



## **Student Senate Regular Meeting Minutes (Approved)**

Monday, November 30, 2020

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:17 p.m.

### **ROLL CALL**

Members Present: President Joseph Nguyen; Vice President Dyana Huaraz; Finance Director Anthony Frangos; Secretary Livienna Lie; Vice Chair Andrianna Pellini; Senators Zaina Abdelrahman; Janice Cheung; Kyle Guanzon; Alec Guulfo; Mele Ikahihifo; Suzy Ito; Jessie Liu; Anna Mahoney; Andrea Morales; Htet Thiri Naing; Megha Rai; Natalie Zamora

Members Absent: Senator Hayden Noe

Advisors Present: Aaron Schaefer, Student Life and Leadership Manager; Fauzi Hamadeh, Student Life and Leadership Assistant

Others Present: Lizette Bricker, CSM Acting Vice President of Student Services

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Motion to approve the agenda by Senator Zamora; seconded by Vice Chair Pellini. Hearing no objections, the motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING(S)**

Regarding the draft minutes of Monday, November 16, 2020, Mr. Hamadeh noted two corrections: On page 2, striking the word "is" at the end of the sentence of the first bullet under Review and Approval of ACCJC Follow-Up Report. In the same section, correct "Dean Goodking" to "Dean Goodkind." Motion to approve the minutes of the Monday, November 16, 2020, meeting with the aforementioned corrections by Senator Naing; seconded by Senator Abdlerahman. Hearing no objections, the motion carried.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HEARING OF THE PUBLIC**

None.

Hearing no objections, the order of the day was suspended and the Senate took up Student Body Fee for Spring 2021.

### **STUDENT BODY FEE FOR SPRING 2021**

Mr. Schaefer announced that due to an error at the District level, the Student Body Fee for the spring 2021 semester will not be collected. In addition, any Student Body Fees for the spring 2021 semester that have already been collected will automatically be refunded to students. Student Life was informed of this decision on the day before Thanksgiving Break. The situation is the same for all three colleges in the district. Mr. Schaefer will share via email with the Senate a message he sent to the College administration and District chancellor expressing his dismay at the way in which this situation was handled.

Mr. Schaefer explained that the District reclassified classes for the spring semester as online classes instead of hybrid. Even though the system is setup so that students enrolled in all online classes are not charged the Student Body Fee, the change was implemented without realizing the implications. Mr. Schaefer noted that Mr. Hamadeh and Charles Phan, the ASCSM Bookkeeper, identified this issue several weeks ago and informed the College and District administration, after

which no additional information was forthcoming. Meanwhile, the issue was taken to a District committee. The committee was given several options on how to handle the matter and chose to go with the solution mentioned earlier. Given this solution, the Colleges do have the option to reimburse the student governments for the lost income that would have been generated by the Student Body Fee.

Mr. Schaefer said that, due to a family emergency, Acting Vice President of Student Services Lizette Bricker was not able to adequately communicate what was taking place. Mr. Schaefer indicated that he had no reason to doubt the cause of Acting Vice President Bricker's lapse in communicating with him. Mr. Schaefer stated that his frustration stemmed from the fact that the District had the opportunity to bring the student governments into the conversation three weeks ago and chose not to do so. He noted that even the Student Trustee was not informed of the situation.

Mr. Schaefer noted that had this happened at a different time, it would have had a serious impact on the student government's ability to provide services to students. However, due to the pandemic and being in remote operation, the Student Senate did not have the usual level of expenditures during the fall 2020 semester. Mr. Schaefer said that before this occurred, he and Mr. Hamadeh engaged in some very preliminary discussions about asking the Student Senate to refund a portion of the Student Body Fees for the year, but those discussions are now moot. Mr. Schaefer added that Acting Vice President Bricker will be coming to today's meeting to provide additional background information on how the College hopes to move forward. Mr. Schaefer and Mr. Hamadeh will also be working with Vice President of Administrative Services Micaela Ochoa to review the Student Senate's budget to see what reimbursement may be appropriate.

Mr. Schaefer suggested that the Senate review its budget and only request from the administration what the Senate may need to finish the fiscal year, not necessarily what may replace all the lost income from the suspension of the Student Body Fee. Mr. Schaefer said that the Senate could also request an amount that would be put towards clubs that are active during the spring semester. He said that members of the Senate may brainstorm additional ideas for future discussions. Mr. Schaefer reiterated his disappointment that the District chose to consult with the administration regarding this matter rather than bringing students into the discussion. He surmised that the Student Senate most likely would have chosen the same solution that the administration did, but that this group should have been given the option to weigh in on the matter.

Senator Mahoney asked if there is any information regarding the Student Senate's current budget. Mr. Hamadeh said that we have solid numbers through October 30, 2020, because our bookkeeping runs one month behind. He estimated that the Student Senate has spent no more than \$10,000 to \$15,000 on continuing operational expenses. Mr. Hamadeh will report back to the Senate its current budget status in early January after the final fall semester numbers have come in.

Vice Chair Pellini asked for clarification regarding next steps. Mr. Schaefer noted that the District has already made the decision not to collect the Student Body Fee for the spring 2021 semester and to refund any Student Body Fees that have already been collected. The Colleges now have the option to use a portion of their budgets to cover the lost income.

At this time, Lizette Bricker, Acting Vice President of Student Services, joined the meeting. She provided additional background regarding the timeline of the decision the District made about the Student Body Fee. Ms. Bricker noted that on November 12, she saw an email from Mr. Schaefer and Mr. Hamadeh flagging an issue with the Student Body Fee collection for the spring 2021 semester. She referred the concerns to folks at the District to find out if there was a solution. Acting Vice President Bricker pointed out that on October 28, the Board of Trustees had allowed for an exemption to Board Policy 8.74, Exemptions and Waivers from Fees, regarding the collection of the Health Services Fee. The Student Body Fee was not included in those discussions and therefore the appropriate coding was not updated in Banner for the spring 2021 semester.

On November 18, Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Planning Aaron McVean brought the issue of the Student Body Fee to the Vice Presidents Council. Ms. Bricker noted that this was 14 days after registration for the spring 2021

semester had begun. Vice Chancellor McVean and District Vice President of Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness Karrie Mitchell led the discussion and shared financial information with the group, including comparing income from the spring 2020 semester. Acting Vice President Bricker indicated that besides issues of equity and fairness, there were also issues regarding Title V and financial aid that had to be taken into consideration. There was also a desire to make a decision that was least impactful on students. The group was presented with three options:

1. Charge students the fee right now.
2. Wait to charge students the fee after classes start in January.
3. Do not charge any student the Student Body Fee for the spring 2021 semester.

Based on discussions with CSM's Cabinet, the decision was made to endorse the third option, which is the one that was ultimately adopted. Acting Vice President Bricker said that she will be updating Cabinet at its meeting on Wednesday. In addition, she will be working with Vice President Ochoa, Mr. Schaefer, and Mr. Hamadeh to review the Associated Students' budget, including any leftover funds from the fall semester as well as any reserves.

Ms. Bricker reiterated that the District felt a decision had to be made quickly because of the fact registration for the spring semester had already begun. In hindsight, she noted that it would have been better to involve the Student Senate in the process. Should a similar situation arise in the future, Acting Vice President Bricker said that there should be outreach to the student governments. Ms. Bricker also said that the Deans of Enrollment Services will be in charge of updating language on the College websites and in the catalogs to reflect the fact that the Student Body Fee will not be collected for the spring 2021 semester.

Mr. Schaefer pointed out that he and Mr. Hamadeh had contacted District Office staff regarding this issue approximately two weeks before reaching out to the College administration. He said that the concerns were "blown off" by District staff and there was no follow-up communication, which is also part of the problem. Acting Vice President Bricker expressed concern at hearing that and said that it is her job while in the Vice President of Student Services position to serve as an advocate for the programs that report to her, including Student Life and Associated Students. She stated her wish that the process had been slowed down to allow more time for input from the affected parties, but also understood the necessity for a speedy resolution given the situation the District was in.

Mr. Hamadeh noted that the Student Senate just had a lot of information conveyed to them, and the group was probably still processing everything they heard. He pointed out that the District has policies in place regarding student involvement in decision making, and that those policies, as well Title V and the Education Code, specifically mention fees as one of the areas where students should be consulted. While acknowledging the necessity of making a decision in a timely manner, Mr. Hamadeh also said that it is in situations like this where the District's stated values must also be the ones that they carry out, where what we say we do versus what we actually do must be in alignment. If they are not, what's the point of having a policy or having participatory governance? Acting VP Bricker said that as the representative from CSM she takes responsibility for not advocating to bring students into the discussions. She did note that the Vice Presidents Council only expressed support for the option they felt was most student friendly and that they did not know which option the District would go with until they were notified via email at the beginning of the week of Thanksgiving.

Senator Zamora noted that some students have already paid the Student Body Fee for the spring 2021 semester. Acting VP Bricker said those students would automatically have the fee refunded. Senator Mahoney expressed her appreciation that Acting VP Bricker came to the Student Senate to explain the situation. Ms. Mahoney said that if the discussions around the Student Body Fee were centered on what was most student focused, it would seem to make sense that the best course of action would have been to ask the students. She pointed out that the management of the Student Body Fee is among the most fundamental functions of the student government and that it is frustrating that no one would think to consult with the Student Senate. Acting VP Bricker acknowledged Senator Mahoney's point and said she felt similar frustrations when decisions were made on behalf of the Student Services division without consultation. Ms. Bricker

reiterated that while the execution of the process may have been bad, there was no ill intention behind it and there was not a conscious decision to leave students out of the discussions.

Senator Zamora asked if there would communication to students regarding this issue. Acting VP Bricker said that the Dean of Enrollment Services at Cañada College has been tasked with developing language that will be posted on the College websites. Ms. Bricker will forward the draft language to Mr. Schaefer and Mr. Hamadeh, who can share it with the Senate for feedback.

Senator Mahoney asked for clarification as to whether the College would be contributing funds to support the student government. Acting VP Bricker said that was part of the final agreement that the District had put forward. The process will be the same at all three colleges. Each administration will work with its student government to find ways to make their budgets whole. Ms. Bricker noted that the administration is in the process of reviewing the student government's prior income and expenditures, and that information will help inform what amount the College may put forward. Mr. Schaefer said that due to being in remote operations, the Associated Students has been expending less than it normally would. He pointed out that any funds the College puts towards the student government would have to come from elsewhere in the College's budget. Senator Zamora expressed concern about the impact such a move may have on other programs and departments. Mr. Schaefer said that the College would most likely look at any unspent or unallocated funds that were available, and that the College would not be reducing any program's or department's budget. Vice Chair Pellini noted that there may also be funding considerations for the clubs. Mr. Schaefer said that even though clubs did not utilize a lot of funding in the fall, he is hopeful that it will pick up in the spring and that the Senate will have to look at its ICC budget.

President Nguyen commented that when he had first heard about the situation, he was upset. After reviewing the information further, he realized that it was an honest mistake and that the steps the College and the District took to remedy it were understandable. He noted, however, that it would have been nice for the Student Senate to receive a heads up about the situation earlier. Mr. Nguyen did extend thanks to Acting VP Bricker for being at today's meeting and for the level of transparency she brought to the situation.

Senator Abdlerahman asked what impact, if any, this would have on the Student Representation Fee. Mr. Schaefer stated that the Student Representation Fee is separate and is actually a state mandated fee and it will not be impacted.

Acting VP Bricker thanked the Student Senate for allowing her to talk with the group. She stated that she has learned from this situation, and said that she is committed to being more transparent and to working closely with the Student Senate going forward. Ms. Bricker said that she will try to be more conscious of the "ripple effect" that decisions have and to make sure that communication is a priority.

At the conclusion of this item, the Senate returned to the order of the day.

## **REPORTS**

Vice President Huaraz reported Academic Senate President Arielle Smith has extended an invitation to the next Academic Senate meeting to anyone who would like to provide feedback on how faculty may be more flexible on grading in light of online instruction.

Senator Zamora reported that Programming Board will be sponsoring Relaxation Week and will be holding activities Tuesday through Wednesday of this week.

Mr. Schaefer reminded the group that this is the final meeting of the fall semester unless there is a pressing need to hold another one next week. This will also be the last week of board meetings for the semester. Mr. Schaefer congratulated everyone on a great job for the semester. Reflecting on the semester, Mr. Schaefer did provide some feedback regarding reports from participatory governance committees. He noted that there were not many reports this semester, so in the spring we will be making a point to check in with everyone to see if they have a report.

Mr. Hamadeh stated that the first meeting of the spring semester would take place on Monday, January 25. The time will remain the same. A new Zoom link will be send out for the spring meetings.

#### **APPOINTMENTS**

None.

#### **LEGISLATIVE BILLS**

None.

#### **DEBRIEF OF ASCSM EVENTS**

None.

#### **PLANS FOR SPRING 2021**

The following topics were discussed for the spring semester:

- Finding ways to create more meaningful connections with students beyond platforms like Instagram.
- Holding ASCSM-sponsored forums with students.
- Encourage participation in Welcome Week and use the event as a springboard for the rest of the semester.
- Work with the College and District to determine guidelines for student government expenditures.
- Find ways to support the activities of the Multicultural Center, learning communities, and other hypermargianalized student populations.
- Advocate for the establishment of an ethnic studies degree requirement.
- Review and improve the student complaint process.

#### **WELCOME WEEK FOR SPRING 2021**

Senators Zamora and Liu outlined the plans for the spring Welcome Week. Activities will take place over three days and include a Zoom Do's and Don't's workshop, a student forum, and an important dates workshop. They encouraged members of the Senate to help advertise the events and to participate as well. The Senate discussed ways to improve outreach to students, including ways to collect email addresses so that students may be contacted directly about upcoming events. Mr. Schaefer mentioned that Welcome Week is a good time to do some additional recruiting for the boards and to start laying the groundwork for the upcoming spring elections.

#### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

#### **FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HEARING OF THE PUBLIC**

Senator Ito announced that the Public Relations Board is working to help promote the boards for next semester. She asked that the co-chairs send her their meeting schedules for the spring semester so the PR Board can start encouraging students to join.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn at 3:54 p.m. by Senator Zamora; seconded by Senator Liu. Hearing no objections, the motion carried.

Submitted by,

Fauzi Hamadeh  
Student Life and Leadership Assistant