

Senate Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, April 15, 2020

In attendance [all via remote connection]: Dinesh Pinisetty (Chair), Keir Moorhead (Vice Chair), Sarah Senk (Secretary), Steven Browne, Christine Isakson, Elizabeth McNie, William Tsai, Mike Mahoney (Provost)

Absent: Cynthia Trevisan

I. Grading Changes

- Report: Immediately after Senate Exec meeting last week, Isakson, McNie, Moorhead, and Senk drafted resolution and an FAQ, and solicited feedback from Registrar Julia Odom. Senate Executive committee met again over Zoom on Friday, April 10 with University Advisor Katie Hanson, ASCMA President Wyatt Juntunen, and CFA student representative Anthony Scopazzi to finalize the draft. McNie, Pinisetty, and Senk attended a Zoom ASCMA meeting on Monday, April 13 to get additional feedback. Pinisetty disseminated draft to department chairs requesting that they forward immediately to their faculty for feedback by email rather than wait for the general meeting. Pinisetty received feedback by email and implemented the changes.
- Pinisetty reports that the Chancellor's office has requested the policy since they are collecting all of the policies from each campus.
- Browne reports he reworded some things in the FAQ and turned the policy draft into a resolution format. Committee reviewed the changes.
- **Committee votes unanimously (with one absence) to approve the resolution regarding the Spring 2020 Grading Policy and the FAQ.**
- **Actions: Chair will forward the resolution to the President and Chancellor's Office.**
- Provost asks if the document is subject to a vote of the Senate. Chair reports no because in the interest of time we requested feedback over email. Isakson asked if all Chairs forwarded the documents to their faculty. Members from at least two different departments report that their Chairs did not forward the document to their faculty. Pinisetty clarified that one of those two department chairs responded to indicate approval. Committee discusses what to do regarding inconsistency of communication with Department Chairs. Browne notes that when the new By Laws are implemented we will have a neater mechanism for ensuring that departments communicated with their faculty (since each department will have a senator responsible for communicating Senate matters).

II. Student Evaluations

- Report: Tsai and Pinisetty met with members of the IRB committee regarding the survey. Some concerns were raised about the survey, specifically regarding the potential of having student comments that potentially directed at an individual faculty or inappropriate comments, such as those seen in some student evaluation of instructors. Tsai proposes that as part of the process he and another individual could review the responses and remove any inappropriate comments that are targeted at

individuals; comments would be removed before the creation of the file that would then be distributed for analysis. Plan is to make the survey available before the end of instruction on April 22 through April 29. Currently awaiting IRB approval.

- Committee discusses who should review the comments to remove anything inappropriate. There may be a conflict of interest for people who end up on RTP committees. Committee suggests that a neutral person like Pat Harper review the responses with Tsai.
- Committee discusses IRB committee's suggestion that we omit certain questions, notably the corollary of asking students about what worked *best* about the course modality changes. Senk argues for the importance of including the now omitted questions about what did *not* work well. McNie agrees, pointing out that from a social science perspective it's not enough to ask what works; you'll only get half the picture, and we need to know what *didn't work* if we are going to provide appropriate opportunities for faculty development. McNie also notes that the purpose of IRB feedback is not to provide feedback on the content of the questionnaire but the ethics of asking these types of questions to the intended audience.
- Committee proposes that to address the IRB committee's concern that "people might be mean," we can very explicitly ask students to identify which practices did not work *without* naming the professor or the class. The inclusion of a step where Tsai and Harper review the evaluations to scrub them of identifying features will protect individual faculty from inappropriate comments.
- **Actions: Tsai will reinstate the original agreed-upon questions and submit the application to IRB.**

### III. New Senate Implementation Plan

- Committee discusses implementation of new representative senate. Due to COVID-19 pandemic and cancellation of last general meeting, we are currently behind schedule for the election of next year's Executive Committee. (The new bylaws specify that "elections for Executive Committee members will be conducted annually by March 15 by all voting members of the incoming Faculty Senate.")
- Plan is to hold a meeting next week (Thursday, April 23) of all new senators. Pinisetty suggests that Senk (the incoming ASCSU representative) administer the online election for the new Executive Committee in real time during the meeting. After the elections the new Executive Committee will meet over Zoom to elect the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.
- Tsai notes that under the new bylaws there is one less member at large.