

Executive Committee Minutes
July 19, 2021
via Zoom, 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Present: Curry, Day, Del Casino, Hart, Faas, Massey, Mathur, McKee (Chair), Papazian, White, Kaur, Sasikumar, Sullivan-Green

Absent: Wong(Lau)

1. The Executive Committee approved the agenda (EC Agenda of July 19, 2021, EC Minutes of June 26, 2021) (10-0-3).
2. Update from the President:
There are lots of moving parts around vaccinations and masks and the Delta variant. There is a little bit of a disconnect between what the UC is doing and what came out of the Chancellor's Office. This all has to do with the emergency use authorization. At this point, we are encouraging everyone on campus (faculty, staff, and students) to get vaccinated, but we are not requiring it except in certain areas such as Athletics and for those students living in housing. We are much luckier than some other counties and states. The vaccination rate in Santa Clara County is close to 80%. There are surveys going out on the faculty/staff side as well as to students asking people to voluntarily indicate their status (vaccinated vs. not vaccinated). The student survey also allows for the upload of proof of vaccination. Right now we are following what Santa Clara County is doing, but this may change depending on what happens with the Delta variant and the county's response. We also want to make sure international students have access to get vaccinated here if they did not have access to be vaccinated where they came from. International students have to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival and we are helping them with what they need during this time. Staff will be returning more fully to campus on August 2, 2021. Faculty and students will be returning a few weeks later.

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) ruling by the federal judge on Friday is something that troubles all of us. It was heartening to see that the Biden administration plans on fighting this in court. It will take congressional action for this to be settled. We will continue to pressure to see a broader change.

We are watching the infrastructure package in congress. As you know the budget process in California is already completed and is moving forward. There still is a large two-part infrastructure package in congress. One part looks like it will go through the traditional way and the other through budget reconciliation. There may be funds in this package for public universities to support infrastructure costs. There is an interest for us in ensuring this happens. We have been pressing hard for it with our elected officials.

Finally, we launched our Learner Design Summit through the Lurie College of Education. It is all about partnerships with K-12, the community colleges, and the university. Lurie is focusing on removing systemic barriers by putting the learner at the center and really listening and hearing their ideas.

Questions:

Q: Do we have any numbers yet from the students self-reporting on the vaccination surveys?

A: We do. I will defer to VP Day. [VP Day] The numbers are looking good. Out of the 5,560 surveys that have been submitted, 5,345 students have been vaccinated. There are 138 that have medical, and 28 that have religious exemptions. There are 49 that are not vaccinated. That is 96% vaccination rate. However, It is still very early in terms of survey submission.

Q: That is great, but those numbers seem really low considering we have 30,000 students at SJSU. Is there going to be a deadline to submit, or any consequences for not submitting a survey?

A: Typically, we will get a large number of surveys in the beginning, then we will have a lull, and finally a large push in the end. We are not ready to sound the alarm just yet. We have a lot of messaging out there and will continue messaging. Usually in the last week, the number of surveys will jump by the thousands. We are encouraged by the early numbers. We will be following up with every student that is not vaccinated. We will be doing random testing of students in the residence halls. There is a process to deal with every student depending on their status.

Q: What is the student's incentive to respond if they aren't vaccinated?

A: For students this survey is self-reporting and verification. Students must upload documentation. We have a service that then verifies the documentation. If they don't provide documentation/proof of vaccination, they will be considered unvaccinated.

Q: Southern California has already changed their mask mandates. Are we doing some planning in terms of whether Santa Clara County changes their mask mandates and physical distancing?

A: We are following the county at this point. Santa Clara County has a higher vaccination rate and lower positivity rate than Southern California. We don't anticipate making any wholesale changes to classrooms, etc. It really is more about whether people will be required to wear masks on campus. It depends on what happens with the Delta variant. Interestingly enough, the Alpha variant is more common in Santa Clara County than the Delta variant, but that may flip itself. We will continue to keep you updated.

C: Thank you for this information. I know there will be faculty returning from all over the country for face-to-face instruction and just wanted to know that we have some contingency plans.

Q: Did VP Day just say we aren't going to require students to have vaccinations to come to SJSU? The reason I ask is that I know we were listed in one of the papers as being one of the universities that requires vaccinations for their students?

A: We are strongly recommending it and requiring it once one of the vaccines is no longer under the emergency use authorization. The difference between us and the UC is that the UC is saying that it is required regardless of the emergency use authorization, but the CSU is waiting until it is no longer under the emergency use authorization. We are hoping that the Pfizer or Moderna vaccination will gain full authorization. The Pfizer is further along. Once one of them has full authorization vaccinations will be required. However, there are places on campus where we are requiring it now such as in housing, and for our Athletes.

Our swimming and diving team is 100% vaccinated. Our student athletes have responded well.

Q: Can you comment on any additional organizational changes you see coming up?

A: For the most part, the big organizational changes have taken place already. There may be some changes in particular divisions that still need to occur. [Provost] I don't see any major changes except for Honors. We do have to think about what the organization is going to look like in the future. We will start by looking at the strategic plan. We are currently in the middle of the master planning process.

Q: Is there any progress on the APID/A Center?

A: [VP Day] I have a meeting tomorrow about this. We are still working on what it will look like. [President] This is very important to me and we will get it up and going in the fall. We are also hiring someone full time to help with the curation and repatriation that comes with the new state law to recognize federally recognized tribes.

Q: What is our position on vaccinations from other countries that may not be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)?

A: We haven't said the vaccine can only be one of the three vaccines. However, we will help them get one of our vaccines if they choose to. This won't be a barrier. We are creating pathways for international students that haven't been able to get vaccinated to get into the vaccination process as quickly as possible upon arrival and after quarantine.

Q: Do international students have to be quarantined?

A: Yes, that is a Center for Disease Control (CDC) requirement. If you come into the U.S. from a foreign country you must quarantine for seven days. If a student is coming to live on campus they will go into housing and we will help them get vaccinated if need be. However, if they are living off campus, we won't be monitoring their quarantine.

Q: We had a "hiring chill" last year. Is the "hiring chill" still on?

A: [President] That was Chancellor's Office language and they rescinded that language. However, we are still being very careful about hiring. We have continued to hire faculty. You just can't turn it off and on with faculty hiring. We also continued to hire staff in the areas of safety, advising and student success. Those were the hiring priorities for last year. We were committed to not having layoffs. We never have control of furloughs. They come out of the Chancellor's Office. Fortunately, we didn't move into that area. We are starting to learn what the budget will look like for this year. We will continue hiring on the faculty side this year as well as staff in safety and advising/student success areas. We will look at all the other areas of staff hiring carefully and weigh it against the budget. We will continue to add key people.

[VP Faas] We are trying to figure out exactly what the budget will be and will know more in the next couple of weeks. The bulk of the numbers have come in and we are just figuring out what that means for us.

Q: Does the hiring of faculty, staff, and student assistants each come from a different line of money in the budget?

A: [VP Faas] There are different departments and lines. That is correct. We are and have been continuing to hire faculty. We are also looking at critical positions. We are not filling

all of the old positions. [President] At the end of the day, it all comes out of the same budget, except for the student hiring. Student hiring doesn't come out of permanent funds. Student hiring can be done with one-time funds.

Q: What I saw in terms of hiring last year was lots of faculty and MPP hiring. However, this year we are transitioning back and we need a lot of operational staff. My concern is that we continue to hire faculty and MPPs, but we don't have enough operational staff across the divisions and we aren't hiring any new staff or student assistants.

A: [President] We have approved a lot of positions at all levels. I will say some of the areas have probably been understaffed for some time so it is not just a matter of replacing people but rethinking what we have. We aren't using the process, and it is a healthy process, to see how we can best support the university going forward. That may mean redesigning some things and recasting them. However, I agree with you it is critical to look at our support staff. I pretty much gave VP Faas open approval for maintenance and trades staff. We always say yes to those and usually the others. It isn't always easy to hire new staff. That is part of the challenge. It is hard to find people in this economy for the pay rate. [Provost] We have a few open admin positions at the unit level, but I think they have been approved and are moving forward. We are making investitures in advising. That is a new line item for the institute. We also took the opportunity in the colleges to change positions as they have opened up to more mirror the Provost's Office with Resource and Operations Directors. The other thing that is happening a lot is people are moving around the university. We are hiring internally and that creates a new vacancy in the department/college. This has happened on multiple occasions. This leads to a bigger discussion. We have a lot of people that are in the wrong classifications. They may have been hired to do one job, but that job has evolved. [VP Faas] I'm going to see the Council of Deans next week and I'll get some feedback from them. [Provost] Traci Ferdolage has a new staffing idea where we go to a staffing company when we need multiple people in the trades and they look for us. She has had a lot of success very quickly in filling trades positions. We may be able to use that for some of our administrative openings. We may be able to use our benefits there.

C: I think it would also be valuable to think about opportunities to keep people in the same positions, because a lot of times we encourage people to move from office-to-office because they can't get promoted in their existing job where we could maybe upgrade their position and keep them in their current space/department.

A: [Provost] This is what I was talking about in terms of a wholesale assessment. I've been at places where it took two years to review and reclassify staff, but clear steps of progression for staff positions were established. This is already being done with the advising positions. It would help to have some trajectory of growth with our current positions, but we do need to accept that sometimes people do grow out of jobs and need to move on.

C: I know chairs are really hurting right now in terms of staff and support for their staff in terms of student assistants. I know you know this, but it is a real struggle right now for them and I wanted to point this out. Departments are in desperate need of administrative support and student assistants are a large part of that support.

3. From the Vice President of Student Affairs [VPSA]:
Enrollment continues to look strong. We are seeing some softening of our Frosh. We have seen some no shows at Orientation. Nothing to get alarmed about. We are seeing increases in our transfer numbers. We should still have over 4,000 Frosh.

Housing is at 94% of capacity. That is slightly down from the 96%, but is still great. All of our Frosh students have been housed. We have about 285 transfer students on our waiting list. This is because students want a particular location. I will continue to update you on vaccinations.

We are very concerned about DACA. We are seeing a decline in the number of undocumented students in California. This chilling effect is something we should be concerned about. It is impacting how people are making decisions about their future. We will certainly be doing outreach.

Our Spartan Speaker's Series will kick off on September 15, 2021. Kudos to Dr. Daniels and her team for pulling this together. More information to come.

Questions:

Q: What efforts are being taken to assist both DACA and undocumented students? I have been sending you emails from students desperately trying to reach people but the website lists people that have left, sometimes up to five years ago. I also am getting calls from Mothers. What efforts are being done to update the website?

A: We have been doing immediate consultation with students you sent me. I need a little more information from you to update the website. Send me the links to old information and we will follow-up.

Q: We had a conversation in the Spring about student Senators on the Instruction and Student Affairs Committee (I&SA). Alison and I would like to meet with you. Alison will send you an invite.

A: Great.

4. From the Associated Students President:
All AS departments are preparing to reopen on August 2, 2021. We are excited to get back into the AS House. Our AS Board of Directors Retreat will be in August.

I attended the California State Student Association (CSSA) meeting in July, 2021 if anyone has any questions about that.

Questions:

Q: Has the CSSA spoken about what their priorities will be this year?

A: We saw a draft of their policy agenda, but they made it clear that we would define it in August and the policies that we are following at the CSU and State legislature level are clear.

5. From the Provost:
This period of time gets very busy for the Provost. I am reviewing tenure, promotion, and range elevation. We are also reviewing salaries and doing reviews for all the direct reports

that I have. The Honors group is meeting and coming up with ideas. There are two leadership searches right now. I hope to conclude the Dean of the Library search. We have three candidates. I believe the search committee is meeting today.

Questions:

Q: The Senate passed a policy in the last meeting about advising. I would like to know if you and the President have been able to look at it and possibly sign it? Also, could you elaborate a little more about the hiring of advising personnel?

A: I will readily admit that like everyone I really wanted a vacation and have just returned. The President and I meet today and will hash through a bunch of things. As far as advising, we want to start with the first year experience. We needed leadership in that space. We will also have a little bit of reorganization. Once we have leadership in place then we will start to look at where advisers should be, what makes sense, etc. That is where we are right now.

Q: My second question is about what the administration's stance and perspective is on AB 928 and what you think that will do to our general education?

A: For those of you that are not familiar, this is the general education bill that is set to require the community colleges, CSU and UC to have the same general education pattern. My position is that I don't want to go through that nightmare. I don't know if the momentum will be stoppable or what the timeline will look like. We know that the UC's first response will be that we have a perfect general education package, use ours. This will be a problem. I don't know what it is going to mean to be really honest. We now have a state law for the Ethnic Studies requirement. The community colleges are already having to do this because of the way we set our requirements. There are better ways to get transfer packages more efficient.

C: My question has come out of interactions I've had with Thalia Anagnos. We are being encouraged to look at our degree programs, including General Engineering, and plan for AB 928 now so we know what we are going to change. I found it very concerning that it sounds like this is a done deal as we are dealing with Area F changes.

C: [Chair McKee] This is a critical conversation and it is important to know how the university is going to respond to AB 928, but this is a conversation I can follow-up with the President and Provost at a later time in the interest of moving the agenda along.

A: [Provost] Curriculum and state law changes and it demands a critical review. We made the temporary waiver in good faith that everyone would review and come up with permanent solutions. It is complicated because of how the law was written so that we can't increase units.

C: Is there any effort to join with the UC push back on AB 928? We have so many wonderful courses in our general education and by marching along in uniformity we are losing many of these courses. It is a really big issue and it feels like every year they come back with something else.

Q: Is there any additional information on the Library Dean search?

A: The search committee did a great job. This is a very difficult job for us to find someone because it is a joint position. The candidates the search committee found were very excited about the position.

Q: What is the situation this year for hiring student assistants? Many departments rely on student assistants to help their overburdened administrative staff.

A: [Provost] I'll have to go back and look at the budget. We definitely have some money in the budget for it. I don't have the details right now.

C: I'll follow-up with you.

A: [President] There is a lot of push to increase Pell Grants. I think there will be an increase there that will really help students.

6. From the Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF):

Rick Abeyta has agreed to come back and will be the bridge while we look for a new University Police Chief.

Questions:

Q: Three or four years ago in the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) meetings you and I were a part of, we talked about the budget reserves. We talked about the challenges of having those reserves in the CSU system. However, I think this past year has proven how beneficial and essential it is to have those reserves. Is there planning going on to build our reserves again?

A: Thank you for the recognition and understanding. This is hopefully what the BAC does to explain these things to the campus. Having reserves is not a bad thing. People think when we have reserves we need to spend that money. We are years away from rebuilding those reserves back up again. There are more hands out there asking for money. We have lots of CERF money but these are one-time funds. These funds can't be spent on whatever we want to spend it on, they have to be spent on things that enable us to get through and out of the pandemic. It is going to be a few years before we can begin to rebuild. We are struggling now even with the funds we've received. There was a lot of money allocated our way, but we need a lot more. It is brutal trying to recruit people and get them to live in this area. Having reserves allows us to act in hiring when we need to.

Q: When can we access our offices without having to fill out forms to be on campus?

A: We are telling everyone to come back. We just want to know when you are here. This is for your safety more than anything else. If we had a fire or earthquake tomorrow, we need to know who is in what building so we know where to look for people.

7. The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

These minutes were taken by the Senate Administrator, Eva Joice, on July 19, 2021 and transcribed on July 27, 2021. The minutes were reviewed and edited by Chair McKee on July 27, 2021. The minutes were approved by the Executive Committee on August 2, 2021.