

**Academic Assembly**  
 April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
 2:05 – 3:35pm, Zoom Meeting

**MINUTES**

**Attendance:** Kirsten Thompson, Frank Shih, Margit McGuire, Chris Paul, Sarah Bee, Gregory Silverman, Yancy Dominick, Terri Clark, Michael Ng, Shane Martin, Mimi Cheng, Patricia Buschel, Russ Powell, Benjamin Howe, Marc Cohen, Angie Jenkins, Kate Koppelman, Arvidson, Felipe Anaya, Kathleen La Voy, Dylan Medina

*Minutes taken by Lindsey Nakatani*

**I. AcA President Update & Review 04-06-20 Minutes**

**2:05 – 2:07**

- a. **Motion:** AcA moves to approve the meeting minutes from 4/6/20. Seconded. **VOTE:** APPROVE: 13, OPPOSED: 0, ABSTENTIONS: 0.
  - i. **Motion is passed** – 4/6/20 AcA Meeting Minutes Approved.

**II. Provost Update**

**2:07 – 2:40**

- a. The Provost gives his sincerest wishes for everyone's continued health and safety. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a global emergency, although recent pandemic statistics are beginning to show promise that the spread is slowing. In response to the pandemic, SU has moved approximately 1,200 courses online for SQ, Over 400 faculty members are participating in online education training modules, the IT Help Desk has lowered call wait times to 5-7 minutes and hopes to lower wait times further by utilizing chat assistance and student workers to help assist with the influx of calls. The Provost is very proud of the university's response and the continued determination of the faculty to help facilitate the necessary changes. Students are engaged and continue to enroll for SQ. This is due, in part, to most courses being taught synchronously, which has continued to improve student engagement. The university continues to buy Google Chrome Books to lend to students in need as well as Wi-Fi Hot Spots. Recently, Hot Spot supplies ran out. Instead, the university began buying low cost smart phones that double as Wi-Fi Hot Spots. SU President, Fr. Sundborg sent a request to SU's major donors and benefactors requesting their support for an emergency fund for students. The fund has raised \$500,000. An oversight committee chaired by Melore Nielsen has been appointed to manage the fund. The fund has already given \$100,000 to students in need and is working towards a 24 hour turn around time for applications.
- b. **CARES Act:** The federal government stimulus bill has granted universities some financial assistance. SU is eligible for \$3.6 million under the CARES Act. The first installment will be \$1.8 million intended for student aid to supplement a student's cost of attendance and other emergency needs. Universities that applied by last Saturday will be prioritized for allocation. Last Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, an emergency committee was convened, and the grant paperwork was submitted on Friday evening. University leadership expects SU's disbursement on Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>. In accordance with the CARES Act, the oversight committee will be disbursing the funds to students for housing issues, child care, learning expenses etc. CARES relief funds do not count against a student's financial aid threshold; the funds must be disbursed within a year. The second installment is intended for

institutional use. Congress is currently working on a fourth stimulus bill. This new bill will hopefully include even more support for higher education.

- c. **Other Updates:** There are 136 students currently still being housed in the residence halls owned by SU. The Douglas and Vi Hilbert Halls (not owned by SU but connected to SU) are housing an additional 130-140 students. Students have been moved to single rooms with single bathrooms. Sanitary and housing services continue to be provided by skeleton crews; food services are still being offered as take out only. Commencement has been cancelled for June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. SU is looking to reschedule the non-Law commencement for the weekend of October 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 on campus. The add/drop period is still ongoing for the Spring Quarter. At this time, the university has only lost an additional 38 students due to the COVID-19 crisis. By comparison, the University of WA has lost approximately 500 students. The virtual student support center continues to offer answers and support to students on any questions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. The announcement was made recently that all undergraduate and graduate courses will all be taught online for the summer quarter.

#### Questions/Discussion:

- d. *Were there any updates on possible Swedish partnerships?* SU has been able to move on a partnership with Harborview Medical Center. Harborview health care workers can now use SU's Broadway parking garage at no cost. Swedish had been interested in using the lab space on SU campus. Currently, Swedish does not anticipate needing SU's lab space.
- e. *Of the 38 students who did not return to SU, what percentage was high discount?* There are a varying range of situations for these students. Some were high discount, some were not. Some students have family members who were laid off and are needed in their home settings. Some students have family members who are dealing directly with COVID-19. Some students believed that the virtual environment was not conducive to their ideal education. However, most of, if not all the students, have only disenrolled for the quarter, and will be continuing conversations with SU.
- f. *Is synchronous education the best practice and the recommendation of the school?* There are varying opinions on this matter. It is open to debate and academic freedom. It takes time to build a high quality, asynchronous class from a previously synchronous class. Classes that were already designed to be asynchronous are a different matter. However, for most teachers and courses, synchronous education is the best method. The CDLI did not have the support mechanisms to help create over 1,000 asynchronous courses in such a short amount of time.
- g. *At what stage will the institution decide upon online education for the fall? And how has the financial situation of the institution changed given the recent stimulus packages approved by Congress?* Presently, the university leadership can only speculate on how the pandemic situation will progress. There has been no guidance from the west coast governors about procedures for restarting communities that could affect higher education institutions. Leadership would expect to have a better understanding of how the crisis will affect the FQ within approx. a month. Some of the financial shortcomings inflicted by this crisis have been alleviated by the stimulus package. The university is still projecting an approx. 3-million-dollar loss for the SQ. There will be more information within the next few days about how enrollment revenue has been affected.

- h. *Notes from the College of Science and Engineering indicated that summer projects would not be allowed by the Provost's Office over the summer quarter. Is this accurate?* Decisions like this are based upon the consultations and recommendations of health officials. Present direction from health officials indicates that people will not be able to be back on campus for the summer quarter. Even if the situation were to change within the next couple of months, there is a specific amount of lead time needed for facilitating summer projects on campus.
- i. *When will we know more about the fall enrollment numbers?* Fall enrollment is still in flux, as we are all reliant upon further guidance from the governors whether or not we can resume face-to-face courses. SU is in conversations with the governor's office and state government agencies about procedures for re-starting communities. Any kind of enrollment numbers or dates for re-opening would be pure speculation at this point.
- j. There should be a clear announcement regarding the allotment for mid-year changes to FAS child care options. CARES Act had a small section revoking the need for a prescription for some counter drugs.
- k. *What options are amongst the range of strategies being considered by university leadership regarding the university's financial struggles?* Financial exigency is *not* being considered at this time. Although some higher education institutions will declare financial exigency or will close, this is not the current situation for SU. The university has held spring enrollment and fall deposits are tracking the same as last year at this time. The university has held virtual campus tours and events with prospective students. The feedback from students has been positive, some students even prefer this interactive, more personal interface with university representatives. The priority enrollment deadline, originally scheduled for May 1<sup>st</sup>, has been extended by request to June 1<sup>st</sup>. If you are reading the Chronicle or other news outlets, you would be aware that higher education is looking at a range of options in this moment, including furloughs, lay-offs, delaying wage pool increases, delaying other forms of compensation such as retirement benefits, and salary reductions. SU is closely examining all its options, including potential salary cuts for university leadership.
- l. *Faculty would strongly encourage consultation of staff council before the furloughing of staff is considered as some staffers are not always well represented in the decision process. How can the faculty help?* University leadership would ask that the faculty continue to provide flexible and high-quality education to SU's students. Students are experiencing a range of difficulties. The faculty are asked to please, be reassuring and creative in their support, encouragement and education of SU's students. This is a time for care and kindness.

### III. Committee on Committees Progress – Sarah Bee

2:40 – 2:55

- a. The Committee on Committees (ConC) is working to have the spring call for volunteers, for all committees, go out sometime next week.
- b. Next Steps: (1) A letter from Shane and Frank will be circulated, highlighting the importance of service and asking for volunteers. (2) ConC has created an online form for volunteering. Data gathered from this form will be entered directly into an excel sheet. ConC will then use the data in this excel sheet to populate committee memberships accordingly. (3) Lists of proposed committee memberships will be sent to the respective committee chair and to the AcA for confirmation. (4) Finalized committee rosters will then be sent to the chairs.

- c. The ConC is also working to create a comprehensive database of all the committee activity. This project is an effort to preserve institutional memory moving forward. The database includes a complete list of faculty that will be updated every 2-3 months to maintain accurate records.
- d. ConC would ask that the AcA representatives send out the call for volunteers to their constituencies. Given the current circumstances, the hope is that community spirit will spark the pride for service.

#### IV. Program Review Committee – Terri Clark

2:55 – 3:05

**Program Review – Master of Professional Accounting (MPAC):** There was some initial concern regarding the mixing of undergraduate and graduate courses. The PRC has determined, in consultation with the department, that these concerns will be addressed. The PRC recommends that the AcA approve the MPAC memo.

- a. **Motion:** AcA moves to approve the MPAC memo. Seconded. **VOTE:** APPROVE: 12, OPPOSED: 0, ABSTENTIONS: 0.
  - i. **Motion is passed** – AcA approves the MPAC memo.

**Program Review – Diagnostic Imaging and Ultrasound (DIUS):** This program was moved from the Engineering department to the Nursing department. All the submitted proposal materials were strong and warranted no further recommendations from the PRC. The PRC recommends that the AcA approve the DIUS memo.

- b. **Motion:** AcA moves to approve the DIUS memo. Seconded. **VOTE:** APPROVE: 12, OPPOSED: 0, ABSTENTIONS: 0.
  - i. **Motion is passed** – AcA approves the DIUS memo.

**Program Review – Master of Nonprofit Leadership (MNPL):** This memo is regarding a regular seven-year program review. The program invited a formal external reviewer in 2018, who examined the program’s alignment with similar programs and made recommendations. There are still some challenges facing the program, such as: diversity and inclusion, faculty structure, lack of a pipeline for undergraduate enrollment and a lack of resources for alumni engagement. Program has been made aware of these challenges. The PRC recommends that the AcA approve the MNPL memo.

- c. **Motion:** AcA moves to approve the MNPL memo. Seconded. **VOTE:** APPROVE: 13, OPPOSED: 0, ABSTENTIONS: 0.
  - i. **Motion is passed** – AcA approves the MNPL memo.

#### V. Student Evaluations

3:05 – 3:20

- a. The AcA President compiled a list of sample course evaluation questions from across the university. This document highlights the fact that evaluations vary quite drastically across the campus. Given the current circumstances, if an adjusted evaluations process is implemented for SQ of 2020, a process needs to be approved and announced within the next couple of weeks.
- b. *How can the faculty increase the response rate of students?* Standardizing evaluation questions increases student response rates. The attitude of students is that evaluations don’t matter. Some faculty have resorted to making their students fill out evaluations in class to ensure a good response rate.
- c. *Conversations on evaluations should be focused on larger questions, such as; what is the purpose of the evaluations? Or, what are we trying to capture?* If answers to these questions can be determined first, they will better direct a re-structuring of the evaluation process.

- d. The university leadership would like to see the AcA tackle this issue and find an evaluation instrument that can be shared across the institution, while also allowing each college/school to tailor questions to meet their specific needs. A process should be devised and approved by the AcA. Consideration should also be given to how the evaluations are advertised. Students are not given a compelling reason to complete their evaluations. A set of best practices for evaluations should be set to guide faculty in their administering of evaluations. The goal should be a centralized evaluation approach and a clear vision on what evaluations are meant to capture. Students strongly feel that evaluations are an important part of student voice in curriculum oversight and development.
- e. *Could evaluations be scheduled to occur once a quarter, rather than for every course?*
- f. The usual questions of process are not going to apply for the current quarter. The CDLI has crafted a short evaluation that will ascertain technological shortcomings for the spring quarter.
- g. The University of Southern California has changed evaluations to be about teaching rather than summative reviews of courses. USC then used this data to improve education. There are different questions for different outcomes. SU needs to decide what the goal of its evaluations should be.
- h. The AcA will form a working group with reps from each school/college to conduct research and write new guidelines for a new evaluation process. *Will the working group begin its work in the fall when the current crisis has, hopefully, abated?*
- i. *Would the Center for Faculty Development be better qualified to draft initial guidelines since they are the experts in this area?*
- j. AcA Proposes 2 different Stages: (1) A working group of faculty and other relevant experts will work to address the central question: what is the purpose of SU's evaluations? (2) Once a clear purpose statement has been written, the second working group will draft a standard student evaluation form and evaluation guidelines.
- k. *How should evaluations be conducted for the 19-20 AY, SQ?*
  - i. *Could there be modified evaluations for this quarter? A continued avenue for student voice is very important. The evaluation should be kept brief.*
  - ii. *There is concern that changes to evaluations cannot be made quickly enough for implementation during the current quarter. Last minute changes would only add anxiety to those faculty who are on a promotion/TT line and rely on student evaluations for their portfolios. Student evaluations are not being added to portfolios this quarter. SU could make a shorter evaluation optional for faculty for this quarter?*
- l. AcA members concur that changes to student evaluations for the current quarter are not feasible. A working group will be formed to address the issue of student evaluations at a future date.
  - i. (Potential) Volunteers for the Student Evaluations Working Group: Dylan Medina, Angie Jenkins, Chris Paul.