

Executive Committee Minutes
February 15, 2021
via Zoom, 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Present: Curry, Day, Delgadillo, Del Casino, Faas, Frazier, Marachi, Mathur, McKee, Peter, Sasikumar, Sullivan-Green, White, Papazian, Wong(Lau),
Absent: None
Guest: Mohammad Abousalem

1. President's Update:

The President commended Vice Chair McKee and the entire planning team on the Senate Retreat.

The President spent this week working on the budgets and how we can ensure there is support from Sacramento. We are fortunate we have elected officials who are advocates. We want them to understand what a lack of support would look like on the campus particularly around the graduation initiative, student success, and the deferred maintenance fee. The President reminded them that with more money coming into the coffers than expected, it would be a good time to invest in deferred maintenance.

2. Presentation on RSCA by the Vice President for Research and Innovation, Mohammad Abousalem:

This is an analysis of the assigned time for the RSCA award for the tenured faculty pool who had the choice of whether to apply for the program or not. There have been three cycles. We looked at both the applicants and awardees both by ethnicity and gender. This is based on data we obtained from institutional research. The actual number of faculty who gained entrance into the program is larger than the currently enrolled and that is because of natural attrition for obvious reasons. As you can see, this is the number of tenured applications, the number of awards, and the number of awards in each cycle as a percentage of the awards from the applications. As you can see, the percentage is going higher each cycle and that was expected because at the beginning of the program we got more applications and that decreased over time. There are applicants who applied once, or twice, or even three times. The number of individual applicants is 175. There were nine faculty who attempted three times. Six of the nine got awarded eventually. Three were from the College of Science and three from the College of Social Sciences. There were three females and three males. There were three White and three Unknown. The ones who did not get awarded in spite of three attempts were in the College of Social Sciences, two females, one male, one White and two Unknown. If you look at the two time applicants, there were 43 in total. There were eight who were not awarded. They included four from the College of Science, two from the College of Social Sciences, one from the College of Education, and one from the College of Humanities and the Arts. Four were female and four were male. There were three Asian and five White. The last category is one time applicants who were not awarded. There were 21 total. Eleven were in Cycle 1, four were in Cycle 2, and six were in Cycle 3. Please keep in mind the review and approval process changed from one cycle to the next. The first cycle was reviewed by the Provost. The second cycle was reviewed by the deans. And, the third cycle was reviewed by the deans and further approved by the VPRI. There was a change in the process of review and who reviewed and approved them. The standard process now is that the deans review and make the recommendation to the VPRI, and then the VPRI discusses with the deans and then makes the final decision. Another point to note is that there was no analysis or targeting of any demographic. It was based on the merit of the application.

Let's look at the gender distribution through the three cycles. In Cycle 1, 55 females and 47 males applied and the percentage awarded was 54% female/46% male. You have that for each cycle and then at the bottom a summary for all cycles. Then you have the awardee split between males and females. For example, for Cycle 2 there were 47 female applicants and 33 female awardees.

Seventy percent of the female applicants received awards. Before we go to the last column what you will see here is that the percentage of female and male applicants is very close to the percentage of the awardees for the same category, so 55 female/47 male applicants and 54% female/46% male awardees in Cycle 1. This is very consistent. Another interesting piece of information we wanted to look at was what did that pool of applicants represent compared to the total pool of tenured faculty at the time. We have on the far right the gender distribution in the overall tenured faculty pool at the time that cycle actually took place. What you will find is in all three cycles the distribution shows female applicants exceeded male applicants even though in the overall tenured faculty pool the number of males exceeded the number of females. In all three cycles it looks like tenured female faculty applicants were more interested in and applied more than tenured males even though males exceed the number of females in the bigger pool. If you look at the graph this is what you will see for each cycle and then all cycles in the end. Again, it shows consistency between the ratio of females and males and between applicants and awardees. Then as far as the overall pool, you are going to find males were more than females in the pool, but the female applicants exceeded the male applicants in all three cycles. There is no obvious difference in the gender distribution cycle over cycle. It stayed consistent across the three cycles. There is nothing concerning or alarming as far as distribution of male and female awards given. Let's look at ethnicity. If you look at the percentage of applicants versus awardees over time you are going to find that their percentages are representative across cycles except for two ethnicities—Asians and Whites. Twenty-four percent of the applicants were Asian and 62% were White. Of the awardees, 38% were Asian and 46% were White. Other than this, the percentages have the same representation in the respective pool. In Cycle 2 and 3, you will find that the percentages are more representative. Seventeen percent of the applicants were Asian, and 17% of the awardees were Asian. Eight percent of the applicants were Hispanic, and 10% of the awardees were Hispanic. Sixty-three percent of applicants were White, and 61% of awardees were White, etc.... Then in Cycle 3 the same thing. It is easier to look at it in graph. What we are looking at here is the awards. Again, these are very close except for a few cases and we are going to go over them. In Cycle 1 faculty that are White or Asian, the percentage was slightly reversed between the applicants and the awardees. In all three cycles ethnic distribution of applicants by percentage has been consistent with all tenured faculty except for one faculty category that in the three cycles has represented at a slightly higher percentage of applicants compared to their share in the pool. If you look at White applicants, they represent at 62%. They were 57% of the overall pool. In all three cycles, White applicants always represented at a bigger percentage of the applicant pool than the other categories which means that White faculty applied more than other ethnicities. Also, another point I think is important to look at is that only one Black Faculty member out of 15 applied in Cycle 1, zero out of 13 applied in Cycle 2, and zero out of 8 applied in Cycle 3. Even though the number is small, it is important to note that there are no applications from Black Faculty members in Cycles 2 or 3. I think there is work to be done here. We need to look at what is making this so and figure out how to make this program more attractive to African-American faculty members.

Questions:

Q: What was the reason for the change in procedure after the first cycle?

A: For Cycles 1 and 2, I'm not sure. I think the program was new and it was decided after that time how the process would go. I can tell you about Cycle 3, because that was when the new Division of Research and Innovation and VPRI were established. [Provost] Andy, Joan, and then Vin. There were three different Provosts and procedures. Joan said the Deans should do it. Andy said the Provost should do it. I say the VPRI should do it. Three different Provosts had different ideas about who should have the final word.

Q: I think it is important we monitor the gender ratios going forward. There has been a very disproportionate influence on research based on gender because of COVID. I think the biggest challenge is going to be to keep those gender ratios as good as they have been looking through a new situation in which the research agenda for many women has collapsed, whereas for men it continues the pace. This is something to keep in mind going forward. The other question I have is when you talked about the African-Americans who did not apply it reminds me of the voting rates

based on registered voters, and the number who never registered to vote because they became discouraged. I wonder what measures will be taken to try and give more encouragement and get the faculty who maybe had their research stymied for many years back in the cycle?

A: I have a couple of comments. Thank you for bringing up that women researchers have been impacted more by COVID. This is a real issue. We are looking at how we can be more considerate in the process not only for RSCA assigned time, but for all the activities and programs we do on campus to be sure our researchers are afforded the right opportunities to help them continue with their RSCA agenda. As for the issue of race, specifically African-Americans, we are connected with Jahmal Williams in the President's Office now and are looking at different areas of research development as well as ongoing grants and opportunities and how to ensure they reach these faculty members.

A: [President] The gender issue has really been thrown into chaos due to the pandemic, but the race and ethnicity issue has been with us a very long time. We have to really understand the particular reasons different populations have responded the way they have and it begins by asking very particular questions. The other piece is faculty development. I know some of you may have read the work in the Chronicle, particularly around the Associate Professor trap. We must take an intentional and direct approach and it involves the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, our Vice Provost for Faculty Success, all of our senior faculty and the deans. Having the data really helps us, but it is just the starting point. I think it is even harder after tenure when the rules aren't so clear. This is just the very beginning of the conversation and I'm really grateful for it.

A: [CDO] I agree with the President and appreciate the comments. One of my major concerns is that we need to look at the challenges for particular communities in its specificity. We have way more tenure-track Black faculty on our campus than we have ever had before. I think there are 41. What this means is that we have a whole lot of people who are qualified to apply for RSCA, but who could potentially through the experiences of their tenured peers, decide that this is not for them because they have not seen some of their Black tenured peers getting RSCA awards or applying for them. Whatever we do needs to involve the entire faculty community and looking at different ways we can mentor faculty, as well as engaging them in conversations about RSCA and their work. Maybe there could be some pre-RSCA grants or something like that.

A: [VPRI] Over the past year and a half, what we have focused on is one of the areas you are talking about which used to be called Central RSCA and now we call it CSU seed grants. These grants are to make sure faculty can use them as a starting point. This grant is focused on faculty that want to start the RSCA journey. Then we have other intramural grants that we setup internally for faculty who have already received the seed grants and need to move to the next level. Also, one of the strategic initiatives for the new research team is to reach out to faculty that have not started the RSCA journey and encourage them. We now have the Grants Academy and we have added workshops there as well. We are trying to build that awareness of what is out there. We can then learn what the struggles are.

A: [Provost] Right now our junior faculty are getting CSU seed grants through their whole cycle. One of the things I've suggested is if you mentor someone who is really good or excellent in research you should just give them another five year award. What has changed when someone goes from Assistant to Associate Professor? The challenge we are going to have is eventually all those people are going to be in the cycle and we will need more money. The other thing that this allows us to do is reimagine post tenure review for full professors. Then there will be an evaluation point or something where you can ask yourself are they continuing in the RSCA program or not. What we are talking about in the community of people is tenured folks who have had to apply into this program, but as we move on does this get baked into the program. That is the goal. For me, I was annoyed when I left Long Beach that I had to apply every year that I was eligible. I was insulted. That is part of this larger conversation. How do you hold onto it year-after-year, and how do you opt out? I want to be a little cautious that we are trying to push everyone into that model and maybe that isn't their bag. Maybe their passion is in the classroom. It will be interesting over the next 5 to 10 years.

A: [VPRI] I totally agree with the Provost. When faculty are applying for RTP and they apply for RSCA, they are automatically accepted into the RSCA program based on their RTP success. We will automatically give them the 5-year program. You will not have the situation where someone gets their tenure, but is denied RSCA.

Q: I think all of these forms of institutional support are wonderful, but I also think that we need the boots on the ground mentoring support as well. Mentoring really varies from department-to-department and college-to-college and that is really critical. That needs to be baked into the culture of this kind of thing.

A: [VPRI] Thank you.

A: [Provost] Thank you. We have to come up with something. We might not be all the way there, but we have to start with something.

C: Lots of senior faculty don't have any idea how to mentor someone who is 20 to 30 years younger than they are. It might take some skill. Maybe there need to be some incentives for senior faculty to take some time out and learn how to be good mentors.

A: We can do all of the training but the training will only achieve some of the objectives with people who are already interested that want to be trained in mentoring which is a long-term relationship. I would look at the collaborations that we are already building between research development and faculty success. I think mentoring will come out of hand-to-hand collaboration between the two sides. I support that very much.

C: I was part of my department's first cycle of RSCA reviews. I was the chair at that time. One of the challenges was that we had people applying who were not RSCA-productive. They wanted the time to become RSCA-productive. The metrics we were using at the time only rewarded people who were active and productive. This tied our hands in many ways. I think if you can provide seed program grants to support faculty in a stuck pattern that would be great.

A: This is a point well taken. This is exactly why we are having the seed program, so that we get them going in the program before we start evaluating them.

A: [Provost] You have to have some metric. In research productivity you are making a \$14,000+ investment. This program is a multi-million dollar program. The goal is to allow people to excel in their scholarship. A number of colleges took their own dollars and created a seed program when they saw the gap. People did jump on some of that stuff, but there aren't enough dollars for every faculty member. We are structurally and financially in a place where we still have to make decisions. There had to be some bars at the beginning. There are only half the number of awards as total people that applied so what are you going to use and where are you going to go? I understand how that could make people feel disenfranchised. As we have masses of faculty doing this long term, what is that going to look like? I think that will put increasing pressure on sabbaticals. The blur between 32 and 33 is not as great as I think it might have been in the past. This is a larger institutional question.

C: I understand the limited dollars, but I think we also have to understand that where we don't have the funds to invest, those individuals' dossiers will look different in the end. That is also a reality. I think that for people in that middle level that their dossier may be stuck and they don't have the time to invest in areas they need to invest in and their dossier will look different than those who did have the time to invest in RSCA and were given these resources.

A: [President Papazian] That is true. The way we used to refer to this at my last institution was the on loan time and then the other work faculty did was measured by number of credit hours or units taught. That is indicated in the dossier. It is not a factor at the tenure level. All untenured faculty have the same time distribution. It does become a factor after that. The key is there is an indicator the individual has had additional time. The other piece, and this is why I was really focused on this at the Associate level, is that this is the area where we really want to be sure our faculty who want to participate have the opportunity. I think that is the difference. The key is that we are providing the support so the faculty can make the choice.

3. Search Committee for the Vice Provost for Faculty Success:

The Executive Committee reviewed and discussed the nominees and made some recommendations to the Provost. The Provost was very impressed with the pool of nominees.

4. **University Updates:**

A. Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA):

COVID testing has been occurring for our returning students. Right now our rates are below 1%. That is very good news. There have been no surprises in the residence halls. We will be doing surveillance testing which is a random 10% across the population of students in the residence halls. This will continue throughout the semester. Our student athletes have a lot more contact and have a lot more testing. Our athletes have kept things tight.

Question:

Q: When and how can people get their COVID shot?

A: [Wong(Lau)] I have been monitoring five different sites and last night when I went to the myturn.ca.gov site and hit education as the category, for the first time it said I was eligible for shots. The closest place was the Oakland Coliseum, but they were sold out of appointments of course. Some of the big vaccination areas like Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, Levi Stadium, and Moscone Center will allow you to make an appointment if you are qualified. The problem is people are running out of vaccines. Also, when I took my parents for the vaccine they said they are taking anyone regardless of insurance. You have to snap up those appointments as soon as they become available.

C: Faculty are concerned because we are talking about going back to face-to-face instruction in fall and they want to be fully vaccinated.

C: [VP Faas] We are working very closely with the county to try and get something here on our campus. They have been out two or three times to look at us. They love the setup of the parking garages and the flow of the SPX. Nothing has been signed yet. They are focused on trying to get Levi Stadium up and running first. Now that that is rolling, we hope to get things moving. That should help considerably in getting our folks vaccinated.

Q: If we are in Tier 1B, is there anything preventing a department chair from writing a memo verifying the employees in their department?

A: [VP Day] This may be a Joanne Wright/University Personnel question. VP Faas will reach out about this and report back to the committee.

Q: We are getting some bad publicity. A student of mine was erroneously claiming that there was no COVID testing on campus. We have a need to highlight that we are doing testing on campus. Also, if we present ourselves as educators for the COVID vaccine, how do we prove that? Is there some way we can provide verification of current employment?

A: VP Faas will ask those questions and get back to us.

In terms of our enrollment, we are just slightly down at under 5% for undergraduates and 3.7% overall. That is good news. We will need to spend a good amount of time between now and the beginning of school getting those students that applied to come to SJSU. There are record applications to the UC system, and there is a decline in the community colleges. Those are both significant to us. We need to pay attention to both of these. The increase in the UC is likely do to the removal of the standardized test requirements. The numbers are substantial and particularly substantial among populations that intersect with our population around race and ethnicity. We compete with the UC, so a substantial increase in their enrollment impacts us. In addition, a decrease in Community College students is significant, because this is where we get our transfer students.

We surveyed about 1200 families about how they are feeling. About 70% were parents of Frosh. VP Day will share this information with the committee at a later date.

B. From the CDO:

A message was sent out today about the rise in anti-Asian crime in particular in the Bay Area.

There have been about 13 attacks in Oakland's Chinatown. There is a lot of concern coming from Asian faculty and students that are worried about their parents and grandparents. The message contained a list of services provided and contact information about the APID/A Taskforce. The CDO had a conversation with some of those leaders as well over the weekend. We want to make sure the APID/A folks know they are part of the conversation about eliminating or reducing systemic racism.

The CDO's Office is in the process of beginning to meet with different units regarding the Campus Climate Survey and findings. One concern that everyone had when taking the survey was that it would just sit on a shelf after we got the findings. The Campus Climate Survey had over 200 slides so the CDO's Office started separating out the slides into groups like faculty, staff, and students to make it easier and encourage more people to view it. The CDO's Office has already met with the College of Engineering. Six forums were also held on the Campus Climate Survey. There were 2 for faculty, 2 for staff, and 2 for students. One of the first colleges that the CDO's Office will be working with, because of the disconnect with graduate students, is the College of Graduate Studies. Many graduate students reported feeling invisible on campus.

Questions:

C: I think it is important to mention that you are continuing to support employees with Tuesday Employee Connection sessions and the next one is on March 9, 2021.

A: They have been very well attended. We have had a lot of employees with less than two years attending because they don't know many colleagues and want to get to know them, and then a good number of employees that have been here a long time and just want to chat with their friends and meet new colleagues. There is "speed connecting" game and people love that.

C. From the Provost:

There are a number of things going on. The Library Dean search fell through. We are going to do a new search and I'm going to put together a new search committee and have reopened the nominations for it. The current committee members may not be able to commit to a new search and they have already put a lot of time into this. We had the most diverse pool of candidates I've ever seen. They were very talented, but a couple of them got other jobs, etc. The library is very important to us. I will be giving a statement to the University Library Board (ULB) today on an external review that happened. It represents that we need a larger needs assessment of what the library does for us as faculty and staff.

We are moving along with Fall 2021 planning. All we can do is move forward with what we know today. We don't even know if the tiers are going to change, or could we be post-pandemic by August. We are just trying to work with everybody and provide as much flexibility as possible. It is very frustrating for people. Coming into my fourth semester as Provost, our ability to be resilient and responsive has been amazing and I love being Provost here. I know people are going to feel frustrated. We are planning with as much knowledge as possible, and then we just have to be flexible moving forward.

As far as I know all the tenure/tenure-track hiring is moving forward. We are putting a call out for people to adjust their three-year plan and add a new year. We want to use the themes we developed. I may push for some cluster hires, particularly in support of Ethnic Studies. Without this, I'm not convinced we are going to get enough people to meet the initiative. Part of that conversation could involve continuing the conversation about joint hires we started at the last Senate meeting. There might be better ways to do that through affiliation.

The Honors Taskforce came up with a really cool name. This sounds like a really cool program. Lots of conversation and multiple sets of ideas. I would like to come and talk to this body about some of the conversation that has gone on. I have tried to keep the administrators out of this and let the faculty, staff, and students handle this. There are lots of ideas and they sound really doable to me.

I've decided to continue the Public Voices Fellowship. It has been wonderful to see so many people flourish this year out of that space. There were 40-50 newspaper articles, opinion pieces on all kinds of things our faculty are involved in. We also talked about getting some staff voices into that group and I'm going to make a three-year commitment.

The Coache Survey could be launched again next year and has to include lecturer faculty. I think a lot came out of it. It certainly was a set of guideposts for me to understand people's positions vis-à-vis leadership on the campus. I think it would be valuable to do this again. I will be talking to the Coache folks, but we could decide that maybe we've had a lot of surveys and we are done for now.

We have gotten into some great conversations about the intersection of SJSU and the City of San José. There is a lot of energy for San José State University to be more deeply involved in city operations. This goes to the accessibility conversation and so forth. I can see lots of intersection for faculty in their research, outreach, and their teaching. We even had conversations about some businesses that would be interested in hosting programs from SJSU, which would be pretty cool for students looking for internships.

Chair Mathur made a motion to extend the meeting for 10 to 15 minutes to hear reports from the rest of the Administrators and the AS President. The motion was seconded and approved.

Questions:

Q: I&SA is dealing with a referral from our student Senators for CR/NC for Spring 2021. What has come up is a lack of a consistent message from the administration. We have members of the administration who are in favor of CR/NC and members of the administration that are not in favor of CR/NC. This is really hard for I&SA to make an informed decision when the administration is not giving a consistent message to our students and our faculty. I would like to ask that the administrators have a conversation and send me [Chair Sullivan-Green] a message for I&SA. Students are also complaining that we are not communicating effectively with them. We need to consider different methods of messaging students.

A: [Provost] I'm not sure what "the Administration" means? We are not told what opinions to have as part of the cabinet. Here is my view. At the end of the day the President is the one that signs the policy. We passed a policy and should go with what we passed.

A: [President] We don't tell people what to say. I'm glad people are exploring different ideas. I'm onboard with the Provost on this. I haven't changed my view. There seems to be some confusion. The Chancellor's Office didn't like our conversion of "WU" to "W." It was never about C/NC.

A: [Day] I met with students this morning. Speaking to your concern, it is difficult to find the best way. We need to give students different ways of thinking about this moving forward.

C: It is very difficult when some administrators say yes, and some say no. This is making it extremely difficult for I&SA. I think we are seeing a pattern here related to the pandemic and grades. The question is when will it stop?

A: [Provost] It is okay for someone to disagree. The final word rests with the President of the university. You either pass a policy or don't. Push it forward and let it be debated.

A: [President] These are real challenges for students and I appreciate AS President Delgado's comments. We can work on those issues while still having some consistency in the grading policy. It is not either or. This is certainly an approach we are open to. We are hoping to get some additional dollars from Sacramento fully funding the Graduation Initiative, funds from the COVID Relief Package, and funds from the CARES Act to help us address this problem. The more we can look at the issue, define it, and look at very specific possible solutions to ensure our students have every chance to be successful the better it is for all of us. A lot of this comes up in our cabinet conversations and is why people are landing in different places. It is all coming from the right place, which is to ensure our students are supported and succeed. That is why different views are not a bad thing. They help us learn more.

A: [Provost] If I&SA is under a lot of pressure, put something forward if you have something. However, I think what we have already put forward is what is going to work best for Spring 2021.

A: [CDO] I'm somebody in the cabinet who has disagreed. It is true none of us are told what to say or do and we are not threatened. However, I think the data the Provost has presented was not what any of us expected. It contributed to some understanding that we are not together as a cabinet or leadership or this issue, I think that is true. We are strong because we are able to discuss, debate and to advocate. That is all part of leadership.

C: I do want to support Senator Sullivan-Green's concern. When I had a chance to visit I&SA it wasn't just that they were having debate, some really negative things were said by some of the administrators about faculty. In addition, faculty were saying some negative things about students. Shared governance is really important, but people are making these all or nothing statements about groups on the campus such as "all faculty are like this" or "all students are like that." We need to move away from this. This is the challenge Senator Sullivan-Green is having in I&SA.

C: This is not only about the grades themselves, but also the anxiety that students have about their grades. One reason to change CR/NC to reduce anxiety that students are having.

C: Listening to this, I'm thinking about some of the passionate statements we have heard from students at the meetings and it isn't really about grading, it is about something else. It is that something else we really aren't able to fix with the grading policy. Maybe there is a need to have a greater conversation regarding the two different things. I think that is important. I like what the Provost said. We already have a policy. It was passed and it needs to be enforced. I understand the dilemma you are facing. I recommend addressing the fact that there are other issues here. I'm not sure how you can do that, but maybe bringing President Papazian, VP Day, Deanna Gonzalez, and Kathleen Wong(Lau) to your meeting to discuss it with I&SA would help .

C: I feel like people are trying to make decisions from their emotions as opposed to the reality and facts and looking at the impact and workload of the people having to do it. Bringing these issues up is not well received in I&SA, because people are passionate and reacting with emotion while under stress. It is very difficult to manage and try to get members to remember that we need to make decisions based on evidence as opposed to the emotional side of things.

C: I appreciate that. I am sorry people are creating these kind of binary conversations. I will say there is no right. There are decisions that have effects. Looking at those effects, we have to decide which are the best moving forward. The wraparound services and support are the bigger issues here. We are challenged by the \$92 million budget hole that we haven't completely filled yet. We are short \$8 million or so. We are not in a place where we can say, "Great, here is a \$5 million solution to hire counselors." We know it is almost impossible to hire counselors. Even when you have the money it is a very hard thing to do. There is a lot of complexity. I will say, if we use spring, 10% of the grades were converted to CR/NC. Of that 10%, some people messed themselves up GPA-wise. To Zobeida's argument, which I agree with wholeheartedly, grades create anxiety but does changing grades ease so much of the anxiety that all the other things become unimportant? I doubt it. I think if I had seen different data I would have had a different opinion on this. Also, the faculty that do the work and the grading had some strong opinions on this. At some level we have to respect the faculty in the classes. That is a non-answer, but we will have to field the repercussions of any decision.

C: I agree and we need to have a much larger discussion at a later date.

5. The meeting adjourned at 1:52 p.m.

These minutes were taken and transcribed by the Senate Administrator, Eva Joice, on February 23, 2021. The minutes were reviewed by Chair Mathur on March 2, 2021. The minutes were approved by the Executive Committee on March 8, 2021.