



# Academic Senate - SUMMARY

Location: Sequoia Room 1, Visalia Campus and Zoom  
 Teleconference Location: 9694 Mimbres Court, Gold Canyon, AZ 85118

**Wednesday, April 24, 2024 4:10 – 6:00 pm (extended meeting)**

<p><b>Executive Members</b>          Juan Arzola - present          David Hurst – present          Teresa Mendoza - present          Ramyar Alavi-Moghaddam - present          Lisa Hott - present          Joshua Geist - present          Liana Craven - present          Elise Baker - present          Sarah Harris - present</p> <p><b>Senators</b>  <b>AG (1)</b>          Russell McKeith - present  <b>IT (2)</b>          Brian Unruh - present          Chris Huff - present  <b>Business (2)</b>          Lisa Hott - present          Kevin Picciuto - present  <b>Consumer Family Studies (1)</b>          Kyran Wiley - present  <b>FEC</b>          Liana Craven - present  <b>Fine Arts (1)</b>          Chris Mangels - absent  <b>Library (1)</b>          Milena Seyed - present  <b>English (3)</b>          Joshua Geist - present          Lucia Tejeda - present          Ronillo Lacson - present  <b>Comm/Lang (1)</b>          vacant  <b>Math/Engineering (2)</b>          Tracy Redden - present          Vineta Harper - present  <b>Nursing/Health Science (2)</b>          vacant          (Mary) Denise Escobar - absent  <b>Physical Education (2)</b>          Michelle Bolt - absent          vacant  <b>Science (2)</b>          Matt Waterhouse - present          Courtney Traugh - present  <b>Social Science (3)</b>          vacant          Octavio Barajas - present          Esther Villegas-Sandoval - present  <b>Student Services (3)</b>          Amanda Thomas - present          Marvin Turk - absent          Robyn Noyes present  <b>Adjunct Faculty (2)</b>          Danielle Alberti - present          Brianda Louro – present  <b>Classified (1)</b>          Crystal Salazar - absent  <b>Student Rep (1)</b>          Marissa Hernandez – absent</p> <p>Also present:          Katie Beberian          Adrienne Duarte          Catherine Medrano          Rick Mangnall</p>	<p><b>1. Call to Order 4:10</b></p> <p><b>2. Public Comment</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. Regarding items not on the Agenda</p> <p>Teresa Mendoza – requested to attend meeting remotely due to an emergency circumstance.  <i>Motion to amend agenda to consider request to attend remotely by Teresa Mendoza. 1<sup>st</sup>/Courtney Traugh, 2<sup>nd</sup>/Russell McKeith. MSA.</i></p> <p>Amanda Thomas – requested to attend meeting remotely due to an emergency circumstance.  <i>Motion to amend agenda to consider request to attend remotely by Amanda Thomas. 1<sup>st</sup>/Chris Huff, 2<sup>nd</sup>/Josh Geist. MSA.</i></p> <p>Juan Arzola – Attended Spring Plenary in San Jose last weekend. There were over 250 attendees with over 80 attendees online. ASCCC (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges) officer elections were completed at the event. All but one of the 32 resolutions were adopted.</p> <p>Fall 2024 Plenary will be held in Visalia at the Marriott. Juan encouraged faculty to attend the event November 7 – 9, 2024.</p> <p>Juan first heard the detailed plans for the library at the last board meeting. Juan explained to the board that as a faculty leader he should be aware of decisions like this, so when faculty come to him with questions or concerns, he could give insight. Juan asked the board to consider keeping faculty leaders apprised of what is going on across the district with respect to facilities (even with it not being a 10+1 matter).</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. Regarding items on the Agenda</p> <p>Catherine Medrano, Sociology professor and committee member of the Equivalency committee -- Catherine had concern that someone from the Equivalency committee put forward a motion for a taskforce that outlines how to investigate said committee. Catherine also referenced a discussion item on the agenda for the Equivalency committee's Friday (4/26) meeting: a 6-page document submitted to the Equivalency committee to remove equivalency as a pathway for CTE (Career Technical Education) applicants. Catherine read an excerpt from the document. There was concern that CTE faculty were not consulted or asked to come to the meeting. The second proposal on the table was to remove the equivalency pathway but to substitute it with a faculty internship program. Catherine was concerned that such actions were unlawful. Catherine shared what a committee member said about life and work experience not being equivalent to an associate degree. Catherine was concerned about the document being passed as an action item. An excerpt from the document included inappropriate language and was posted on the public website. Catherine read the excerpt from the document.</p>
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Katie Beberian, faculty member and EEO representative – spoke in support of a taskforce to redesign Equivalency committee and processes. Katie recapped feedback requested by the Equivalency committee. Katie noted that the committee follows their processes, but their processes need to be redesigned and improved. Katie shared her observations as a silent observer during one of the Equivalency committee meetings she recently attended. She noted that voting occurred without deliberations, and the results were announced. Katie stated reasons for why meeting for deliberations is necessary. Katie referenced some of the ASCCC guidelines for Equivalency not being followed by the Equivalency committee. The specific examples and more could/would be shared with an Equivalency Taskforce if senate chooses to form such a taskforce.

David Hurst, as the Equivalency Committee Chair – many of the comments had not been contextualized because people had not been present at the meetings and have not experienced the current process. David stated that the Equivalency committee operated professionally and with integrity. Committee members were not censored. Some issues being raised were imbedded in interpersonal issues between committee members and those issues were under independent investigation and would be inappropriate to discuss. The Equivalency committee had asked for legal advice from HR and HR would not comment. David stated that the Equivalency committee had openly, transparently, and as communicatively as possible brought deliberations and thoughts to this body and to other bodies on campus. It has been difficult to know what to do in the absence of a response. The presentation by the English division chair at the last senate meeting omitted that David had communicated with the chair and the hiring committee eleven times by email over a 3-week period answering questions and directing them to documents that their applicants needed to submit. David urged them not to delay getting the paperwork to the committee. The hiring committee waited 2 weeks and the documentation was received two days before spring break. The hiring committee's HR person was already scheduling interviews. There were 4 days to get the proper documents to the applicants and get them to return them, and then the committee would have had to work over spring break. HR contacted the applicants, and neither sent in any documentation needed to determine equivalency. Because the committee could not assess the applicant's equivalency, the vote was unanimous to deny equivalency for both. The reason for the denial was explained in an email. The English chair attended one of the Equivalency meetings and interrupted the meeting several times. The chair used the appeals process, which was then denied. David asked senate to consider that the Equivalency committee was much more transparent and communicative than the presentation made by the English chair at the last meeting. David stated that the Equivalency committee talks about improvements at every meeting and the committee members take their job seriously. It is in the district's best interest for this committee to be able to stand independent from coercion by outside influences.

Juan Arzola – At the last senate meeting a senator stated that the senate bylaws precluded the Academic Senate President from giving an opinion on the DE Proposal in a recent email made by Juan to senators. Juan shared that the bylaws state that the President must preside over all general and executive order meetings in an impartial manner. Nothing in the bylaws states or implies that the president cannot share an opinion in an email. Brown has limitations to senate members sharing their opinion, but as senate president, Juan does not have a voice at meetings since he is the meeting manager. Therefore, Juan believed he did not violate Brown or the bylaws.

Juan asked that someone make a motion to have the DE proposal be tabled until the May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting so that COSAFA can meet with the district before the proposal is reviewed for action by senators.

Juan gave context to a statement made about AP 7211 and the appeals process. In 2019, Juan was asked during the summer to sit on the Equivalence committee as chair through for an equivalency request. The equivalency committee denied the application, but the original AP had a right to an appeal. When it was requested that an appeal meeting be held, Juan looked for a process and could not find one. A process was established for any colleague wanting to challenge the Equivalency committee's determination on an Equivalency package. The appeals process was born out of an appeals hearing.

### **3. Consent Calendar**

All items listed on the Consent Calendar are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion. An item may be removed from the Consent Calendar at the request of any Senator or any person in the audience and considered as a separate agenda item.

*Motion to pull the Meeting Minutes made by Danielle Alberti. (Meeting minutes become action item c).*

*Motion to approve amended Consent Calendar made by Josh Geist. Approved.*

~~a.~~ ~~Meeting Minutes~~

~~b.~~ a. Approval of Agenda

### **4. Action**

a. Request to attend remotely due to emergency circumstance –  
Teresa Mendoza

*(During public comment: Motion to amend agenda to consider request to attend remotely by Teresa Mendoza. 1<sup>st</sup>/Courtney Traugh, 2<sup>nd</sup>/Russell McKeith. MSA).*

b. Request to attend remotely due to medical emergency – Amanda Thomas

*(During public comment: Motion to amend agenda to consider request to attend remotely by Amanda Thomas. 1<sup>st</sup>/Chris Huff, 2<sup>nd</sup>/Josh Geist. MSA.)*

*Motion to approve action items 4a and 4b made by Josh Geist and 2<sup>nd</sup>/ Lisa Hott. MSA.*

c. Meeting Minutes

*Motion to approve meeting minutes made by Josh Geist 2<sup>nd</sup>/ Tracy Redden. MSA.*

*Danielle Alberti made a motion to add the following to the April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes which was a request for changes with respect to AP 7211. 2<sup>nd</sup>/ Josh Geist. MSA.*

Danielle Alberti – asked why he/she was kept in the AP, why can't it just say "they"?

Jennifer Vega La Serna – When Meghan gets these, she uses the language we've adopted for all of them. She will fix it. We'll just make note of that for her when she does that.

~~a.~~ d. Academic Senate Election

Election completed. Results will be posted under May 8<sup>th</sup> documents on COS website.

~~b-~~ e. AP 4021

*Motion to approve AP 4021 made by Tracy Redden, 2nd/ Josh Geist, MSA.*

David Hurst asked about “regional duplication” on page 3 of the policy. Sarah Harris explained that regional duplication is more applicable to colleges in larger cities. For example, LA City College doesn’t want LA Trade-Technical College to have the same programs for the same students. It’s part of the regulatory language, but it’s not generally an issue for our college.

Juan Arzola – In step 2, the policy talks about the bringing together of a committee, the Program Discontinuance Review committee. Juan stated that at DGS he took issue with the terminology of the term “committee.” which suggests that it is a part of the participatory governance structure. The language seeks to empower this committee to make recommendations directly to the board. No other committee makes those recommendations. Recommendations are made to DGS, Academic Senate or Student Senate. Juan suggested to DGS to relabel the committee as either a work group, task force or a council.

David Hurst suggested tabling AP4021 until the next meeting because that would give time to get questions answered by DGS and think through the language better.

*Motion to postpone AP 4021 until the May 8, 2024 Academic Senate meeting made by David Hurst, 2nd/ Lisa Hott, MSA.*

~~e-~~ f. AP/BP 4025

*Motion to approve AP/BP 4025 made by Tracy Redden, 2nd/ Matt Waterhouse, MSA.*

Sarah Harris – the policies had not changed much, but the GE committee is working on updates to the framework in alignment with the new GE pattern that was recently passed, so expect those to come through next year. The policies may or may not need edits.

~~d-~~ g. AP 4112 (recommended deletion)

*Motion to approve deletion of AP 4112 made by Josh Geist, 2nd/ Tracy Redden. MSA.*

~~e-~~ h. AP/BP 4220

*Motion to approve AP/BP 4220 made by Tracy Redden, 2nd/ Josh Geist, MSA.*

~~f-~~ i. AP 4233

*Motion to approve AP 4233 made by Josh Geist, 2nd/ Tracy Redden. MSA.*

~~g-~~ j. AP 7211

*Motion to approve AP 7211 made by Josh Geist, 2nd/ Tracy Redden. (Original motion failed).*

*Motion to postpone AP 7211 indefinitely made by Octavio Barajas, 2<sup>nd</sup>/ Danielle Alberti. MSA.*

Octavio Barajas – due to the nature of the attention to AP 7211, the previous discussions and public comments regarding the Equivalency committee, their procedures and the appeals process in AP 7211, Octavio stated it would be best to postpone any action on this policy.

David Hurst suggested amending the policy to not remove the appeals process. The very first paragraph of the AP is now incorrect since the Equivalency committee has changed how candidates submit their documents.

Senators discussed the policy. David Hurst (Equivalency committee chair) answered questions about the policy.

*A motion to end the debate (call to question) was made by Tracy Redden, 2<sup>nd</sup>/ Lucia Tejada, MSA.*

~~h.~~ k. DE Certification Proposal (Elise Baker)

*Motion to approve DE Certification Proposal made by Josh Geist, 2<sup>nd</sup>/ Elise Baker. Motion failed.*

*Motion to postpone the DE Certification Proposal until fall 2024 made by Lisa Hott, 2<sup>nd</sup>/ Tracy Redden. Motion failed.*

Lucia Tejada – asked if this would disrupt anything with respect to accreditation. Elise Baker – In response to Lucia, Elise stated she would like to have some changes made to our training program before the fall, but it was not strictly necessary.

Several senators did not want to discuss the policy because the district had sun shined it and it will be negotiated on by the unions.

Josh Geist - if negotiations happened between the union and administration, it would be without any information from the faculty body responsible for making decisions and recommendations about training for distance education.

David Hurst – should postpone because of the mandates that are in this proposal. COSTA is not opposed to DE changes, but Academic Senate should not discuss mandates until those issues are discussed in negotiations.

Sarah Harris – agreed that it would be valuable to have the Academic senate's perspective on it before it gets negotiated.

Elise Baker – did not believe that senate voting in the approval of the DE proposal or postponing it, was equivalent to it being implemented as policy. That was never the goal of DECOS to create something that immediately received unanimous approval at every level. The idea was to receive faculty feedback and create something that the faculty was behind. Elise did not think that senate supporting the proposal or voting on it before the end of the year and before negotiations were completed is equivalent to us agreeing to do it free. Compensation was not the purview of DECOS or the Academic Senate. The job of DECOS was to review and recommend policies and procedures about online instruction to Academic Senate. There were areas of accreditation in DE that COS will struggle to provide

	<p>evidence of in distance education courses at this time. Elise had difficulty while putting together the DE self-evaluation report to find evidence of those things. This training represents a faculty-driven effort to show that desire to meet these things.</p> <p>Kevin Picciuto – COSTA is not opposed to training. The concern is mandating something that can be used punitively. Encouraged people to come to COSTA to give voice/guidance.</p> <p>Danielle Alberti – noted there is no part time faculty representative on DECOS and therefore zero feedback given by P/T Faculty.</p> <p><i>Motion to table the DE Proposal until May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting made by Octavio Barajas, 2<sup>nd</sup>/ Russell McKeith. MSA.</i></p> <p>The DE Proposal will be brought back at the May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting as an action item.</p>
	<p><b>5. Information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Student Senate Update (Marissa Hernandez) - did not inform</li> <li>b. Master Plan Update (David Hurst) - did not inform</li> <li>c. Accreditation Report (Sarah Harris) - did not inform</li> </ul>
	<p><b>6. Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Taskforce Recommendations for Committee C (Danielle Alberti) - did not discuss</li> <li>b. AI Statement from Educational Technology Committee (Elise Baker) - did not discuss</li> <li>c. Committee A Dual Enrollment Recommendations (Lisa Hott) - did not discuss</li> <li>d. Equivalency Committee (Esther Villegas-Sandoval) - did not discuss</li> <li>e. Proposed Taskforce on Equivalency (David Hurst) - did not discuss</li> </ul>

Meeting adjourned 6:00 pm

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Submitted by Teresa Mendoza