

Yuba College
Academic Senate
M I N U T E S
August 20, 2009

Senators Present: Nickolson (president), May, Boren, Buckley, Davidson, Kemble, Kitchen, Morgan, Ramsey, Stemmann, Turner, Weiss, Willson

Guests: Trutna

Meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm. Zucchini bread supplied by Larry Michel.

1. Agenda: approved with additions (3. Introductions; 4d. Senate forums)
2. Minutes: Kemble agreed to (re)send the minutes from the Senate Retreat for approval at next meeting.
3. Introductions
 - a. Everyone said his or her own name (touching).
 - b. Welcome to new members.
 - c. Best wishes (and a card to sign) for a speedy recovery for Fernando Canto-Lugo.
4. President's Report – Nickolson
 - a. Nickolson gave a “Blue Eye” to each member of the Senate. Blue Eyes are used to ward off the Evil Eye—placed over children's beds, for example.
 - b. College Council meeting on Tuesday Aug. 18 included discussion of the budget.
 - i. There is a \$5 to 5.5 million deficit; Yuba College's share, despite cuts already made last year, has been set “proportionally” at 60%. Things done so far:
 1. Last March at Yuba College, supplies budget was lowered 5%
 2. In May, there was an additional 5% cut.
 3. The MESH dean position was not filled
 4. 10+ retiring faculty were not replaced, though some were hired part time
 5. We lost some classified staff
 6. No administrative positions were lost
 - ii. Concerns:
 1. Cuts are not proportionate.
 2. Even though we're one district, the discussion always treats us as three separate entities—Yuba, Woodland, and the District.
 3. College Council asked Dr. Adkins to ask for information that has not been supplied yet.
 - iii. Ideas that have been proposed, saving \$1.5 million:
 1. compression of Fall and Spring semesters

2. Cancelling summer session
 3. Cancelling POST academy
 4. Reducing library hours
 5. Lessening the budget for temp classified staff
 6. Tennis and Cross-Country teams have been cancelled.
- iv. There will be an all Yuba College meeting tomorrow (Friday, Aug. 21) at 2:00 pm.
 - v. We might consider giving up the Senate budget.
- c. Concern about what's going on with the Board
- i. They tried to cut her off, citing a 5 minute limit
 - ii. Spoke to Trustee President Flory, who thinks the Senate presentation should only be 5 minutes, even though this has never been true before, and even though Flory had agreed, at the May meeting with administrators, WCC Senate, and YC Senate, to leave the Senates as exceptions to the 5-minute rule.
 - iii. Nickolson refuses to comply since this would, in effect, cut off the faculty voice.
 - iv. We need to attend Board meetings as a Senate group.
- d. We need to reschedule two important meetings we had planned: one with the district lawyer about tenure process (we have learned that this will only be possible on a Friday in October or November); the other, a shared governance forum with the State Academic Senate and College League (originally tentatively scheduled for August 5, but this obviously did not happen.)
- e. Trustee President Flory has more than once asked why the Senate does not put topics on the Board agenda for discussion. When Nickolson mentioned this to Dr. Harrington, she was told to present the topics to Dr. Adkins, who would then present them to Dr. Harrington before agreeing to put it on the agenda.
- i. Topics Nickolson will recommend for the next meeting:
 1. Study Abroad
 2. administrative hiring and evaluation
 3. expenditures and productivity by site (addressing the "proportionality" of the cuts)
 4. tenure process
 5. shared governance training
 6. Basic Skills
 - ii. Davidson noted that it is important that this list be in the Senate minutes so people can see what gets approved or denied. He asserted that it is ridiculous to have to go through three levels to get an item on the agenda.
 - iii. Boren asked if there are written, Board-approved policies regarding getting things on the agenda. Are all members of the community treated

the same way? This almost seems illegal. Nickolson noted that training will help clarify these issues.

- iv. Nickolson has requested that the next Board meeting, which is September 9, be moved to a larger room.

5. Vice President's Report – May

- a. May believes that 60% is a disproportionate cut.
- b. He has been unsuccessful at putting together a meeting of Yuba Board and Administration representatives
- c. He is concerned that we are not getting the information we need
 - i. Suspicion about the accuracy of the numbers we're being told.
 - ii. Believes an independent audit is needed, which would focus on analysis of the numbers.
- d. May wanted to know why convocation included a 45-minute presentation on accreditation while the college is being dismantled. There is a problem here of perspective and leadership.
- e. Trustee Buchan says "We're all in this together," but this is not true; the Board and administration want our cooperation, yet they have consistently bullied us for over a year—and now are floating ideas like asking us to teach for free, or take a pay cut, etc.
- f. May asked what he and Nickolson should talk about in upcoming meetings with Dr. Adkins and others. Suggestions:
 - i. Davidson would like to hear a serious argument in favor of and/or against using more of the reserves; to make wise choices, we need to know what would happen in such a case.
 - ii. Davidson noted that, at convocation, the leadership argued that the main issue is the number of FTES the school is not being paid for. Why, then, are the math department's requests to lower caps, which would lower FTES, consistently rejected?
 - iii. Willson asked if the leadership is discussing furlough. May answered that we are being given the choice of salary-reduction measures or classified staff being laid off—making faculty the bad guys in the discussion.
 - iv. Turner noted that, in the case of the Welding program, the proposed cuts would require getting rid of all part-timers. This would mean that entire parts of his program would simply disappear. (Kemble noted that this is true for Fine Arts as well). He understands that tough choices need to be made everywhere, but emphasized that these particular cuts would be devastating to such programs.
 - v. Buckley demanded why such expectations fall on faculty and staff, but not administration.

- vi. Boren noted that we can't devise options without information (such as how much we have tapped into the reserves so far). He also wondered if accreditation might be put on hold at a state level.
 - vii. Kemble wanted to know why other schools are not as bad off as Yuba. Sierra College, for example, is still hiring and has given extra classes to some adjuncts.
 - viii. Davidson wanted to know if there is an intent to backfill some positions. For example, we don't need an HR Director right now. May responded that he can't even get a clear answer on whether or not they are planning to hire a MESH dean at this time.
 - g. May noted that the creation of a District level of administration has been a disaster: it has created impediments for the Senate to deal with the Board while pursuing budgetary processes that have made the District insolvent.
 - h. Boren noted that classes have been virtually full for a month. The only way students can get into classes now is with instructor approval.
6. Old Business: Review of Goals
- a. Nickolson asked that we look over the goals and think about whether or not we want to adjust them in some way.
7. New Business – Discussion
- a. May noted that everyone is demoralized right now, and asked if we should comply with Board and administrative demands.
 - i. Davidson noted that this question assumes that compliance would make things better. He is considered that it won't matter a hill of beans either way, so we should do what we think is right and let the chips fall as they may.
 - ii. Turner is going to continue doing what he is doing: the best he can for his students, pursuing outside resources and scraping by the best he can.
 - iii. Boren noted that Yuba College is fortunate to have Turner and the things he does for his program, and finds it "unfortunate" that the administration will not support him because they know he'll do it anyway. This is a pattern.
 - iv. Boren noted further that this is a tough time, and that we'd be willing to take a fair share of the cuts if we believed everyone was going to do so. It seems that the administration is not, however—though we'd need to see the whole picture to know for sure.
 - v. Kemble noted that ignoring the Budget Committee's recommendations about, among other things, administrative hiring shows that they are not willing to do their part.

- vi. Willson suggested that this is the time to start “thinking smart”—taking a look at what Yuba does well and support that, while improving or letting go of less important or successful things.
 - vii. Turner was asked by a constituent to ask why, whenever there is a budget crisis, the first thing cut is the thing that would help end the crisis? Why always cut skills-based programs first? Such programs prepare people to be able to jump right into the work force when the economy improves. Yet—again—devastating cuts are being proposed for skills-based programs at Yuba.
8. Meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm, though there was no sign that the discussion was flagging.