

Academic Senate Spring 2020 Retreat MINUTES January 31, 2020

PRESENT

M Aparicio, P Bell, M Bojanowski, J Carlin-Goldberg, C Crawford, A Donegan, T Ehret, N Frantz, T Jacobson, J Kosten, D Lemmer, S Martin, G Navarro, A Oliver, J Stover, A Thomas, E Thompson, J Thompson, S Whyllly

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. by President E. Thompson

OPEN FORUM

- S Martin voiced concerns regarding the upcoming Ed Insights visit to SRJC and subsequent meetings between Ed Insights staff and members of the SRJC involved with Guided Pathways. Ed Insights does not employ responsible research standards (e.g. using loaded research questions, small samples, and unrepresentative samples) Further, Ed Insights has a conflict of interest in that their funding sources include the Chancellor's office, The Lumina Foundation, and the Gates foundation, all of which have been leading supporters of Guided Pathways. Further, several members of the Ed Insights staff either currently work, or have recently worked for, the above entities with political interests in promoting Guided Pathways.
- A Donegan suggested thought be given to the Academic Calendar in terms of catastrophic events like the wild fires that took place in Fall 2019, which caused the college to close several times over several weeks. Other Senators' input included the question of how this could be done and also how the campus closures impacted students' financial aid and ability to sign up for classes and/or transfer due to late grades.
- A Donegan reported on the first semester of the reorganization impact on classified staff
- President Thompson introduced Tristan Frazier, the interim Administrative Assistant to the Academic Senate.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ASCCC Area B meeting on March 27
- ASCCC Plenary Session held April 16-18
- ASCCC Faculty Leadership Institute held June 18-20

DISCUSSION

Robert's Rules of Order: President Thompson gave an overview of The Brown Act and Robert's Rules of Order and how they are different. The Brown Act—or laws regarding open meetings of certain kinds of governing bodies—is law and required of us. Robert's Rules of Order are rules of practice for parliamentary procedure and are optional. Each body may adopt or ignore them as they collectively decide. Robert's Rules “provides rules and procedures that allow a deliberative assembly to make its decisions efficiently, but with all due regard for the rights of the minority.”

Discussion ensued around several topics including whether it was deemed appropriate to set time limits on speakers; the possibility of setting up 'discussion forums'; making meeting materials available well in advance of the meeting so Senators can fully review; presenters being available to answer questions without needing to contribute to discussions; the possibility of having fewer items on the agenda to have more time for discussion; the possibility of additional hours to meet apart from the regular meeting time; the possibility of moving the current meeting time to a different day and a longer meeting time. Some other ideas were to have

multiple Retreats each semester; respecting start and end times of meetings; and maintaining Senate purview in the 10+1.

Main points from the discussion:

- Senators do not favor imposing per-speaker time limits
- Senators all agree there never seems to be enough time to adequately discuss issues
- Senators generally agree that the end-time of the meeting should be observed, and that extensions of time should be found elsewhere as mentioned above

Senate Elections: President Thompson started the discussion on Senate Elections by providing background information on the process. There have always been problems with elections. For example, last year there was mention of security issues brought to attention by a member of the Computer Studies department, that the fix would need to be handled via Information Technology (IT). The Senate has an Election Committee that oversees the elections and is made up of Senators not running for office in any given year. Elections will be taking place this Spring, with the Elections Committee and Administrative Assistant preparing for the upcoming vote. There was also clarification regarding the Senate Executive Committee in that it is usual for elections of the Vice President and Secretary to be held in alternating years. That changed last year because of the simultaneous departure of the previous Vice President and Secretary, as well as the subsequent discussion and later election, around the constitutional language of who can serve as President and Vice President of the Academic Senate.

Discussion turned to the recent election to change the Senate Constitution. The irregularity was described—the knowledge of inside information on the part of a senator who subsequently advocated for a particular vote to their constituents. Because the result of the election was unaffected by this event and because the person did not repeat the insider information, no further action will be taken, but it remains that we must fix the underlying problems. Discussion continued regarding whether it was appropriate for Senators to advocate for a particular position, possibly affecting the voting result. General consensus was that people have views on voting outcomes and that would fall under free speech, but certain things could be considered confidential of which Senators would need to be mindful. It was mentioned that a conflict of interest as well as the appearance of a conflict of interest are both things of which Senators should be aware. There were also questions about how to define the electorate, with the general definition being those with hiring rights. President Thompson stated that the Senate had the right to reverse some decisions, but clarified that did not include any item that had been approved by a vote of the electorate.

Main point:

- We need a secure election infrastructure, and that needs to be provided by the institution

Faculty Professional Development: T Jacobson, Senator and Faculty Co-Chair of the Professional Development Committee (PDC), addressed discussion points brought to their attention by the Senate Executive Committee beginning with New Faculty Orientation; this orientation has been scaled back from the initial offering. Also noted was that the Faculty Mentoring program had been transferred from Senate Exec to the faculty side of Professional Development. Incorporating the needs of Faculty, Classified and Management into Professional Development has been a challenge, and while there was some concern about Professional Development being housed in Human Resources, it was allowed that the administrative support has been invaluable. In Fall 2020 there will be 35 new tenure-track faculty members teaching at SRJC.

The Senate is charged with New Faculty Orientation, which gave rise to discussion about the higher numbers of newly hired faculty and whether New Faculty Orientation co-opts Tenure Review teams. Also, some faculty members are new to teaching and others have years of experience, so there needs to be a balance between

the experienced and inexperienced.

Another discussion ensued around what constitutes professional development and the importance of faculty members determining for themselves what they need to develop in their particular field. Some Senators were frustrated by offerings on PDA Day, stating that no offerings represented their area of expertise, while other Senators said they benefitted from the workshops offered. Several Senators agreed it was more like “Institutional Development Day” since many activities seem geared to doing District-type work. There was also discussion about professional development for adjunct instructors and how funding and rules regarding absences, in the past, has made it difficult for adjuncts to attend conferences and workshops. A recommendation was made for adjuncts to be included in a mentoring program.

T Jacobsen mentioned aspects of PDA Day difficulties due to lack of funds. Also, there is hope the SRJC Foundation will contribute further to Faculty Excellence Awards. A recap of the Senate discussion was given of what will be reported back to professional development faculty. Final Senator comments included the possibility of faculty regaining professional development in the Spring semester and also making professional development an opportunity instead of an obligation.

Main points from the discussion:

- The general consensus of senators is that faculty professional development should be housed within Academic Affairs, not Human Resources
- Changes to PDA Days: It should be part Institution Day with the president’s address, Tauzer Lecture, etc., and part faculty professional development per se with opportunities for department and discipline meetings and individual projects

President Thompson concluded the Senate Retreat and thanked all who were in attendance.

ADJOURNMENT 3:04 p.m.