



Academic Senate
College of the Siskiyous
800 College Avenue
Weed, CA 96094
www.siskiyous.edu/academicsenate/

Academic Senate Meeting Minutes

May 26th, 2021 (convened at 1:00 pm) in Zoom.

Attendees: Sherice Bellamy, Jude Baldwin, David Blink, Natalie Bradley, Liz Carlyle, Neil Carpentier-Alting, Jesse Cecil, Wenli Chang, Dave Clarke, Hallie Coppi, Andrea Craddock, Marcy Demetro, Katie Elwood, Maria Fernandez, Jenny Heath, Kyle Irwin, Ann Klein, Michelle Knudsen, Michele Korkowski, Shirley Louie, Ron Slabbinck, Patrice Thatcher-Stephens, Kirk Thomsen, Mike Tischler, Jayne Turk, Chris Vancil, Alison Varty, Carly Zeller and part-time faculty representatives Sarah Kirby and Monica Harle. Dr Char Perlas, Val Roberts, Mark Klever, Charlie Roche, Stephanie Wroten and Bill Hurt also attended the meeting.

A. Public Comments

- No public comments given

B. Action / Discussion Items

Dr Ron Slabbinck opened with discussion of his initial meeting with Dr Char Perlas and Dr Mike Tischler, Faculty Association (FA) president. The department chair structure should be equitable in workload, as well as consider the grouped disciplines. Selection and compensation will mostly be the purview of the FA but the Senate still has input.

- Maria Fernandez noted that we have previous organizational structures with Area Directors that worked fairly well. Dave Clarke wanted to ensure that areas are not being created with differing needs. Bill Hurt noted that one important chair duty was coordinating course offerings so that they were balanced and there wasn't a lot of duplication. Also, for math and science, scheduling was critical because so many courses ran over several semesters and had required prerequisites.
- Dr Char Perlas clarified some of the duties of the department chair based on other colleges. Duties include being the point person for the disciplines in the area; helping coordinate efforts as far as scheduling; chairing department meetings; working closely with Academic Senate and the administration; providing leadership and evaluation of course offerings; conducting trainings and evaluation of staff; working cooperatively with other chairs; providing data for reports (Program Review).
- Mike Tischler asked if faculty can supervise the work of a technician. Char Perlas noted that this is a broader conversation with CSEA. Alison Varty noted that this is an important piece as it will be the duty of some chairs and not others. Faculty need to have the ability to direct staff in the classroom (EIAs and technicians), which is different from supervision. Chris Vancil noted that there is nothing in the Ed Code that prohibits faculty from supervising staff. Jesse Cecil noted that there is language in the CBA

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regarding lead faculty, who are not supposed to be supervisors. Mike Tischler noted that this was a provision discussed in bargaining. No faculty are currently assigned to be “lead faculty”.

- Maria Fernandez noted that a critical duty is working with other chairs to create a schedule that is best for students and to capture the best possibilities for enrollment. She emphasized the need for support staff for department chairs. She was also concerned on the creating another layer in our structure. We need to push the support down to chairs so they can think about how we can increase enrollment.
- Ron Slabbinck asked whether there is going to be a dean structure if we take on Department Chair structure. Char Perlas responded that we may not need a Dean of LASS if we have department chairs in place. The Dean of CTE also oversees the Yreka campus so the role is much broader. Michele Korkowski noted that some CTE faculty don’t have coordinators so having a dean is helpful (Bus/Comp Sci, welding, ADJ). It takes a lot of work to coordinate CTE. Patrice Thatcher Stephens noted that as a faculty coordinator, if she hadn’t had a dean to attend all the meetings to connect with the different entities in CTE, there would no time for teaching. Michele Korkowski noted that coordination of Strong Workforce funds is another area that goes outside of direct faculty work.
- Katie Elwood asked if we eliminate the deans, how does it affect the curriculum review process?
- Maria Fernandez expressed the need to rethink who we are as an institution. What can we do to support our size and make sure the structure is fully supported? Char Perlas reiterated that we are just looking at the organizational structure and what makes sense for the college. She noted that deans are hard positions with multiple layers of responsibility.
- Andrea Craddock commented that she has had four deans so far of varying quality. If we had chairs, it would give faculty a chance to advance someone in our areas who is invested in our work.
- Michelle Knudsen noted that counseling has been without a dean-level person for over a year. In other colleges where she has worked, there has always been a lead counselor to report to and help with new faculty. It has been a challenge to lose the dean position and she would like counseling to part of any discussion and decision on chairs. Maria Fernandez noted that a counseling lead is a position that is called out by the CVC implementation team as needed.
- Ron Slabbinck asked how does what we decide about department chairs help our students? Tischler explained that whether or not chairs have support staff will be part of bargaining. Patrice Thatcher Stephens noted that despite our size, our college needs to function, and these functions depend on an effective dean structure--separate from the need for department chairs at a local level.
- Bill Hurt noted that there were huge advantages having the area director/chair being an instructional faculty member intimately familiar with course offerings in a department. From the deans' perspective, what are the larger issues (e.g., grant funding, etc.) they could focus on if chairs managed the details of scheduling and day-to-day department issues? Jayne Turk commented that chairs create the space to work on program review,

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scheduling, and class rotations. The English department came up with an adjunct packet for recruiting and onboarding when we had area directors

- Mike Tischler explained that the workload doesn't have to be equitable. The compensation is what needs to be equitable.
- Tyler Knudsen explained that Kinesiology, Health, and Athletics are a good fit but they shouldn't include other disciplines due to the differing organizational structure in this area. There is a director of Athletics but this does not include Kinesiology.
- Faculty librarian Jude Baldwin asked where the library fits in to this discussion. ASC faculty coordinator Carly Zeller noted that the ASC and Library are still reporting to the VPSS. Char Perlas confirmed that these areas are still in the VPSS job description but they can be reassigned in future as needed.
- The Senate noted the good work of our current deans, Val Roberts and Mark Klever. Ron Slabbinck reported that he has been in meetings with Char, Mark and Val and they have never shied away from the hard conversations. Carly Zeller commented that the current administrators are a perfect mix of competency and compassion. Ron expressed that he feels confident that Char will consider Senate discussions in her decisions on organizational structure.
- Next steps: Char Perlas liked the idea of a survey. Ron Slabbinck will work with Senate Exec and Char, Mark and Val to discuss options. Ron noted that it would be important to include different scenarios on organizational structure in the survey, as it will be a challenge for faculty to respond otherwise.
- Timelines: Mike Tischler noted that it might be unlikely to implement department chairs by Fall as faculty are about to go off contract. Perhaps the administrative structure will be in place in the Fall and we can implement department chairs in the Spring. The new VPAA is starting on July 1 who will also have input on this discussion.

C. Good of the Order

D. Adjournment: 2:25 pm

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