

Santa Monica College Student Affairs Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date & Time: Wednesday, September 13, 2023
Location: SSC 222
Attendees: Beatriz Magallon (Chair), Esau Tovar (Vice Chair), Donna Davis-King, Matt Musselman, Press Nicolov, James Thing, Thomas Bui, Nancy Cardenas, Sharon Obsatz, Esmeralda (Student Rep)
Guests: Alicia Villalpando (Interested Party)

I. Call to Order: 12:15 PM
(due to technical issues with audio)

II. Public Comments:

Bea introduced the first in-person SAC meeting since the pandemic began. The Committee members went around the room introducing themselves and Bea welcomed new members.

Approval of Zoom Participation

Motion to approve Dr. Donna-Davis King's participation via Zoom due to Emergency Reasons. Thomas Bui moved to approve, Esau seconded, (8) Aye, (0) No, (0) Abstain at 12:44 PM

III. Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve Minutes from May 17th, 2023. Donna moved to approve, Sharon seconded, (8) Aye, (0) No, (0) Abstain at 12:46 PM

IV. Updates and Old Business:

a. Brown Act Requirements

Esau requested the Committee speak on the Brown Act requirements and the specifics therein that now confine the committee. Per the Brown Act, the committee must follow one of the two current models: traditional Brown Act rules or the other rules that expire in 2025. Thomas recommended that the Committee follow the new rules since traditional Brown Act rules require a location be posted for public attendance, as well as those who attend remotely. Thomas further explained the new rules to the Committee and suggested that these new rules allow for remote committee members to fully participate, provided they met the Act's requirements. Quorum needs to be held in the physical space the meeting is taking place. Bea asks that Committee members give her prior notice if they will not physically attend meeting since the Committee needs to meet quorum in person. Thomas also noted that for the Committee that the video and audio must remain on for the participants of the Zoom call.

b. Scope and Function of the Committee/Equity Principles

Bea stated that Title 5 and the California Education Code are the foundation of the regulations process for revisions. Bea then explained how the Committee functions and the processes that inform the

Committee's decisions. Title 5 is the guiding force for the Committee as well as using an equity lens. The Committee seeks to remove barriers not only for faculty but for the students. Esau also stated that there are a lot of administrative regulations that have not been updated or revised within the 6-year cycle as is the standard, however, SMC is still required to follow all changes and requirements made to the law, regardless of their current SMC regulation status.

Esau explained that the Committee tries to focus on what is best for the student body population and always reviews the impact of the regulation changes on students, however this process can be a long one given the extended nature of implementation. Bea stressed that the Committee moves at its own pace, but real changes are felt by students and the college community in due time.

Sharon inquired about academic dishonesty involving AI and cheating with regards to its applicability and relevancy to the committee. Bea stated that SAC is the correct venue to air that type of question but reiterated the long process that lies ahead of any such regulation changes. Bea stressed that the committee determines our goals for the year and if this is important than it should be prioritized as such.

V. New Business:

a. Student Representatives

Bea informed the Committee that a discussion and vote on whether or not to allow the Committee's two allotted student representatives to have the ability to vote on regulation matters during Committee meetings would need to be had. Bea stated that historically, the two student representatives have been able to vote on regulations but were not counted as part of the minimum attendance needed to reach quorum. Bea additionally asked the Committee if the student representatives should be counted to reach quorum and opened the topic up to discussion. Thomas stated that he supports the position that student representatives be allowed to vote on regulation and be counted towards quorum. He further explained to the Committee that it was his belief that SMC academic regulation is to be superseded if Education Code states that student representatives must be counted towards quorum.

Matt added if two administrators are needed to have quorum, as in the previous year. Esau agreed that as long as the administrator present at the Committee is ok with being alone and the other absent administrators gives consent, then it is fine for a meeting to proceed provided that no votes are taken during the absent administrator's time away. Press stated that the way the committee ran last year was fine and that meetings should not be scuttled sans administrators. Bea reminded members that it almost happened last year and that based on history, committee members see regulations for more than one meeting and that votes would not be coming as a surprise to any member and that we have always respected the process and have worked by consensus to then eventually arrive at a vote. Members agreed.

Upon contacting legal counsel, Esau mentioned that SMC legal counsel stated that the Academic Senate Bylaws specifically exclude student members from quorum.

Motion to approve that student representatives be allowed to vote during Student Affairs Committee meetings. Sharon moved, Donna seconded at 12:48 PM

b. AR 4250 Probation

Bea presented AR 4250 and 4255 to Academic Senate for first read. The only minor changes that were suggested by Academic Senate for the Second and Third Consecutive Semester subsections were as follows: **"If a student is not off of academic and/or progress probation at the end of..."**. Matt inquired

about if 6 units was enough for heavy unit classes that are 6 units or more. Bea and Esau explained that counselors can override this limit which is the designed purpose of the limit. Bea explained that if this limit was changed, it would be for all students and the majority of classes are 3 units. She also added that even if the counselor denies this override, a student can appeal the decision. Sharon inquired if there was any legislation that compelled students to reach out to a counselor. Esau stated that he would be in favor of adding that counselors are required for students who are on academic/and or progress probation. Bea reiterated that in order to override this limit, students must reach out to counselors to handle this situation. Sharon shared a story about a struggling student and how she wished she recommended reaching out to a counselor. Committee members all agree that struggling students need to reach out to counselors far more often than they currently are. Bea stressed the importance of the counseling department being more intentional in providing support/services to these students as well as the College.

Bea then stated that AR 4255 had no recommendations or changes from Academic Senate. Bea also asked if the Committee wanted to review previously approved ARs from last meeting in the Spring before those are presented to Exec. The Committee decided to move forward without looking back on three ARs that were already approved. Bea stated that these ARs will be taken to Academic Senate Executive Committee at the following meeting.

Esmeralda then asked the Committee if she could voice her recommendations for various ARs if they had been previously worked on. The Committee members vocalized their support of Esmeralda voicing her opinions, welcomed her feedback and assured her that this was the venue for her to speak her mind. She thought it important to add Special Programs since they are so critical to the success of many students and should be referred to in as many areas as possible.

Esau then brought up AR 4250 subsection 2. Standards of Academic and Progress Probation. Esau then read aloud the section stating that students should seek out counseling to discuss the circumstances that led to the probation as soon as possible and to create an education plan. Sharon recommended adding "support services and/or special programs" in the opening paragraph of subsection 2 to help assist struggling students who would benefit from connecting with a program. The Committee agreed with this minor change.

Alicia then spoke about email communication that are sent out to probationary students by the Counseling department and how these emails contain information regarding support services and special programs. In this same email, students are also informed on how to participate in "Back to Success" workshops and to meet with a counselor, as well as a Disqualification Reinstatement Petition that all students who are disqualified complete, wherein counselors can add notes, services, support programs, special orientation sessions, etc. Bea also suggested that VIP Day be a time when these topics (Withdrawals, Pass/No Pass, Drop Deadlines, and Counseling) can be covered at length for students.

Esau stated that historically, SMC has been very passive in how we work with students who are on probation or are on disqualification status. Around 75% of students do not participate in the "Back to Success" sessions, and most of these students face disqualification. Esau believes we need a more proactive step in handling this issue.

Thomas then brought up the matter of language in ARs being too precise, as this can lead to restrictive implementation, which can in turn create a challenge and a barrier for us. He also recommends we have to find more proactive means in assisting these struggling students that doesn't need to be in regulation. Esmeralda then asked a question regarding a subsection regarding "Loss and Appeal Procedure of California Promise Grant". Donna stated that it is important to take responsibility, ask questions and encouraged Esmeralda to continue doing what she's doing. Donna then echoed Esau's sentiment about adding a requirement for students who are on probation to reach out to the Counseling department and

inquired if it was possible to do so. Bea explained that we can say they are required but that we can't enforce it because we don't want it to be a barrier for them. The more intentional interventions the counseling department can do, the more students we can reach, the better. Donna suggested that this apprehension to make counseling a requirement for struggling students may hurt them more than help them in the long term. Bea said she would take these comments to the counseling department because these are populations that needs more interventions.

All Committee members accepted the minor changes.

c. AR 4255 Dismissal and Reinstatement

Esau requested a second look at AR 4255 to add another sentence to subsection 8, Probation, Dismissal, Readmission Data Reporting if intentionality was being sought. The Committee worked on and added: **"The annual report shall also include a specific action plan on improving success rates and support services for these students. The report should be developed in concert with the Institutional Research Office and Counseling Department"**.

Donna then asked if there is a database containing records of students who have been placed on probation/dismissal and are applying for reinstatement who have seen a counselor. Esau stated that the data exists, but the report does not. Donna stated that she believes this information could be better utilized to assist struggling students. Esau also requested that more specificity on current Guided Pathways and Strategic Enrollment Management plan and frameworks, something to the effect of this report should include at minimum the impact of probation interventions, including counseling.

Motion to approve AR 4255: James moved, Thomas seconded, YES, (8) NO, (0), (0) ABSTAIN at 1:43pm

VI. Updates to older Academic Regulations

Bea stated that the Committee should look at the list of Academic Regulations and decide which of the Academic Regulations should be prioritized and rank for our next meeting. The highlighted regulations should be the list Committee members should use to prioritize.

VII. Announcements:

The next Student Affairs Committee meeting will take place on September 27th, 2023.

VIII. Adjournment: 1:53 PM

For all documents, visit: <http://www.smc.edu/ACG/AcademicSenate/Committees/Pages/Student-Affairs.aspx>

Respectfully Submitted by Jackson Edwards