ACADEMIC SENATE
Of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA

AS-911-21

RESOLUTION ON FACULTY CHOICE OF MODALITY

WHEREAS, AS-903-20 suspended curricular review for courses offered virtually due to COVID-19 through Spring of 2022; and

WHEREAS, AS-904-20 permitted faculty teaching virtually to select their virtual modality in that same period; and

WHEREAS, Because of ongoing uncertainties about the status of the pandemic, and given the wide variation in personal and professional circumstances that may arise in that context, faculty require additional flexibility in choosing their teaching modalities into the foreseeable future; therefore be it

RESOLVED: Instructional faculty may select their teaching modality as face-to-face or virtual through Summer 2022; and be it

RESOLVED: The provisions of AS-903-20 and AS-904-20 be extended through Summer 2022; and be it

RESOLVED: Faculty should inform their departments of their decisions in a timely fashion and are encouraged to discuss the matter with their Department Chairs or Heads before finalizing their decisions.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Executive Committee
Date: February 16, 2021

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1 (1) Describe how this resolution impacts existing policy on educational matters that affect the faculty. Examples include curricula, academic personnel policies, and academic standards.
(2) Indicate if this resolution supersedes or rescinds current resolutions.
(3) If there is no impact on existing policy, please indicate NONE.
MEMORANDUM

To: Thomas Gutierrez

From: Jeffrey D. Armstrong

Date: March 2, 2021

Subject: Response to AS-911-21 Resolution on Faculty Choice of Modality

By way of this memo, I acknowledge the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution.

I fully appreciate the faculty’s concern about the nature of their teaching assignments in the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic, but I cannot approve or accept the above-entitled resolution. The dynamic and rapidly evolving situation makes it necessary for administrators at every level — department, college, and university — to make timely scheduling decisions that account for the needs of multiple stakeholders — students, staff, and faculty.

My specific comments regarding the three resolved clauses are as follows:

**RESOLVED clause #1.** The mode and modality of a particular course is not usually the choice of an individual instructor; it is established by the faculty in the course of regular curricular review at all levels. In response to the pandemic, the Academic Senate adopted AS-903-20, “Resolution on Temporarily Suspending Virtual Learning Review,” which I acknowledged and accepted with the understanding that the “CSU Policy, Procedure, and Considerations for 2020-2021 Academic Year Planning in the Context of COVID-19” is also in effect. This policy allows for local determination of the mode of instruction as approved by the campus president, in consultation with County Public Health, and by the CSU chancellor. The “ongoing uncertainties about the status of the pandemic,” as described by this resolution, will require that the modality of the course be determined in a way that supports the health and safety of the campus community as well as student learning and success.
**RESOLVED clause #2.** The extension through summer 2022 of the terms of AS-903-20, “Resolution on Temporarily Suspending Virtual Learning Review,” and AS-904-20, “Resolution on Faculty Choice of Virtual Modality,” both of which I acknowledged and accepted, will unnecessarily extend crisis conditions into a new academic year.

**RESOLVED clause #3.** Class scheduling and teaching assignments are administrative decisions that flow from the college dean’s responsibility for the investment of academic resources in support of student learning and success. Now as before, work assignments of faculty are the responsibility of the dean and will continue to be made following consultation with the department head/chair and faculty members, in a manner that respects both the privacy and professional judgement of the instructor.

In considering the needs of students, staff, and faculty, I will continue to assess the health and safety guidance from County Public Health, the State of California, and the CSU. The campus community’s health and well-being, as well as our shared commitment to student success, will guide my decisions as the university navigates future conditions with necessary flexibility.