

Yuba College
Academic Senate
M I N U T E S
October 1, 2009

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

Guests: Bui, Cupp, Farrell, Hulin, Langston, Mello, Orton, Steverson, Stranix, Syda, Trutna

Meeting was called to order at 12:02. Helen provided “homemade” cookies.

1. Agenda: Approved with additions
 - a. 5b (tentative): grade change
 - b. For future meeting: role of Academic Senate in program elimination
2. Minutes:
 - a. Approved.
3. Announcements / Reports
 - a. BSI – Farrell, Steverson, Cupp
 - i. Dr. Farrell presented the BSI Plan and budget for 2009-10 for the Senate for initial comments and questions and, by Oct. 15, for approval. As Steverson noted, in the past, this had been given to the BSI committee, and thus to the Senate, with very little lead time; this is still a tight deadline, but better than in the past. Nickolson affirmed that the Plan has been put on the following week’s agenda.
 - ii. The Plan fits items in four areas to Best Practices in Basic Skills education. Some items are carryovers; since it’s a comprehensive plan, not all items could be implemented. Tutoring and student services have priority, with an additional focus on faculty development.
 - iii. The budget has two columns: one for 2009-10 allocation, which is due to the Chancellor’s office by Oct. 15; and one for rollover funding, which is not due to the state. Dr. Farrell noted that the allocation across the state for BSI has been reduced, but there is no word on whether BSI funding will continue or be cut. However, the state had originally conceived BSI as a five-year program to be funded by growth money; with the current state of the economy, this seems unrealistic now.
 - iv. May affirmed that the committee has done great work, but asked if the Senate should withhold its signature in response to the money assigned to the research position at the college, which the committee had officially opposed. Steverson acknowledged that the committee is sorting out this issue too, trying to decide whether to use rollover funds or 2010-11 funds to pay for the researcher. They currently have it identified in rollover

funds (though this is still under discussion) for fear that the BSI money might be reduced to the point where only the researcher could be funded—leaving no money for any other projects. Cupp noted that the Senate made its position clear the previous year, voting to support the committee in recommending against the researcher allocation—but that the money went out anyway. Hulin noted that, though the process for allocating that money was wrong, the Initiative—and SLOs—require an institutional researcher do demonstrate effectiveness to the state. Davidson asked if the researcher has been helpful; Hulin said that, though he’s getting up to speed on the vagaries of the community college, he has been helpful.

- v. Boren expressed concern that a recommendation to bring in outside counselors seemed to have been made without consulting the experts at the school—the counselors. Cupp noted that the item came up as a way to supplement a staff dwindling through unreplaced retirements. Steverson added that they had only identified this need and matched it to best practices, but that there had been no detailed discussion yet. Hulin invited Boren to BSI meetings to add his expertise to the discussion.
- vi. Cupp briefly introduced the committee’s desire to have Janet Zadina, a neuroscientist with experience in community colleges and a dynamic style, speak at convocation in 2010. The committee recommends that she speak to the entire college for one hour, and then hold one of the optional break-out sessions. Her teaching is always supported by research data, focusing on what we now know so we can work with the brain rather than against it.
- vii. Turner asked what is being done for older students, especially in Voc. Tech., who do not take placement tests. Dr. Farrell said that such students should be referred to counselors, who have a more complete picture or their individual situations. Steverson suggested that linking courses helps this group as well.

b. Academic Calendar

- 1. Nickolson explained that the committee will be meeting next week. One issue they will have to deal with involves possible classified furlough days (the rumor mill suggests there might be eight or more). Gomez requests the Senate contact her with any other issues we want brought up.
- 2. Willson suggested that the schedule be submitted to the faculty for review. Boren noted that an analysis of MWF versus TTh classes would be important to be sure that Monday classes, especially, don’t get canceled disproportionately. Willson agreed to forward these concerns to Gomez.

- c. President's Report – Nickolson
 - i. Nickolson still has not heard a response from Trustee President Flory, so she is not sure if there will be a video link for faculty to interact with the Board in their October meeting at Clear Lake.
 - ii. Nickolson announced the November 19 Accreditation Liaison Officer training session in San Francisco. Dr. Trutna committed to paying the entry fee for as many Senators as would be willing to go.
 - iii. Nickolson announced that a faculty member had the idea of limiting the number of units students would be allowed to take. Orton identified himself as that faculty member, noting that there is a discrepancy between FTES and the number of students we can serve; if we want to serve as many students as possible, limiting students from huge overloads would open spaces for more students to be on campus. Dr. Trutna asked researcher Erik Cooper to look into this question. Cooper noted that more successful students are more likely to take more units, but that there is a drop-off in grades after 18 units. Dr. Trutna said limiting the number of units a student may take in this way might affect 150-300 students. Davidson suggested we put this on a future agenda when we can look at the research in more detail.
 - iv. Nickolson reminded everyone of the Oct. 16 Board meeting / work session / forum on the tenure process and shared governance.
- 4. Old Business
 - a. List of questions for Oct. 16th forum – Ramsey & Kemble
 - i. Ramsey compiled a list of all the questions for each topic (tenure, shared governance) and requested that the Senate rank the top 5 for tenure and the top 10 for shared governance, also marking the questions that should be sent in advance to the presenters. She recommended that Senators use the discussion forum if they need clarification on any of the questions. Rankings should be in Kemble's or Ramsey's email or mailboxes by Monday night to give time to compile the results, discuss the results at the next Senate meeting, and send the selected questions on to the presenters.
 - b. Student Grievance Hearings – May
 - i. May moved (Turner seconded) that student grievance hearings be given to the Academic Standards Committee. He noted that there aren't that many grievances, and the ASC already meets as needed. Boren suggested that the ASC could use some looking into; May recommended this be agendaized for future discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
 - c. Summer Session (Discussion)
 - i. Willson noted that there was some concern about subgroups of students being jeopardized—for example, some programs must offer summer

classes to keep accreditation agreements. These students will be taken care of.

- ii. Boren and others misunderstood this to mean subgroups like veterans, but the question raised by Nickolson is still valid: should we be focusing on a group of students, or on all students?
- iii. Turner noted that not having summer school is certainly tough, but wondered what the effects of reinstating summer school would be on the following year. Would it require even further compression during the regular semester sessions? Such compression would only hit already hurting programs even harder.
- iv. Davidson moved (May seconded) that the Senate recommend that there be a summer session sometime between the 2010 semesters and that colleges immediately start the discussion with affected parties, as required by shared governance, on how this could best be accomplished. (Sorry to break the suspense: it passed 8-1, with someone silently abstaining...).

Discussion:

1. Davidson noted that we were rightly upset that summer was cut without consultation, and have since learned that the cut will affect many students. These are both reason enough to put some sort of summer session back in place. It need not be a full-blown session, but we do need the facts on the table to undo the damage done from the earlier decision.
2. Turner expressed concern at the notion of a “limited” summer school. Which students would be “limited out”? Which programs would we offer? If we offer tech programs, for example, this limits others out. The motion sounds good on paper, but we need to be careful about how we limit the schedule.
3. Boren noted that the motion doesn’t identify the groups, so these questions would be part of the process. He favored, however, voting to have regular summer school as the *beginning* of the conversation because having “some type” of summer school gives “them” a lot of room to fix the problem—which they created—in the way they see best.
5. New business – no time...
6. Bin – no time...

Meeting adjourned at 12:55.