

Senate Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 10, 2020, 11 AM

In Attendance: Dinesh Pinisetty (Chair), Elizabeth McNie (Vice Chair), Sarah Senk (Secretary), Matt Fairbanks, Christine Isakson, Cynthia Trevisan, Frank Yip, Lori Schroeder (Provost)

I. Delayed Start of Spring 2020 Semester

- McNie reports on license exams, notes that usually we try to schedule them before class, but in past couple of years they've overlapped. Triad came to McNie with concerns about navigating both the exams and the first day of class. They report some professors agree to let them focus on their exams that week and others do not. So when the new spring schedule came out they were troubled by the idea that they'd have the overlapping week of exams and class.
- Chair says the presentation last Friday left it unclear: in Neto's initial proposal the exams were scheduled the week before class. McNie says understanding from Kazek is that USCG is happy to have the tests at any time.
- Provost clarifies: Kazek initially said they said yes, and that they were "flexible" but we have responsibility for any fallout related to this. Kazek thinks putting the exams at the same time as the start of classes makes sense because we're saying as a campus we won't bring anyone back before the safest time. Provost has talked to Brig about getting together the document we need to submit to the CSU; in that plan that gets submitted it talks about "the first day we feel it's safe." Kazek feels giving that approved plan to the CG will be best in terms of making them feel it's okay to be here in person.
- Provost suggests that faculty be told that it's out of the control of the cadets and that to really assure the CG of the safety we needed to ensure this happened at the same time.
- Isakson asks if we can make it clearer to students that we are coming back on Feb 1 for safety reasons. It could be the case that not all the professors are clear that this isn't the students' choice. If we decided that Feb 1 is safe then we can't change our mind and bring them back two weeks earlier (because we'd have to bring them into their rooms a week before the exams). Isakson suggests we craft a message – one message for faculty and one for cadets – explaining expectations.
- Senk suggests sending a reminder to faculty that if they are doing anything synchronous in the first week they *must* record the content so that these students can watch it at a later date.
- Chair: what's a good timeline for sending out this message? First week of January?
- McNie will report back to Lachlan
- Provost: we do want to stay open to the possibility, depending on the COVID situation, that we could end up delaying further the start. Wanted to relay another concern expressed by the Triad is delayed commencement and delayed opportunities. Obviously, safety is first, but wanted to communication that message as well.

II. General Education Committee Report

- Senk (GE Chair) reports communication lapse in the General Education Committee last week: a GSMA faculty member's proposal was rejected for the proposed GE classification last Tuesday. The GSMA department representative reported the results of the committee

discussion to the department later last week and Senk confirmed the result had been reported with department chair (who praised the GSMA representative's report as "comprehensive" and added in an email on 12/3 that "although the committee's feedback may appear to be harsh, my sense that it is fair and will result in a much better course.") But apparently the faculty member who had proposed the course was *not* in attendance and was not notified. Senk reports realizing retroactively that the GSMA representative was waiting for Senk's formal written report before telling the faculty member what he had told the rest of the department earlier in the week. Senk explained that as Chair she typically sends formal *approval* reports to Curriculum Committee a few days after the meeting; she sent the ME proposal, which was approved at that same meeting, but did not have time to finish drafting the complete feedback to the GSMA instructor.) Senk notes that this was an unusual case in that things went wrong at several levels: Senk was unaware that the faculty member whose proposal was missing was *also* the Curriculum Committee representative, who would normally be the one from the department communicated who talked to the Curriculum Committee chair about pulling the proposal from the Curriculum Committee meeting. Senk reports she has corresponded with and apologized to the faculty member in question and asks the committee for ideas about avoiding miscommunications like this in the future. Suggests perhaps carving out time at the end of each meeting in which department representatives are required to report out in writing to the whole department to make sure people who are absent are in the loop *and* the Chair sends a very brief summary to the Curriculum Committee chair, even without the full formal report, which takes quite a bit of time to write.

- Pinisetty says, "I have seen the reports you produce as Chair for the GE committee and there is no way those can be sent immediately."
- Senk says, "yes, they go into great detail, they were meant to replace a system where we used to forward a single sheet with literal check marks on it and no context."
- Chair suggests that the whole committee comes up with a half page proposal decision document that can be sent immediately, freeing up time for the Chair to write the full report in a longer timeframe.
- McNie says "I was at the meeting, I think part of it is reminding department reps what their job is. I am hesitant to create more bureaucracy given that this was a long error chain and if any single one of those errors didn't happen, this wouldn't have happened."
- Yip agrees: we should put the onus on the instructor/department proposing the chain and should also require the instructor and/or Chair proposing the course to attend the meeting.
- Senk says "that's how it worked at my last job: if you were proposing the course you had to be there or it didn't get discussed."
- Pinisetty suggests include a line in the new policy saying that "if the faculty member proposing the course [or a designated proxy] is not there, the proposal will not be discussed." Senk will report back to GE Committee as they begin drafting the policy.

III. Discussion about the President's Response to the IBL Resolution

- Committee discusses problems raised in Senate, notably that the written response did not appear to respond directly to the resolution.
- Provost notes that one solution is to invite the President to come to Exec to speak firsthand about the concerns.

- Yip notes that the reason we've moved to a resolution based culture is that "it's not just about documenting, it's about having coherence with precedent." Committee consensus is that it's important to have these discussions and decisions written down so that we preserve institutional memory.
- Chair asks if the problem was that the resolution didn't have a "direct ask" that could be responded to in writing.
- Senk says the ask was clear: we explicitly said we wanted metrics / information about how departments go into conservatorship and get out of it. Appreciates how the president replaced the Dean with a faculty member but the problem Senate brought up is that it sidestepped the question about metrics for conservatorship.
- Isakson reports that IBL department has been deeply anxious about this for months, especially with unclear expectations about how/why a department goes in/out of conservatorship, reports that statements about the department "struggling" were taken very seriously by department members,
- Consensus is the main issue with the response is the omission of key parts of the history of the decision.
- Yip suggests that part of our response can be to inform the President that we are working to change culture: "The whole purpose is to be transparent and public, and what we all share is a frustration with the fact that by not having accountability and deliverables we bleed time re-discussing things without closure. The whole point is that *this* is showing progress and responsiveness to problems we've identified."
- McNie: seems like Senate tasked us with writing *something* and I feel like we can be going back and forth on this for a long time. Maybe it's worth one or two or three of us writing something as a strawman that'll make it a little easier to talk about the finer points. Senk and McNie will begin drafting letter tomorrow and will present something to Senate for revision in next week's meeting.

IV. Mural Policy Follow-Up

- McNie reports the Gender Equity Chair communicated that there has still been no progress on the Mural Policy. Captain Pecota said it would be concluded by Thanksgiving. There is very little work left, but a single step that's missing. McNie says a little pressure would be good. This mural policy is approaching 2 years in the making and that seems like a really long time for a policy that is just a couple of pages long. The students want closure; they want to know that they can put up some murals for cruise. It's important to them and to the Gender Equity committee.
- Senk: what are we waiting for?
- McNie: For Captain Pecota to convene the Mural committee to review the policy.
- Yip: How long ago did you request this?
- McNie: February, which partly explains the delay [#COVID]. But we've all reconvened online this fall, and he said he would get to this by Thanksgiving.
- Yip: "it's a festering wound"
- Chair: What is the course of action?
- Senk: "maybe I'm steeped in toddler discipline right now, but is the problem that we're not presenting a compelling alternative? Can we say "would you like to convene the committee or would you like to step aside and let someone else take on the role of Chair"? This doesn't

have to be a punishment. We can acknowledge that he's really busy and maybe it's unintentional that this has gotten kicked down the road."

- McNie: we have no jurisdiction over who chairs a university committee. It could be that he has to chair it because he's the captain and it's the ship.
- **Action items:** Chair will "nudge" the Captain with a reminder.
 - o *Post-meeting follow up: Chair received an email on December 15 from the Captain attaching the draft policy (dated 03-03-2020) and saying that "Cabinet really does not have the bandwidth to deal with this presently which was why you had not heard from me in awhile. Apologies for not informing you."*

V. Course Evaluations

- Chair reports that for extenuating reasons the earliest Khaoi can enter the evaluations into Brightspace is December 14th, which is unfair to probationary faculty [whose evaluations may be negatively impacted if students receive poor grades]. Chair met with Registrar and agreed to postpone the release of grades so that students won't see final grades before submitting evaluations. Cadets will fill out the evaluations between the 14th and 17th. After the deadline the grades will be released. We've received criticism from faculty that it's so late that we won't have a good response rate. But, unfortunately, we didn't have a choice.
- Yip: they won't be able to see them on Peoplesoft but those who keep a Brightspace catalog should be careful about releasing those grades. Yip asks if someone can write up a simple set of instructions for faculty showing them how to hide the final grades. Isakson says she can write something up. Yip appreciates and says we should send a list of instructions for people who are less Brightspace-adept.
- Chair: another challenge that came to my attention: some other faculty have already finished their F2F classes but they never got their paper evaluations. Luckily, Khaoi has a copy of our F2F evals in Microsoft forms and somehow it worked out and ClassClimate adapted the question for those faculty.
- Senk: perhaps we should draft a recommendation to the RTP committee about interpreting this fall data. I was one of the faculty members Dinesh referred to who criticized the lateness, but the issue isn't just the low response rate. Lots of things are missing: the reading of the statement about what evaluations are *for*.
- [conversation about how, sadly, this is what we're stuck with]
- McNie: if we had Qualtrics this would be easier.
- Provost: I *just* wrote Julianne about it again this morning.

VI. Additional Business

- Committee needs to hold a special election to replace Senk as ASCSU Rep during her maternity leave. Will conduct special election to replace for one semester.
- Committee agrees to hold one more Executive Committee meeting next week. Senk reports the General Education Committee is holding an emergency meeting to discuss a new Area F Course. Committee agrees to schedule Exec meeting at 12:30.
- Fairbanks reminds committee that Wil Tsai sent an email to senators asking for a compilation of the issues. Fairbanks expresses concern that the documents sent out do not make things clear for people not close to the issue.

- Fairbanks suggests we make a list of what issues they should discuss with their departments. Chair: problem is timing: Tsai asked Curriculum Committee to come together to put this together but everyone is busy with grading and finals. Senk contacts Parsons over text, who agrees to put together a list by tomorrow and send it to the Executive Committee.

Meeting adjourned.