

Executive Committee of the Academic Senate
Minutes of the Meeting of April 21, 2025
Clark 551, 12 p.m. to 1:30 pm

Present: Joshua Baur, Julia Curry, Vincent Del Casino, Tabitha Hart, Ranko Heindl, Colleen Johnson, Ariana Lacson, Stan Nosek, Shannon Rose Riley, Karthika Sasikumar, Laura Sullivan-Green, Cynthia Teniente-Matson, Hiu Yung Wong

Absent: Kristin Dukes, Mari Fuentes Martin

1. Update by the Chair

- a. Results of Special Election for Staff Senator - Kelly Masegian.
- b. Lunch provided from Island Taste for last meeting on Apr 28, 2025 (Deadline to order 5 PM Tuesday, April 22—please email grace.barbieri@sjsu.edu)

Laura Sullivan-Green moved to amend the agenda to add Honor Convocation discussion as an agenda item.

2. Update by the President

Last week, we had the Service Awards, the celebration of our faculty and staff for service awards, including a faculty member who was honored for 60 years of service. I think it had an exceptional turnout, and if anyone has any feedback for the event, let Vin or me know. Also, last week was the Honors Convocation, which is always a joy to be around students and to be able to give them recognition.

Please note University Policy F81-4 Faculty Attendance at Annual Commencement, which suggests that each department shall be responsible for ensuring that at least 50% of its tenured and probationary faculty attend each annual commencement. I would like to understand what work the Senate is doing to ensure that we have more attendance from the faculty. My request is for the Chair of the Senate to take this up to ensure that what was intended in the policy is acted upon.

C: In Engineering, it has been brought up in the Council of Chairs, and we've been asked to remind our faculty of the expectation. Also, part of the question is that this is an extremely dated policy; we no longer hold only an annual commencement. I think this was made in reference to when we just had celebrations of all the colleges, and then one larger commencement on Saturday at the stadium. It would probably also require some updates to this to make it consistent with how we are currently offering commencement. The committee responsible for the policy was Instruction and Research, which predates ISA, but would probably fall under the ISA scope.

C: Once the university has a policy, how are policies enforced? Who ensures that any policy is followed? I think that is a larger question to reflect on because I think that it depends on the policy that ensures it gets followed.

C: These are Senate policies. As president, I am responsible for ensuring that administrative policies are enforced and followed, and I am obligated to act by the policies. So in my view, these are Senate

policies, so it is in the purview of the Senate Executive Committee to determine what the steps are to ensure these are followed.

C: Although these policies are developed in the Senate, once they are signed, they are considered university policies, not Senate policies. So in a way, the responsibility rests on the university, broadly speaking, but again, it depends on the policy.

C: I think that ISA should look at a revision of the policy. Also, we could remind faculty that this policy exists by sending out some emails through the deans, perhaps. I don't think everyone remembers or knows about this policy, and we do not have a lot of onboarding or teaching about old policies in that regard. Additionally, if it is amended, then it could be included in the statement on professional responsibility.

C: Also, the determination could be whether there needs to be a policy like this at all.

C: In my department, the chair made it very clear to all faculty that we were expected to attend commencement. I think it ultimately rests with the department chair.

C: I think most chairs try to get faculty to go, but are met with a lot of resistance because chairs don't have any authority. I think this shows more evidence that we need a faculty handbook.

C: What if each policy committee made its own faculty handbook, and they could somehow be integrated?

C: I want to point out that the policy says that "each department and/or program shall establish a policy ensuring." So the ensuring part is clear in the policy, but the execution has been left up to the departments and programs. What is being asked for here is to remind the department and the programs that this policy exists.

C: In university policies, where we've said the departments are meant to establish a policy, it is very consistent. For example, things like RTP and voting rights. Most of the departments did not establish voting rights guidelines after the change in 2017. It is very difficult for the Provost's office to manage merger votes and chair votes when they are not established. I think the Senate needs to look at when it directs other parts of the institution to create more infrastructure.

C: I do think that we have been more reflective on being more careful about what procedure goes into policy now. We only put procedures in when we feel like it is necessary.

C: I agree that we should alert the departments that this policy exists, and a message can be drafted with the Provost.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of April 7, 2025- approved 12-0-1

4. Consent Calendar

5. Guest Maggie Barrera, time certain (12:20-12:40)

The Accessible Technology Initiative (ATI) is a campus-wide effort focused on accessibility in three areas: instructional materials, procurement, and web presence. Recent efforts have revitalized the ATI committee, which reports annually to the Chancellor's Office. A federal update to Title II ADA requirements in April 2024 now mandates alignment with WCAG 2.1 guidelines by April 2026. The Chancellor's Office has asked campuses to reaffirm their commitment to ATI reporting, accurate assessment, and the designation of an ATI coordinator—Dr. Jennifer Redd, Senior Director in CFETI

for Teaching Innovation, currently serves in this role. The updated reporting process emphasizes establishing a new baseline and encourages accurate self-assessment, even if it means lowering previous scores. Campuses must also engage in a significant remediation campaign focused on instructional materials in the LMS (Canvas), websites, and mobile apps. The Chancellor's Office is also launching its learning management system digital content remediation pilot. With this pilot, we need to leverage software to take an inventory of and assess our current instructional materials in Canvas, not just documents, but videos as well. Currently, we have Ally, which is a feature embedded in Canvas to see the overall accessibility of your course materials, and at a campus level, we are in the 60s. The Chancellor's Office invested in a different tool, Equidox, which will make things easier to remediate. Campuses must also launch training and informational campaigns to prevent the addition of inaccessible content. Funding between \$15,000 and \$40,000 will be allocated per campus based on FTEs to support these efforts, with guidelines still being finalized. Accessibility efforts will need to be tailored by the college due to differences in accessibility across disciplines.

C: I am worried that faculty will stop uploading some of their materials because they will feel like this is additional work.

A: In our messaging, we want to make it clear that faculty are not on their own with these changes, and there will be a lot of support.

C: I think it would be great to utilize students for support as well as partner with the library because Affordable Solutions is doing innovative work.

A: The students can help with making the progress, but the ongoing process is going to be making sure we all learn what it means to make something fully accessible.

C: I think we should frame this in a way that is not just about compliance, but what it can do for the students in a broader success effort.

C: Maybe short tutorial videos could be made available.

6. Honors Convocation

ISA ran a survey about the Honors Convocation, and the faculty were mixed regarding whether they thought it being more casual would cause more students and faculty to participate. The student survey is going out to all students. There was a survey done a couple of years ago for students with honors on why they don't go, and the reasoning was that timing and things along that line. The attendance is about 25% of students. There was some conflict with the time as AS had their election speeches on Thursday; however, that is not going to make a huge difference in attendance, but I think for future events, the student event calendar should be kept in mind.

C: Maybe a small venue is an option since we are not filling all the seats in the Event Center, but it was nice to read the students' names and engage with them, and I was more comfortable not in regalia.

C: It was around \$40,000 for this year, which is historically less because we went without regalia and the automatic name reader. The problem with the smaller venue is that every year, there are about 3000 students with Presidential Scholars, and we also want to be able to let them bring as many people as they want. Also, the lack of regalia at these types of events is normal at other universities.

Other universities also just do it at the college level, which could be another option, because then maybe Dean's Scholars could be included, which is technically in the policy.

Q: Has there been a cost comparison if we did it at the college level?

A: The Event Center is \$26,000 of the cost, so if it is not done there, you could take the difference and distribute it to the different colleges; however, that would take a policy change. Also, the monetary cost does not include the staff work of people like Jessica (Larsen) and all the volunteers. There is also a choice of integrating this into the commencement, where students can get corded there and include President's Scholar or Dean's Scholar when their name is on the screen. We also send out the certificate every semester, which the students can print out. If it is in commencement, we can also tell the colleges that they can also throw a party for their scholars in April to celebrate them separately.

C: From what I have seen on social media, I think a lot of students enjoy attending the Honors Convocation and using it for things like highlighting it on their LinkedIn. I don't think we see the biggest turnout because we also have a commuter campus, but it is important for whatever the amount of attendance there is.

7. Selection of new senators from CHHS and COSS

The Senate Executive unanimously approved Carmen Saleh as the one-year Senator from the College of Social Sciences.

The Senate Executive unanimously approved Erin Siebert as the one-year Senator from the College of Health and Human Sciences.

8. Provost Update

The system put out a call for proposals for curriculum innovation around AI, and we have around 45 proposals, which is really amazing. 50 are going to get funded across the entire system. We'll be endorsing what comes through, but I am also looking to see if there are any other funding sources out there that are interested in funding the ones that don't get funded. For enrollment, at the undergraduate level, it is strong in CA residents and nonresidents. Andrew Wright put in place that we started accepting people in December instead of waiting till February 1st, and we started admitting nonresident students in January. Our international undergraduate numbers are up, and so is the Western Undergraduate Exchange, and there are a lot of international transfer students who are already in this country. I don't have the final numbers, but it is going to be a big class. Our reenrollment is also really high, we are launching Second Start, where students who left in poor standing can come back and earn a better GPA and start over. We're going to hit those 3000 students in June to try to get as many enrolled for August.

Q: Can Andrew Wright come and share with us the strategies that are driving all this success?

A: I am happy to have him do that, but a ton of it is process improvement. For example, we used to tell our international students they had to file all their paperwork before we would tell them they were accepted. I think the biggest change is that we started telling our Santa Clara County students they were admitted in December.

The minutes were taken by Grace Barbieri on April 21, 2025, reviewed and accepted by Senate Chair Karthika Sasikumar on April 23, and approved by the Senate Executive Committee on April 28, 2025.