

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING 05/11/2021 APPROVED BY COMMITTEE 10/12/2021
Sub. To Exec. Comm. _____ Approved by Exec. Comm. _____
Sub. To Acad. Senate _____ Approved by Acad. Senate _____
POLICY ITEMS _____

Members Present:

Nazaret Dermendjian, Michael Doron, Ellis Godard, Kim Henige, Vickie Jensen, Greg Knotts, Renee Moreno, Linda Noblejas-Sapuay (recording), Diane Stephens (non-voting), Katherine Stevenson, Elizabeth Sussman, Yarma Velazquez-Vargas

Guests:

President Erika Beck, Provost Mary Beth Walker, Genevieve Evans Taylor, Callie Juarez

Call to Order

The virtual meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

1. Listening Tour with President Beck and Provost Walker

President Beck apologized for rescheduling the meeting last time. Introduction of all members followed.

The President stated that she has seen most of the group as most have participated in her listening tour. She has engaged with all sectors of the campus -- faculty, staff, students, internal and external leaders, and it has been incredible. She is wrapping up and will be writing a report to send to the university by the end of the semester.

She wanted to drill down deeper to get a more nuanced understanding from a whole variety of perspectives. She wanted to understand how faculty from various departments, in different points of their academic careers and different kinds of leadership roles, experience the university. It is really important for her that all help shape the future in such a way that the members, their colleagues, and our students thrive in the years ahead. She wanted to hear everyone's perspective as faculty and as members of ERC. She asked the committee to paint a picture of what a decade of transformation of growth and mission fulfillment looks like for the university. What would be different from how the university looks from today?

The following were the responses:

- a. In terms of transformation, more Latinos in leadership positions; also leadership that reflects the demographics of the students that the university serves;

- b. Leadership that has consistency, continuity and access; having a new president gives everyone excitement and hopefulness but it wanes pretty quickly without action; To be able to know what our jobs are beyond section 600 and beyond serving the larger community; to be thoughtful as to what a CSUN graduate looks like and what they are able to do; having a sense of a shared mission and conversation that is consistent in moving the university forward and that for every CSUN graduate to know what they look like and what they can do.
- c. A partnership between the administration and the faculty where the faculty are not placed in positions of antagonism but rather working together in a common goal. It is evident in the past, the administration is not on the same side of the faculty; an administration and faculty shared vision on what the role is for the CSU and CSUN within the CSU.
- d. For the university to continue and grow in leadership in the community, be change agents in helping the community seek out change; change in the institution by breaking down barriers that inhibit our students from engaging in community work; continue the pursuit of justice, equity and diversity, and do the work to achieve that; breaking down barriers between people or in groups in respect to our work and thinking; the university has interdisciplinary work and should continue to grow and be productive if we work together across departments, across colleges and it can be successful.
- e. This committee recently has passed resolution for a shift in its charge that is more substantive, clear and contemporary; after a decade of transformation, to see ERC have a role in helping the university think about the match between resources and planning, that resources flow where they need to flow to support its plans.
- f. To see faculty have a good understanding of how the institution works instead of being in their departments and getting frustrated and feeling disconnected. Faculty to feel empowered, informed about when decisions are made and how they are made; faculty have the responsibility to step up and also do the work; Top down decision making from the Chancellor's Office to all CSUs; administration needs to take the opportunity of listening to the people in the rooms with the students, to know what infrastructure is needed, how they teach as faculty are the people that are close to the students and they know what student needs.
- g. The academic calendar and budget cycle do not match, they are seven to eight months behind; the faculty to start to teach student they have rather than the students they wish they have, more transparency, more communications and involvement of faculty and be an integral part of the decision making process not a committee that hears it after the fact.

President Beck inquired on how the members' individual academic journey is unfolding and how the university can best support the advancement of their academic journey and if there is an untapped opportunity for the university that can be taken up?

- h. Chicano/a Studies is an untapped opportunity; there are many scholars in the department who are not acknowledged; a lot of hostility against the department that is unfortunate.

- i. As part of First Year Experience, a member stated that 99% who teach are lecturers and they need more attention; provide more opportunities for them for full-time positions that they can depend on; promotion opportunities as assistant or associate professors; they have stellar lecturers who can accomplish a lot and they also can help tenure-track if they can be involved in service.
- j. Someone shared their positive experiences in their academic journey on this campus; the faculty member stated they knew they made the right decision in the first hour of their two-day orientation and that also started their trajectory that allowed them to spread their wings. This university offered the opportunity for them to get out of their discipline and be able to do something else (e.g., Senate). There are many bumps in the road but there are lots of great things about campus including the tremendous support of faculty.
- k. Another member stated that they have grown up a lot at CSUN and was given so much opportunity; there is a lot of generosity from the students at CSUN; there is no better job than teaching here at CSUN; they have more meaning in what they do in their department. Their hope is that CSUN will be a leader in the transition from K-12 into post-secondary education. There is still a crevice and there are many students falling out. The faculty member wants the campus to reach in deeper ways, create a dual enrollment course; doing early STEM instead of early Start; lastly, teacher preparation, making sure teachers going out from our university can make a difference in the lives of the students they serve.
- l. A member stated that she started in 1997 and has seen tremendous changes and all are good. The growth in terms of taking care of new faculty, thinking of their needs, and providing support, has grown tremendously. It has become more institutionalized instead of individualized and informal. When she was hired, there was strong female leadership and she has great mentors that are informal. She has been given an opportunity with her colleagues to create a new department and to provide opportunities for faculty to grow in different ways. This place is so much better now than when she was hired in 1997.
- m. Another member stated that that campus has some brilliant formal systems but our best experiences come from those informal systems. We need to move to formal system of support of faculty. We need to make sure our faculty have experiences that are similar to our student body. We need to capitalize on the informal programs but also make formal systems so that faculty feel supported.
- n. Someone asked President Beck what things she has not done, what boundaries she has discovered, what she has not accomplished at her former institution that might be different at CSUN?

President Beck said that she has not seen boundaries yet but heard from other people. But the one challenge in large-scale organizations is how to set up systems and structures in such a way those pieces come together and decisions are able to be shaped in the course of when they are being made and that there is meaningful impact on the trajectory and lined up with a collective vision. She continued that everyone will share a collective vision on where the university is going once we identify priorities and provide resources to them. President Beck stated that right now she is trying to first understand the people that make up the

institution, understand how these systems and structures to facilitate the dialogue of the shaping of a collective vision and moving it and then the action requires resources. She thanked everyone and stated that everyone did paint a beautiful picture and heard them in different ways from other groups that gave her tangible ideas.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The meeting agenda was approved. (Godard/Stevenson MSP)

3. Approval of the ERC Meeting Minutes of April 20, 2021

The minutes of the ERC meeting of April 20, 2021 were approved with one abstention. (Moreno/Godard MSP)

4. Approval of ERC Annual Report for AY 2020-2021

The Annual Report for AY 2021-2021 was approved as amended. (Stevenson/Knotts MSP)

5. Chair's Report

No report due to limited time.

6. Executive Secretary's Report

No report due to limited time.

7. Update on Budget and Faculty Hiring – Provost Mary Beth Walker

Provost Walker stated that the budget year is so messy because of the distribution of general state dollars and one-time dollars. Some are continuing dollars and some are not. A certain level of knowledge on this is really important to provide recommendations on the budget.

She continued that next year in terms of faculty hiring, she has met with the individual deans and got approval to hire up to 30 new faculty members over next year. Some of these were positions based on their enrollment growth that were “chilled” or paused last year. And we have thirteen positions that we can fund through the university. Those positions will be in Engineering and Business as these were pre-decided before the hiring “chill” based on the enrollment growth in those areas. There will be eleven tenure density positions that can be funded through Academic Affairs resources, mostly from attrition savings. There are many different ways to measure tenure density. The measure that Academic Affairs uses is one that allows us to be comparable with other CSUs and also the one used by the Chancellor's Office. This year, when we did calculations for departments, we counted teaching assistants (TAs). There are about three departments that use TAs in a big way. They recalculated to see if there is a change in relative standing of departments. There was very little change in relative standing when you

compare departments and college. This consideration was taken based on this committee's recommendation. The other factor is a measure of FTES per tenure faculty member. It is weighted towards majors because of more mentoring, more senior projects, etc. It also matters for those teaching GE courses. So it is the interaction of those two variables, the department with the highest FTES per faculty member and the lowest tenure density that rise to the top of the list for allocating positions. Positions are then allocated at the college level and deans have the discretion to make the determination within the college on where the positions would go. That has been the way we started last year before the pandemic and we are going forward the same way this year.

Some of the deans are reporting high levels of faculty attrition and faculty moving to FERP status. It started last year and is continuing now. Because of these, there are five other positions that deans will hire as replacements. As we continue to get attrition savings there is possibility that positions can be allocated.

In this past year, in Faculty Affairs, two faculty/equity advocates went through our recruiting policy to see how to improve, change and to increase the hiring of diverse faculty members. They had some really strong recommendations. They looked across the CSUs, national research, as to what works, what makes a difference, etc. They will have strong recommendations that will be coming forward to the Faculty Senate, to PP&R. These will make a big difference and the Provost wants this in place before the next hiring cycle. This summer there will be meetings with chairs so that they understand the new hiring policy. The next thing that these faculty/equity advocates will review is retention. Good hiring is not enough, we need to retain faculty. Discussion ensued.

She thanked the committee for the recommendations provided on the HEERF II funding. The budget changed as a result of all those conversations. She noted that as the money get expended, the money gets drawn down. We will need a very clear dashboard so we can see the expenditures in these different areas. The categories and the amounts that we set can change if the expense in a category is decreased and that money can be moved elsewhere.

Last year, the university had a \$33M hole in the budget, \$16M was the cut from the state funding from the CO and the other \$16M was reductions in other way. The Governor has said that he will restore the \$299M to the CSU budget. If it comes back to us, \$16M will be returned to our budget but will not bring us back to where we were completely. There is still uncertainty on the AB1460 money, one-time or continuing money, GI2025, etc. But definitely, to some extent, the budget will be restored in Academic Affairs.

The Provost also mentioned the Strategic Budgeting Project that Juarez will discuss today. The motivation for this is to build back the college budgets from the ground up, "re-benching" the college budgets. Colleges have changed through the years and they have different needs such as technical equipment needs, supplemental instructions, etc. This is an exciting project but will not be fully implemented right away as there will be a lot of work to be done. She also mentioned about providing financial incentives to do interdisciplinary work to encourage faculty to innovate and be creative. Discussion

ensued on ways for the committee to be involved in allocation of the academic budget, Hyflex classrooms and training for the faculty in the summer, encouraging more in-person engagement in the fall, choices given to students for what they want in terms of learning in the fall, etc.

8. Strategic Budgeting Project – Callie Juarez

(Due to time limitations, Juarez did not have much time to discuss the Strategic Budgeting Project).

She stated that Academic Affairs general operating budget is primarily based on history with incremental adjustments. This model has created inequities in the base budgets among colleges. After multiple years of budget reductions, nearly half of the colleges have recently ended fiscal years either in deficits in the General Fund. The Provost has charged a volunteer sub-group of directors of finance and operations to review the current budget model and to present recommendations on how to realign budget allocation process in support of core functions and other university and divisional priorities and to have a mindset of “University First” and not focus on their own college. This group meets twice a week for two hours.

For their initial review, they did a deep dive on a pure cost of instruction model. They used Fiscal Year 2019-20 or data prior to Covid. They based it on FTES (common measure used for enrolled students) and Course Student Faculty Ratio (SFR) (pure instructional ratio that excludes other workload or reassigned time).

Dermendjian suggested to have the committee review the data that is in myCSUNbox and maybe Juarez can come again to present it at the next meeting and the committee can have more time in the discussion.

Juarez suggested as members go through the document that they focus on the questions as the group continues to develop the model and let them know what suggestions or information they need to consider as they continue to do their work.

9. Election of Chair

Greg Knotts and Katherine Stevenson were nominated. Knotts declined the nomination. Stevenson was unanimously elected as Chair for 2021-2022. She mentioned that she will be on sabbatical in the Fall but will continue to serve if that is allowable. Knotts stated that he can be interim chair if Stevenson goes on sabbatical.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

Notes:

The next ERC meeting will be held on September 14, 2021 from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. via Zoom.

**** THERE WERE NO RESOLUTIONS PUT FORTH AT THIS MEETING FOR SENATE CONSIDERATION.***