Senate Executive Committee Meeting (9/23/2021)

Attendees: Dinesh Pinisetty (Chair), Christine Isakson, Bets McNie (Vice Chair), Matthew Fairbanks (Secretary), Wil Tsai, Margot Hanson, Frank Yip, Lori Schroeder (Provost)

- Minutes Approval
  - Postponed. Everyone is snowed in with WPAF and beginning of the semester duties.

- Health and Safety Protocol Discussion
  - McNie noted that the COVID FAQs need to be updated. Some of them refer to older policies and aren't accurate.
  - McNie – Dr. Grace Chou (Health Center Director) contacted me regarding questions that faculty have on COVID protocols. Discussed a message to all faculty rather than individual responses.
  - McNie – The thought is to submit some questions to Dr. Chou, and she can address them all. Questions from us and from other faculty.
  - Pinisetty – Dr. Chou can be part of our Senate Exec meeting next week. She would like to have some questions in advance so she can be thorough in her answers.
  - Yip – It doesn't seem like contact tracing is going well. Students appear to be making the announcements and communicating.
  - Pinisetty – I had a faculty member that said they had a cadet that was coughing all through the class. What are the faculty's options? Can they send the student for testing? This faculty member asked these questions to Dr. Chou, and her answers weren't clear. She basically said that health information is private.
  - Isakson noted that isn't how contact tracing is supposed to work. You don't address individual students' health status, you tell people they've had a contact. Yes, people can make assumptions, but that seems irrelevant. Yip agreed, said that the contact tracing regime here doesn't seem to be doing much.
  - Isakson – it's really important to have immediate information on positive cases rather than a week lag in the COVID numbers (the weekly email).
  - There was a question on whether we are the only CSU without a COVID dashboard. Tsai noted that the dashboards typically aren't immediately updated anyway, so unclear whether it would provide more immediate information.
  - Isakson said that we've had 7 positive cases in students. Yip noted that that could turn into 70 easily without appropriate contact tracing.
  - Hanson – perhaps there should be a link to the CSU-wide dashboard from our COVID page?
  - Some discussion of the regime for contact tracing, the daily health check (whether it's being used), whether the question about close contacts on the daily health screening is in line with the CDC. (because it lacks information for getting a test for vaccinated individuals).
  - Pinisetty thinks the place to start is with Craig Dawson (Campus Safety Director), and we will request an adjustment to the question. Provost Schroeder suggested we cc Michael Martin as well.
  - Provost Schroeder noted that she's made the point to Craig Dawson about tailoring the FAQs to address both student and faculty and staff specific issues.
  - Pinisetty recounted the example of the coughing student. Provost Schroeder acknowledged that it's an issue, no obvious point person for faculty to refer students to.

The Health Center is ostensibly the place to send students, but sometimes they can't immediately respond.
- o Hanson wrote up a few items for Dr. Chou and Craig Dawson and pasted in chat for Pinisetty to discuss when he's meeting with them.

- Student Evaluations Issue (Offensive Comments and How to Handle)
  - o Pinisetty reminded us of the offensive, xenophobic comment from the spring semester that he had mentioned previously and said these should be handled somehow. Comments, in particular about the person rather than the teaching, are issues. He has seen offensive comments that are sexist and misogynistic, both male and female.
  - o Pinisetty said he was going to the CSU system council (of Senate Chairs) to ask how they handle it.
  - o Tsai suggested a task force to handle both this issue and the questions on the current evals (which is another issue that faculty have brought up) with the goal of having something ready for the spring or next fall.
  - o Provost Schroeder noted that this issue has come up on her previous campuses and that she's sensitive to these issues herself. Some statement on the evaluation that states that their whole evaluation could be removed if the policy is violated. Not sure if that's something the faculty here would go for, but it's an option.
  - o Hanson asked how that worked exactly. Provost Schroeder recalled that the faculty member usually reported it, and then administration would review it and perhaps remove it. Provost Schroeder noted that the student responsibility on evaluations is an important thing to emphasize.
  - o Hanson noted that we do have some language (Cynthia Trevisan's work from a couple years ago), but now with the online evaluations, that statement might not adapt well if not delivered in person.
  - o Pinisetty thinks that having that language (or something like it) could be implemented. He and Khaoi Mady (Director of Academic Technology) could work on it.
  - o Tsai – really want to push on the task force idea. The online transition is not a small thing. Faculty have concerns, and this task force could handle this and the related issues.
  - o Provost Schroeder recalled some language that was used for evaluations at her previous institution and offered the following language for us in chat: '*Reviewing and evaluating your courses and instructors is both a privilege and a responsibility given to all cadets. Using this platform to violate community standards is therefore unacceptable. If you use this platform to engage in such behavior, your entire evaluation may be invalidated. Please take this responsibility and privilege seriously.*'
  - o Some discussion of the Fall 2020 evaluations and the online system. Isakson noted the issue of students evaluating the courses that they weren't in, and also that some courses were graded prior to students evaluating them.
  - o Pinisetty – I'll speak with Julie Simons and Aparna Sinha about a task force to address the evaluations themselves and also how to handle offensive comments on evaluations.

- WPAF Records Issue
  - o Hanson – Moodle eWPAFs have been deleted, apparently irrecoverable. She notified Graham Benton (AVP), and he noted that faculty had been notified to back these up, though that's not really faculty responsibility. Others noted that HR should be keeping these files - they are PAFs.

- o Others also noted that various letters and files have been requested from HR and HR isn't responding. Sometimes not in a timely manner. Sometimes not at all. Graham Benton has conscripted Pat Harper (Administrative Specialist, School of Letters and Sciences) to assist, but that's not her job and she's on jury duty with the deadline for WPAF submission approaching.
  - o The Moodle backup server is apparently dead. Contract was not renewed with the cloud provider for Moodle, so we don't have that either.
  - o Provost Schroeder noted that Graham Benton figured out last year that the files were not being properly forwarded to HR. That's been adjusted going forward. Graham is pushing hard to make sure the appropriate things now happen.
  - o Pinisetty – faculty should be able to check these letters, request them, etc. HR seems confused.
  - o Yip – Pat Harper (who is in the Academic Affair division) is now being tasked with this stuff. Seems untenable.
  - o Some discussion of Michael Martin's (HR Director) role in this. Provost Schroeder noted that her understanding is that the previous HR director was amazing but didn't delegate these tasks very much, which is a problem now that she isn't present anymore. A difficult nut to crack. In the short term.

- Open Floor
  - o Hanson – wants to place drafting a statement on diversity and inclusion from faculty on the agenda for next meeting if possible.
  - o Tsai – also A/V support in Academic Affairs for a future discussion.
  - o Fairbanks noted the lack of faculty on the campus wide email about the "anti-Semitic vandalism", which seems an oversight given that the rest of campus leadership (Administration and Students) co-signed. A missed opportunity to present a united front, even if it is general understood that faculty support the message of the email.