

Senate Executive Committee Meeting (11/12/2021)

Attendees: Bets McNie (Vice Chair), Matthew Fairbanks (Secretary), Leah Wzykowski, Dinesh Pinisetty (Chair), Christine Isakson, Wil Tsai, Margot Hanson, Frank Yip, and Provost Lori Schroeder

- Minutes Review and Approval
 - Reviewed 10/28 draft minutes. Some adjustments for clarity and grammar. **10/28 minutes approved by acclamation.**
 - Reviewed 11/4 draft minutes. Some adjustments for clarity and grammar. **11/4 minutes approved by acclamation.**

- Discussion of the AS Resolution and Proposed Senate Resolution in Support
 - Wil Tsai presented his short resolution on support of the AS resolution.
 - McNie asked that the Provost speak first to these issues so we can see how the process is proceeding and what her ideas are about it.
 - Provost Schroeder has been in dialogue with VP of Cadet Affairs Kathleen McMahon. Idea of a teach-in or 'stand down day' are being discussed. She would love to have faculty input in choosing an external facilitator and also faculty participation in the event(s) themselves. The idea is that we're a teaching institution and we should bring that expertise to bear on these important issues.
 - After Friday's Title IX climate review announcement regarding Cruise 2, VP McMahon mentioned that she wanted it to be clear that it would only part of a more comprehensive review of a variety of issues relevant to students.
 - There would also potentially be a review of Cruise 1. There should be a decision on this by next week.
 - Pinisetty said he was about to ask - why the restriction to Cruise 2? Cruise 1 was not perfect according to faculty participants. Provost – there were some secondary concerns about finances, but more importantly, they were looking for a narrow focus to keep timeline short. VP McMahon has shifted her thinking on the latter item, and is advocating for the review to be more expansive.
 - Some discussion of the implied meaning of only examining Cruise 2 vs. Cruise 1 and Cruise 2, mostly relating to who was Captain of the TSGB during each.
 - McNie – the President's silence on this makes it seem like he doesn't care, and there's currently a vacuum of leadership on these issues. Provost – I will pass that on. McNie – you can let him know it's from Bets. An instance of radical candor.
 - Wzykowski asked about the group that came to campus to discuss and examine gender issues. What's happening with that? McNie – the report is late (meant to be done in October), but should be to us soon.
 - Discussion on the idea of a teach-in on campus. Wzykowski suggested the involvement of student and faculty groups. Provost was supportive. McNie noted that STCW courses might make scheduling difficult. Faculty should weigh in on how to accommodate the teach-in. Pinisetty noted this as well, emphasizing that students can only miss a class or two before having to retake the course. He suggested a day prior to classes beginning as a possibility. Isakson asked whether the Coast Guard would grant a waiver given the current climate in the maritime academies on these issues.

- Wyzykowski pointed out that getting students to attend a pre-spring semester event would be a tough ask.
- Tsai and Isakson floated other ideas. Weekend event? Or paid overtime for STCW make-ups? Tsai also suggested an open 'extra' Tuesday or Thursday (more of certain days of the week than others in the spring semester calendar).
- Tsai also pointed out that spring might be a little late, and we need to be thinking about continuing measures to address these issues.
- Fairbanks noted that he appreciated the difficulty in accommodating a day during the semester, but at some point we and the University needed to decide just how important this was to us. There is limited flexibility to STCW/sea-time requirements during a semester. We should use it.
- Hanson suggested that this can be our 'fire day'. Other semesters accommodated class cancellations due to fire and other incidents. She noted that some students and some faculty are not aware of what is going on, or only tangentially aware, and people need to be prepared for these conversations if they happen.
- McNie – part of a stand-down is acknowledging the importance of the reason for it. Moving it to a weekend or prior to classes, diminishes the perceived importance of the event at its subject material. Agreed with Hanson's fire day metaphor. Faculty in MT have commented on the chaos this semester. She thinks that the President getting involved to request a one day stand down from MARAD and Coast Guard might move the needle in terms of this happening.
- Pinisetty asked Wyzykowski whether she had a chance to review the draft Senate resolution [on our support of the AS resolution on grooming standards] and whether she had feedback. Wyzykowski noted her suggestion on the distribution list for the resolution. She also spoke with the authors of resolution, and they wrote a statement (which was read in support of the resolution at the AS meeting) which Wyzykowski read in our meeting. Text included here:

“Today I encourage that the board votes to support gender neutral grooming standards. This resolution was introduced to the board in September, and over the past two months we have taken the time to amend this document for submission to the President's cabinet. We have heard student opinion on this resolution with most of the feedback being supportive. At this time before the vote, ignorant rumors, unsubstantiated speculation, and petty gossip are being to run rampant which is unfortunately coming from the top of student leadership downward, and I find it important to remind the board of the purpose and intent of this resolution before we vote. As I made clear on the first day of discussion on this resolution, I will not allow the conversation to be derailed from the students that are impacted the most. The reason we are here, and why the voting members were elected, is to advocate for all Cal Maritime students and ensure that each student has equal and fair access to higher education. Our position is that the grooming standards should not be arbitrarily legislated, socially out-dated, and unnecessary for maintaining a positive and professional campus environment. Our position is that the grooming standards must not discriminate based on gender expression or skin tone regardless of who is enforcing these policies. Our position is not that all uniform and grooming standards are thrown out, but that they are applied and enforced the same.

Students should not have to come out to an authority figure to get a uniform and grooming chit. There are some standards that are necessary for safety and some that

are not. Safety concerns like keeping long hair out of the face, not allowing long jewelry, or shaving to ensure the fit of PPE are not discriminatory and that was never disputed.

In practice, gender neutral grooming standards makes the most sense for all students and what we are accomplishing as a university. For those that have not worked in a professional maritime work environment, yet no one cares how long your hair is. The idea that hair longer than two inches is unprofessional is blatantly unrealistic in the current job market. Men have far less agency in their appearance, and men should be able to style their hair with the same amount of freedom given to women. If I shaved my head today, I would still be in regs and if I keep my hair long it is still in regs. The argument of professionalism simply does not stand when it is applied equally.

To address some student concerns, no students shouldn't just leave the school if they disagree with discriminatory grooming standards. Most students enroll in this school to receive highly specialized and marketable job skills. Cal Maritime cadets have much higher job placement rates than other universities because of how we perform, and not how we look. No, this resolution isn't virtue signaling and students, faculty, and commandants have been working on making equitable adjustment to the uniform and grooming standards for years. If you don't understand why trans people exist, no one is asking you to think that hard and you really need don't need to worry about it. The bottom line is that if you have an issue with the gender neutral uniform policies are enacted on this campus, chances are that nothing will change for you. However, more students than ever before will have the freedom to express themselves. The purpose of this corps is to leave no shipmate behind. From today to the day we resign from seafaring careers that should be the biggest priority. We have a responsibility to behave as the leadership we want to see in this industry by making mature and evidence-based decisions that evolve with the CSU system and maritime industry. "Tradition" is not a good enough excuse for these policies when minorities have always been left out of the decision-making process. Either Cal Maritime is a university for all students as the Cal State system requires, or it isn't. We are either a campus that is accepting and accommodating of all students or we aren't. We can choose to stand with students and exercise the power we do have today by passing this resolution."

- Tsai – so, the distribution list? 'AS officers' was changed to Compass leadership. Hanson suggested the media. McNie noted that the communications from Senate typically communicate within the scope of the CSU rather than going to the media or to other external bodies. Hanson clarified that she was being a little flippant, so no, not the media in the resolution distribution list, but these issues should have external eyes on them.
- Some discussion of whether other administrative levels of the CSU, say, the Chancellor's office should be included in the distribution list. Various ideas were put forward. There's a subcommittee of ASCSU on DEI that we could consider, but we're not certain on their charge. Also clarified that the AS resolution would be attached to our resolution for context.
- Some discussion on whether to include any 'action items' (the teach-in, etc.) in this resolution. The conclusion was that tentatively, no, this will focus on supporting the AS resolution, and actions would come later.

- More discussion on the evolution of the grooming standards over time. Wyzykowski wasn't sure on previous standards. Hanson noted that faculty aren't notified of these changes and aren't consulted. Yip noted that Simons was involved in the re-drafting of the current policy – the original one was even worse. Pinisetty noted that this is the first time he has learned about these changes, seems like a shared governance issue. Provost agreed. Dinesh also said that student input on these policies should go beyond the student leadership. Not sure how to implement that, but it's important.
- Hanson noted some recent changes on the grooming standards: This section was on the website on 11/10, but is gone now:

“CADETS WHO IDENTIFY AS OTHER THAN MALE OR FEMALE (e.g., non-binary, genderfluid, or genderqueer)

Cadets identifying as other than male or female may request reasonable adaptations to the restrictions of uniform and grooming standards for male and female cadets. After discussion with the Director of Cadet Equity and the Commandant of Cadets, grooming standards guidance will be provided in writing to each requesting cadet. Cadets will be provided the same uniform items as cadets who identify as either male or female.”

- McNie – Regarding the content of the resolution, I think we should keep it short. Less is more here.
 - Hanson stated that she will add a ‘whereas’ to the resolution that last year there were gender neutral standards and the standards were revised for this year.
 - Wyzykowski liked the additional whereas’s and thought they added important context.
- Open Floor
 - Hanson asked if staff also got the feedback form for the other resolutions in first read. It was confirmed that yes, the email went out.
 - IRB Committee staffing – two faculty are interested. Election to be run by McNie next week.
 - Yip – I think we should discuss how the student leaders are chosen. It appears to be a good ol’ boys network. There was general agreement with the idea of discussing the process.
 - Wyzykowski commented that the process should be democratic, perhaps like AS. McNie and Isakson noted that they didn’t get to ‘pick their friends’ when they were students at Cal Maritime.
 - Isakson – we also need to discuss leaving open WPAFs to everyone through the whole RTP process and shared that one WPAF was accidentally left open on an instructor’s computer in a classroom. Raises questions about confidentiality.
 - Some discussion of how this might be implemented with no clear resolution for the moment.
 - Provost Schroeder – here’s some news! The CSU will be mandating Canvas as an LMS for all campuses.

- There will be financial support from CO. There was some discussion of how to do this effectively and support faculty who find these LMS's daunting as well as those who simply need some training and basic support. There was also a comment that faculty may oppose this given our relatively recent transition to Brightspace from Moodle.
 - Tsai is willing to champion the transition. He said Canvas could be run as a local instance on the ship, which is exciting, because the Moodle server there is not good.
- Meeting Adjourned