

Notes from President's Meeting with the IBL Department Regarding Chair Announcement
Friday, May 15, 2020, 3 PM-4 PM

In attendance: President Cropper, Provost Mahoney, Michael Martin; Senate Executive Committee Officers: Dinesh Pinisetty (Chair), Keir Moorhead (Vice-Chair), Sarah Senk (Secretary); IBL Department Faculty: Khalid Bachkar, Thomas Brindle, Christine Isakson, Tony Lewis, Robert Neumann, Joshua Shackman

Background: Dr. Kamdar sent a letter to the Senate Executive Committee earlier in the week requesting clarity on the President's appointment of Dean Maier as Chair of the IBL department. The Senate Executive Committee agreed an explanation was important given the unprecedented nature of the decision at Cal Maritime and drafted a formal letter to the President requesting information. The committee shared the draft letter with the Provost during the Executive Committee Meeting on Thursday, May 14, but the Provost suggested meeting in person to discuss instead. During that meeting the Senate Executive Committee communicated to the Provost their concerns regarding Dean Maier's appointment. [See Executive Committee Meeting Minutes 2020 – 5_14_20]

- Dr. Kamdar begins by thanking the President for taking the time to meet with us in the middle of the 1,001 things going on. Appreciates taking the time. Adds, "I'm assuming that the meeting happened as a result of the Senate Exec discussion yesterday, so I will put that in context and explain my request."
- Kamdar begins by repeating letter points from the letter she sent to the Senate Executive Committee regarding the President's decision to appoint Dean Donald Maier as Chair of the IBL Department. She notes:
 - o Does not dispute that the CBA accords the president the right to appoint a chair
 - o We hope in most circumstances the President will accept department's recommendation.
 - o We were surprised. I should speak for myself. The letter was from me, not the dept. I was surprised on April 30 when the letter came out, there were 4 elections reported. 3 departments had their nominee appointed and we did not. In the 10 years I've been at CMA, I don't believe this has ever happened that a department's near unanimous recommendation has been overruled. It was puzzling, it set a precedent on *our campus* (not the CSU system), and the vote was not split, and I thought it would be good to get an explanation about why our vote was overruled. I would like to understand how you came to that decision.
 - o We expect this decision will probably stand since it is your right. I would like to see what you hope to see from the department in those 3 semesters while we are "in conservatorship." What is to be accomplished by having the Dean as Dept Chair. We want to know your expectations.
 - o We also want to share concerns, What do we do until December 21, for example, about RTP, when that layer of a faculty chair is taken away and now we have one voice instead of two, and possibly, if the chair chooses to become part of the department RTP committee, then the faculty voice gets diluted.
 - o What happens in December 2021, what happens afterwards? We certainly feel that we want the Chair to be a faculty person. We think that is better representation of the department's voice. And we'd like to see what the expectations are. We don't anticipate composition of our faculty changing then? So how do we get our voice heard again?

- President Cropper responds, asking if the department has seen the letter she sent.
- Kamdar says yesterday, when the meeting was announced. The letter was signed just by me. I made the point that this is a letter from me, not the department. So the request for a department meeting threw us off a little bit. So I sent it to them to provide brief context. Only person who knew I had requested the Senate Exec was Dean Maier. I sent letter to Exec on Monday, had my standing meeting on Wednesday with Dean Maier and let him know that I had written to senate exec requesting the senate's support for my request for more information.
- President thanks Dr. Kamdar and makes the following points:
 - o "I'd like to start before the letter. The decision that I must make in appointing a chair is to make sure that the dept succeeds. So my first rule is that I need to make sure that I'm appointing someone who can help the department be successful. That's what I believe is most important for the institution and the department. I don't want to delve too far into this, I don't think we need to get into trading letters when there are issues like this. If you want an explanation, we can do it voice to voice. We don't need to have dueling letters. I think we can resolve things and explain things in the way I'm doing now."
 - o "I appreciate you noted that it doesn't overrule a vote but does *not* accept rec from department. There's a reason for this and I hope that you and the department can see this. Your department and one other Department – Global Studies – were selected as the departments to lead enrollment growth at Cal Maritime in the strategic plan; your department has not for the last 2 years been able to recruit adequate numbers of prospective students into your program, and what's exacerbating the problem is that your retention is the worst of any of the departments in the university. There may be a number of reasons behind that issue, but it is a significant problem for me and for our university. I need a leader who can lead your department and program out of this condition of very poor retention and poor recruiting to the program. I do not believe that either of the 2 candidates you forwarded have the experience to lead us out of this retention and recruiting problem. I need a leader for the department to help us resolve the recruiting and retention problems. For me it's urgent, it's extraordinary. This is very important. It's also a process still in play. It's not a process that was unilateral, it was also brought on by the resignation of the prior chair. That's why we're in a position to even choose a new chair. Fundamental problem under these enrollment issues, is that we're trying to expand the reach."
 - o Another issue is regarding accreditors: "they didn't look at the climate of your department, they're not interviewing cadets. they're looking at "programmatics." But fact remains that program as a whole is struggling and I want the department to succeed. This is a process that's still in progress. Knowing that the chair resigned I know I have to get someone in who has experience with retention and recruiting. Once the dept moves in the right direction, we can appoint a chair. And I've been working with the Provost to have someone with the right experience come in and help the department with recruiting and retention."
 - Kamdar and Shackman add that IACBE looked at retention numbers
 - o President addresses concerns about RTP. Understands point about having Dean there, but notes there are many voices in the RTP process.

- “I have heard your voice. I’m just asserting to you that until these fundamental problems can be resolved, I’m going to have the Dean in that position because the Dean has experience in retention and recruiting and program growth. That’s what I need out of the dept, I want the dept to succeed. It’s the engine for recruitment of more minorities and more women. We have already received permission from the Board to increase our enrollment in the Master Plan, so it’s not a matter of not having support in Long Beach, it’s a matter of recruiting/retaining cadets within the IBL program.
- Kamdar asks for clarification: if in December 2021 we can expect the IBL department will get an external chair or if the Dean will continue in this position?
- President repeats “process is still in progress.” Provost Mahoney is trying to find someone with meaningful experience, whether that’s a faculty member here or somewhere else, to help the department to get back on track. Invites Provost to share his thoughts.
- Provost adds: what the president says is true, I know a lot of people in the system, this is my third campus now, 30 years, I’ve been looking for somebody at a nearby campus to be a temporary chair, maybe just until December 2021, but as the president mentioned this is a difficult time to recruit people, even those who may be a retired annuitant. People are hesitant to do anything
- Kamdar asks: rationale for hiring three deans was recruitment and retention. We followed through with that plan. The last two years we’ve had that plan in place, the same two years that we’ve had declining enrollment. This is not the Dean’s fault; we’ve seen enrollment decline in business programs nationally and at Cal Maritime. Doesn’t it make more sense to continue to have a dean that is focused on enrollment growth, while the chair manages the daily nitty gritty of schedules and student complaints. It seems it’s counter-productive to take the dean’s attention away from enrollment growth.
- President responds he wouldn’t support that kind of bifurcation. Department needs to lead its own destiny, and department shouldn’t rely on the dean to decide its future.
- Lewis says this seems inconsistent, adds that “we brought on this dean whose role is increasing enrollment, and enrollment is suffering, and you’re finding fault with the department. Doesn’t that fall on the dean, and why would the dean be invested with more responsibility?”
- President says he does not support the model that limits enrollment to the dean’s role, says that “the Dean is new, the program’s been around a while. The program didn’t just suffer in the last two years. It’s been suffering. You can’t say it’s the dean’s role to do the recruiting. We’ve got some work to do. I say “we” not “you” and want you to say “we” as well.”
- Kamdar responds, saying she appreciates notion of partnership, that we want to have someone with experience and clear vision and someone who is able to articulate those things to increase enrollments, to get opportunities for our students, but adds, “I don’t understand why the Dean has to be a chair in order to accomplish that objective.”
- President says that “I don’t believe that either of the candidates forwarded to me have the wherewithal to move the program back on progress. I’ve talked to the provost about continuing to search for the appropriate person.”
- Kamdar asks if the intention is to hire an external chair
- President says he’s not sure that’s the answer, but given the resources available, with the pending resignation of current chair, the choice was to appoint the dean as the chair. That gives us time to look for someone else.
- Bachkar states that he “is not part of [Kamdar’s] letter, that he “supports the president, wants someone who can work toward the goal without having cliques, are we thinking about

the department? It might close? Probably as a faculty we'll need to do auditing of ourselves, try to learn from our mistakes. We need to look at the future with different glasses, and this is truly an important moment for us. I believe from my perspective, we need to have someone who can be strong, advocate for inclusiveness, a team player, and authentic person who is approachable when asked. There will be no "I am closer to this faculty," in sum: priority should be given to someone who has the following traits: fairness, capacity to run things transparently, to have a good working relationship with provost, president, and other departments."

- Question about the timeline. Pinisetty says it was a mistake on his part, gave the wrong date for the Chair term. Provost adds: "I don't think it's the president's intention to leave the dean as chair for two years, regardless of what the end date is."
- President confirms the Provost is right: "difficulty is that senate letters and process sets time. And I'm not looking at time, it's conditions-based. So when conditions are improving then we can look for a chair."
- Kamdar adds she want to follow up to Bachkar's comment: "Khalid was not part of the letter. But nor was anyone else. I want to reiterate that's a letter from me, not the department, and no other member was included. I wrote it as campus precedent-setting situation, a decision that was made that was not explained to us, this is the first I'm hearing that it's the chair's job to recruit and retain, this is not an argument I've heard. I resigned on October 15 effective July 1, and in none of the intervening months has this rationale been provided. It's very surprising. I also want to digest what this means for other departments with declining enrollment issues. GSMA is one of them. There are other departments which have had this. Would be great to get clarity. What are the expectations of chairs? What are the resources that will be provided? What are the consequences? That is not a discussion that we had. And if that's going to be a basis for decision-making, we need to have a discussion."
- Lewis says President described Tony/Khalid's lack of experience dealing with enrollment issues, asks "Is that the entire scope of it? If the department was on an upswing, would you have made the same recommendation? There was widespread concern among faculty that this decision may have had something to do with the report."
- President "unequivocally rejects that assertion." Says "I'm happy for faculty to get involved with the budget, there has to be exchange of ideas and opinions. That has nothing to do with my decision regarding your qualifications."
- Lewis asks for clarifications: "Are you saying if enrollment wasn't down, I would have the qualifications?"
- President responds: "I am saying that you don't have the qualifications for what we need right now. You don't have the experience to lead the department through the problems of retention and recruiting. I need a chair who can move the program. That's it, fundamentally."
- Kamdar asks if this standard is going to be applied across the campus, and if so, what are the benchmarks.
- President says he will provide that.
- Bachkar adds: "This is not a cabal, a clique. This is the department. We should look at sustainability. We have to have the right skill for the right position. I know at many universities you [inaudible.]
- Kamdar responds: "I reject the assertion that we have taken decisions lightly. I accept that the president's analysis is different from our own. But it's based on weighing the pros and cons about the candidate, and who the department thinks they could work with, but it's a decision."

- Neumann says he “would like to get President’s idea about our enrollment problems. Where are we going wrong? Where is our failure? What are your impressions as to where our failure is?” President asks if Neumann has seen the IR reports. President says there may not be as much unity in the department as you say there is.
- Kamdar invites department to say if they feel it’s collaborative.
- President says, “you need to own your destiny” and dept retention is a problem: department numbers aren’t holding.
- Kamdar says “so is the other department.” Cropper says GSMA retention is “not near what yours is. Enrollment has not declined, but not to the levels that IBL has declined.” Cropper says point isn’t to point fingers, but to get department on track for growth. Says, “I need a chair to lead the department collaboratively.”
- Lewis asks “do you think it may be difficult for us to do that when we repeatedly come together with an almost unanimous decision and you overrule it.” President responds that “this is one decision.” Lewis asks “isn’t it relevant?” President invites Tony to articulate what decisions. Lewis asks, “is it your perception that you have overruled just one decision.” President adds, “overruled is *your* word.”
- Provost interjects: “wants to jump in and says there’s a lot to retention and recruitment. Are the messages the same out of every faculty member? Are faculty hands on with individual students on daily or weekly basis. I’m not saying they’re not. For recruitment, do you go to high schools, do you get out there, do you understand why we have certain things at a maritime academy? There’s a lot to recruitment and retention that when I was chair, I know I did a lot of that. There are a lot of things you can do to improve those numbers.”
- Kamdar recognizes that the meeting time is ending, wants to thank everyone for their time. Says what has been shared is a real surprise and we’ll take some time to think about it and think about how we’d like to respond.
- President thanks for sharing thoughts, even those not in agreement. Appreciates that very much. I want you to understand I’m making decisions for the benefit of the university, and part of that is the success of your department. I need your department to be successful. Enrollment in your department will drive the increases in minorities and women, and that was part of the strategic plan, and this is part of the reason we have not made the gains we need, and your department can lead us in that direction.