancellor of Business, two research administrators, a dean of MESH). If we can make do without the instructional positions, we can make do without the new administrators as well. I have heard the argument that there is enough BSI money to do both: reduce math class sizes and hire an administrator. I would like to see ALL of the basic skills instructional funds devoted to basic skills instruction, period. If the District Research Administrator is burdened with additional research chores because two more researchers are not hired, is that not analogous to the math instructors on this campus who have for years been burdened with inappropriately large classes?

I hope that the Senate will fully support the BSI Committee's proposed use of funds to support instruction.

Other news:

The SLO Committee meets again today to plan convocation activities.

The Diversity Committee met last Friday. We hope to have a preliminary report in July on Diversity for the new College President, and we are making good progress toward that goal.

The MESH Dean selection process has been stalled; Kevin Trutna indicates a decision is pending.

The last Faculty Mentor Meeting is now scheduled for May 27 from 3 to 5-- a social gathering at the end of the Senate retreat. I hope all Senators can stay around for the social hour--or two.