

District Shared Governance Council (DSGC)

April 18, 2011

Minutes

Members Present: Co-Chairs Diana Bennett and Jing Luan, Donna Bestock, Peter Bruni, Sandra Stefani Comerford, Kathy Fitzpatrick, Fermin Irigoyen, Teeka James, Charles Jones, Raymond Parenti-Kurttila, Martin Partlan, Rita Sabbadini

Members Absent: Vivian Abellana, Heidi Hansen, Stephanie Samuelson, Darnell Spellman

Others Present: Kathy Blackwood, Barbara Christensen

The meeting was called to order at 2:25 p.m. Absent a quorum, approval of the minutes of the meeting of March 7 was postponed and the report on "Council Meeting Protocol" was moved to the top of the agenda.

Council Meeting Protocol

Professor Bennett said that David Mezzera, parliamentarian for the State Academic Senate, observed the last DSGC meeting and made the following recommendations:

- Make sure a quorum is reached.
- Make sure to follow the consensus model; during the discussion on Policy 8.70, the group reached consensus to not approve the revisions and, therefore, there was no need to continue the discussion. The recommendation to not approve could have been forwarded to the Board.
- Set a time limit on discussion items, e.g. start with a five minute limit and, after that time, ask if the group wants to take another five minutes or bring the item back to a later meeting.
- When polling, begin with the (c) level ("I cannot support the recommendation").
- Refer to Robert's Rules for consensus; Mr. Mezzera said he will send a "cheat sheet."
- People who are in attendance but are not members of the Council should be recognized to speak by one of the co-chairs before participating in discussions.
- Keep in mind that DSGC is advisory to the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees.

Professor James said there is some confusion about when to call for polling and some members felt they were not able to provide their full input before polling was conducted at the last meeting. Vice Chancellor Luan suggested that the Council follow Mr. Mezzera's suggestions for the next one or two meetings and discuss the issue further after that time if necessary. Council members agreed with this suggestion.

The discussion ended at 2:38 and a quorum was present at that time.

Review and Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Ms. Fitzpatrick and seconded by Professor Irigoyen to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 7, 2011. Professor James requested that the phrase "before implementing the dropping of students" be added to the following sentence shown on page 3: "Professor James said that, in general, the idea of a payment plan is a good idea but more information is needed." The motion to approve the minutes, as amended, carried, with three abstentions and the remainder of members present voting "Aye."

Statements from the Public on Non-Agenda Items

None

Board Policies

Policy 5.14, Managers: Compensation and Benefits

There was no discussion. Polling resulted in all members at the (a) level (“I support the recommendation completely”) and the recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for action.

Policy 5.16, Managers: Evaluation

Ms. Fitzpatrick asked if employees are given the opportunity to complete surveys to evaluate managers who supervise them. Professor James said that Vice Chancellor Harry Joel indicated at an earlier meeting that very few employees completed the surveys. However, AFT believes it is important to continue to give employees that opportunity and would like to see this provision reinserted in the policy. Professor Partlan said he believes there is a procedure which calls for evaluation by subordinates. Ms. Christensen said Vice Chancellor Joel will return to the office next week; she will ask him to amend the policy and send it to Council members and ask for approval at the next meeting. Council members agreed with this suggestion.

Policy 5.24, Academic Supervisors: Compensation and Benefits

Ms. Sabbadini asked why the sections of Rules and Regulations applying to Academic Supervisors, as listed in item number 2, are different from those listed for Managers in Policy 5.14. Professor James said that more sections apply to managers than to academic supervisors and suggested it would be more clear if those sections are listed as they are in Policy 5.14, rather than included in the text of the paragraph. Ms. Christensen said Professor James is correct; more sections apply to managers because they may be classified employees while academic supervisors are faculty only. Polling to approve the policy, including Professor James’ suggestion to list the applicable sections, resulted in all members at the (a) level and the recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for action.

Policy 5.26, Academic Supervisors: Evaluation

Professor James said the same concern would apply to this policy as to 5.16, i.e. supervised employees should have an opportunity to participate in the evaluation. Professor Irigoyen said Skyline College faculty have the same concern. Dean Bestock pointed out that the situations are different because many of the academic supervisors supervise only one or two people. Professor James noted that academic supervisors may also work with students and said a student evaluation piece may be appropriate. Mr. Parenti-Kurttala said that some academic supervisors interact directly with students and some do not; for example, he is a DSPS student and has had no direct interaction. Professor Partlan suggested that language could be added to clarify that evaluations will be carried out according to a specific and appropriate procedure. Professor James said that item number 3, “The annual evaluations shall be conducted according to adopted procedures which are maintained in the Office of Human Resources,” addresses this point. She suggested that language could be added stating that evaluations by students may be included as appropriate. Ms. Christensen suggested that she take these concerns back to Vice Chancellor Joel and bring the policy back for approval at a later meeting. All Council members agreed with this suggestion.

Policy 5.54, Classified Professional/Supervisory Employees: Compensation and Benefits

Ms. Christensen said she would like remove this policy and Policy 5.64, Confidential Employees: Compensation and Benefits, from consideration in order to clarify with Vice Chancellor Joel which portions of the CSEA agreement apply to these groups. There were no objections.

Policy 5.56, Classified Professional/Supervisory Employees: Evaluation

There was no discussion. Polling resulted in all members at the (a) level (“I support the recommendation completely”) and the recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for action.

Policy 5.66, Confidential Employees: Evaluation

Ms. Blackwood said confidential employees are those who are privy to the management side of contract negotiations and there are very few such employees. Polling resulted in all members at the (a) level and the recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for action.

Policy 2.08, District Shared Governance Process

Ms. Christensen said there should be 20 members of the Council, in which case the quorum (50% + 1) would be 11 members. However, it happens from time to time that there are fewer members. The Council is currently missing the College of San Mateo Academic Senate President (the position held until recently by Professor Bennett), the Cañada College administration representative (the College did not appoint a member to replace Jenny Castello who returned to faculty status), an AFSCME representative (AFSCME did not appoint a member), and the student trustee (position was vacant until last Friday). Changing the language to specify that a quorum is 50% + 1 of the membership, rather than 11 members, would allow the Council the flexibility to act on issues. Vice Chancellor Luan noted that the change would not do away with the requirement that at least one representative from each site and one representative from each constituency be present. Dean Bestock said the change is reasonable because it is based on the principle of how a quorum is defined in the policy. Professor James agreed, but said she is concerned about managers not appointing members and about members not attending meetings and taking their duties seriously. Ms. Fitzpatrick said she has missed meetings and was not aware of the issue of a quorum being needed. Professor James said the Council should think about ways to educate the constituencies about the importance of attending meetings. She added that it is acceptable to send fill-ins to listen and report back even though they cannot participate in polling. Vice Chancellor Luan said the co-chairs will continue to offer orientation to new members prior to the first meeting of the year. Mr. Jones said that some employees are reluctant to participate because they feel their work will not be viewed as important if they can take time to attend meetings. Vice Chancellor Luan said he will bring this concern to Vice Chancellor Joel so that it can be addressed at a Managers Forum. Ms. Christensen said she has learned that one of the Associated Students organizations has their meetings scheduled on the same day and at the same time as Council meetings; she will request that this be changed. Council members should take this policy to their constituency and be ready for discussion and approval at the next meeting.

Policies 7.60, Student Organizations and Activities; 7.61, Financial Responsibilities: Student Body Associations and Student Organizations; and 7.62, Associated Students Election

Ms. Christensen said the Vice Presidents of Student Services worked on these policies and will take them to the Associated Students at each College for their approval. DSGC members should take the policies to their constituencies as information items and email any comments to Ms. Christensen.

Policy 8.70, Fees and Charges

Professor Bennett set a time limit of five minutes for the discussion on this policy. Professor James said her constituency would like to strike the addition to item number 6 (“Students whose fees are not paid and who have not enrolled in a payment plan shall be dropped from classes prior to the start of the term.”). They would like to hold off on the language regarding dropping students and see how it goes for one or two more semesters. Professor Partlan said his constituency is in agreement with Professor James; however, he personally believes that students should be held responsible and the revision should be accepted.

Dean Bestock said there is an issue regarding students who wait to register and “game” the timeframe for being dropped. Ms. Blackwood said she surveyed colleges and found that, in most cases, if a student registers after the class starts and is not enrolled in a payment plan, payment is due at the time of registration. She said that enrollment went up when this plan was implemented. Dean Bestock said this is not as clear as it might be in the policy. Ms. Blackwood said she would like to keep this as a policy and not include procedures.

Dean Comerford said that if a student registers for a class and is not receiving financial aid or enrolled in a payment plan, the recommended change does not make clear what the last day is that the student must pay before being dropped from the class. Ms. Blackwood said that some colleges use a rolling drop date, depending on the date and time a student registers, while others have one set drop date. She said a rolling drop date seems appropriate assuming that proper notifications and reminders are sent to students.

Dean Comerford asked how easy it is to devise and implement a payment plan. Ms. Blackwood said she is still in the process of reviewing what others are using. She said all plans seem to be easy and are designed for online use. She said the District would choose a plan that could be implemented with the Banner system. She believes the District will implement a payment plan regardless of whether this policy revision is approved.

Professor Bennett said five minutes had elapsed. Council members agreed to extend the discussion for another five minutes.

Mr. Parenti-Kurttila asked when the revised policy would be implemented if approved and how much stress it would put on admissions offices if students are dropped without their knowledge. Ms. Blackwood said it would not be implemented soon because proper and widespread notification of the change would be necessary. She said it is not anticipated that students would unknowingly be dropped because they would receive ample warnings before being dropped. Mr. Parenti-Kurttila asked whether students who buy textbooks before being dropped could return the books. Ms. Blackwood said there already is a policy in place; if a class is dropped entirely and the book is still wrapped, it can be returned for a full refund.

Professor James said her constituency is concerned that if a student who is participating in a payment plan misses a payment, the drop may be triggered. She spoke with Henry Villareal, Dean of Admissions and Records, who said it is not clear if this could happen. He said financial aid checks arrive close to the first day of classes and students do not have the money to pay fees before the checks arrive. Ms. Blackwood said that students who apply for financial aid will be automatically enrolled in a payment plan and will not be dropped from a class. Professor James asked if students who receive financial aid pay the fees themselves or if the fees are deducted. Ms. Blackwood said fees are deducted and paid in full before students are given their financial aid funds. Mr. Parenti-Kurttila pointed out that this is specified in item number 9 of the current policy.

Mr. Jones asked if using a vendor for the payment plan will cost the District money. Ms. Blackwood said the method of payment is not yet determined. Students could be charged for the service (usually \$15-\$20 per semester) or the District could absorb the cost.

Vice Chancellor Luan reminded the Council that the purpose of the proposed revision is to make sure the District remains financially viable. He also reminded the Council that changes in policies can be made in the future and that it is important to move on.

Polling on the recommended changes resulted in two members at the (c) level ("I cannot support the recommendation"), six members at the (b) level ("I support the recommendation with reservations") and four members at the (a) level.

Dean Bestock asked what kind of holdup there would be if a revised policy is not in place. Ms. Blackwood said the current policy is not being followed and said the Board will be discussing student fees at the June 8 study session. She said most concerns about the recommended revisions regard a lack of trust that students will not be harmed. However, systems would be in place to protect all students except those who simply choose not to pay. Dean Comerford said with more knowledge gained at this meeting, she would feel comfortable going back to her constituency and explaining it more fully.

Mr. Parenti-Kurttila said that many students do not meet the qualifications for the federal work-study program and asked if there could be a work program for students through which they could work off their fees. Professor James said this is not an issue that is within the purview of DSGC.

Ms. Christensen noted that the polling did not result in 60% of members being at any one level. There was discussion about members changing their (a) votes to (b); Professor James said this seems like "horse trading" and the true sense of Council members' level of support would be lost in the recommendation that would be sent to the Board. Professor Bennett said part of the meeting model is to try to get consensus. Ms. Blackwood said it would be appropriate to let the Board know what this body thinks. Vice Chancellor Luan said the recommended revisions will be taken to the Board with the notation that DSGC could not reach consensus. Ms. Christensen added that the Board will be provided the results of the polling.

Budget Update

Ms. Blackwood said it is quite clear that there will not be an election in June to extend the temporary tax increases. The Governor might decide to ask the legislature to approve the extension and then place it on a September ballot for ratification. A budget was passed by the legislature, a portion of which was signed by the Governor. It includes \$290 million in cuts for community colleges and a student fee increase to \$36 per unit. The Governor's May revise is scheduled to be released on May 13.

Ms. Blackwood said the three Colleges finished their second period reports of FTES; the District is 400 below the funded cap at the State. The District will probably borrow 500 FTES from summer (which may be reported in either year) in order to get a higher level of funding for this year. This would require serving those students next year, having received funding for them this year.

Ms. Blackwood said assumptions for next year include a 10% reduction in the funded workload. Plans include one-time money being used to restore funds to the sites, resulting in running a deficit of \$7-\$8 million. This will allow time to prepare for anticipated cuts of approximately \$8 million in 2012-13. It is also assumed that the Colleges will receive the same allocations from Measure G for 2011-12 as they received for this year. There is a strong possibility that the District will become a basic aid district in 2011-12 and almost certainly in 2012-13. However, there is discussion at the State level about basic aid districts taking their fair share of cuts, which could result in a cut to categoricals.

Professor Partlan asked how much money Measure G brought in this year. Ms. Blackwood said this will be known at approximately the end of this month.

District Strategic Planning Update – Visioning

Professor Bennett said the words "lifelong learning" were taken out of the visioning statement in response to Professor James' comments at the last DSGC meeting. Professor Irigoyen said Skyline College faculty would like to add "transfer" to the programs listed in the Statement.

There was discussion among Council members about how the Colleges should be listed, along with issues of sentence structure, vocabulary and grammar. It was agreed that Vice Chancellor Luan, Dean Bestock and Professors Bennett and James will collectively review and edit the document. Professor James will begin the process and email her suggestions to the others.

Closing Remarks

None

Statements from Council Members/Agenda Building

None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 4:24 p.m.