Meeting of the Academic Senate Executive Committee  
Tuesday, February 18, 2020  
01-409, 3:10 to 5:00pm

I. Minutes: February 4, 2020 minutes (pp. 2-3)

II. Communication(s) and Announcement(s):

III. Reports:
   A. Academic Senate Chair:
   B. President’s Office:
   C. Provost:
   D. Statewide Senate:
   E. CFA:
   F. ASI:

IV. Special Reports:

V. Business Item(s):
   A. Substitution of Jerusha Greenwood for Thomas Guiterrez as Academic Senate Vice-Chair for Spring Quarter 2020: Dustin Stegner
   B. Resolution on Timely Adoption of Course Materials: John Hagen, Academic Senate Instruction Committee (pp. 4-5)
   C. Resolution on Discontinuation of M.S of Printed Electronics and Functional Imaging Degree Program: Colleen Twomey, Academic Senate Curriculum Committee (pp. 6-7)
   D. Resolution on Class Attendance: Jerusha Greenwood, Ashlee Hernandez, Alan Faz, Tess Loarie and Kylie Clark (pp. 8-20)
   E. Additional Charge to Instruction Committee: Resolution on Poly Access: Dustin Stegner, Academic Senate Chair
   F. [TIME CERTAIN 4:40 P.M.] 2021-2022 Fall Calendar: Keith Humphreys, Vice President for Student Affairs

VI. Discussion Item(s):
   A. Possible Resolution on Change to University Housing Requirements: Dustin Stegner

VII. Adjournment:
Meeting of the Academic Senate Executive Committee
Tuesday, February 4, 2020
01-409, 3:10 to 5:00pm

I. Minutes: M/S/P to approve the January 7, 2020 Academic Senate Executive Committee minutes.

II. Communication(s) and Announcement(s): none.

III. Reports:
   A. Academic Senate Chair: none.
   B. President's Office: none.
   C. Provost: none.
   D. Statewide Senate: Gary Laver, Statewide Senator, announced that the Chancellor is seeking feedback from the various CSU campuses on the proposed Ethnic Studies requirement.
   E. CFA: Lewis Call, CFA President, reported that CFA and the CSU recently published their bargaining proposals. They can be found online at https://www.calfac.org/pod/cfa-bargaining-proposals.
   F. ASI: Mark Borges, ASI President, described the voter registration efforts ASI is hosting leading up the March election, including an on-campus debate between the District 5 candidates.

IV. Special Reports:
   A. Immediate Access Program Ethical Risks Presentation. Ryan Jenkins, Ethics + Emerging Sciences Group, presented the ethical risks of Follett’s “Immediate Access” program, specifically student consent, conflicts of interest and perverse incentives. Jenkins also explained ways the Ethics + Emerging Sciences Group is planning to manage these risks, such as opt-out options for students.
   B. Cal Poly Marketing Presentation. Marya Figueroa, University Marketing, introduced the recently redesigned Cal Poly website (https://calpoly.edu). The new website launched in February and includes feature news stories, student spotlights and hundreds of photos taken by the newly-hired campus photographer.

V. Business Item(s):
   A. Recommendation for Fall 2021 academic calendar.
      The proposed calendar for the 2021-2022 academic calendar suggests fall quarter starts on Thursday, September 16, 2021. However, that date conflicts with the Yom Kippur religious holiday, so the President’s Office provided three options for the Executive Committee asking for a recommendation of a new start date for Fall 2021. M/S/P to recommend Option Two: classes start on Monday, September 20, 2021.
      M/S/P to appoint Joongmin Shin, Industrial Technology and Packaging, to the Fairness Board to represent OCBOB for the 2019-2021 term.
   C. Resolution on University Faculty Personnel Policies Subchapter 6.3: Post-Tenure Faculty Evaluation Pattern. Ken Brown, Faculty Affairs Committee Chair, introduced a resolution updating subchapter 6.3 of University Faculty Personnel Policies (UFPP) to propose changes regarding post-tenure faculty evaluations patterns. M/S/P to agendize the resolution.

VI. Discussion Item(s):
   A. Mark Borges, ASI President, led a conversation about the potential advantages and disadvantages voting rights for the ASI student representatives on the Academic Senate.

805-756-1258 ~~~ academicsenate.calpoly.edu
VII.  **Adjournment:** 5:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

*Katie Terou*

Katie Terou, Academic Senate Student Assistant
RESOLUTION ON TIMELY ADOPTION OF COURSE MATERIALS

Impact on Existing Policy: This resolution supersedes Academic Senate Resolution 654-07.

WHEREAS, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities act of 1990 require that universities make courses accessible to all students; and

WHEREAS, California State University Executive Orders 926 (2005) and 1111 (2018) call for all courses to be accessible to all students; and

WHEREAS, Cal Poly is committed to the principles of accessibility and inclusion; and

WHEREAS, Accessible course materials, (textbooks, course packs, and lab manuals) must be provided in a timely manner to be useful for students; and

WHEREAS, Production of course materials in alternative formats by the DRC requires time; and

WHEREAS, Cal Poly is also committed to affordable course materials; and

WHEREAS, Students need time to find the most affordable option for their course materials; and

WHEREAS, Academic Senate Resolution 654-07 addressed these problems, but was ineffective; and

WHEREAS, It is the responsibility of the instructor of record or a designee to submit course materials in a timely manner; therefore be it

RESOLVED: Beginning with Spring Quarter 2021, the deadline for submitting faculty selections of textbooks, course-packs, and lab manuals will be one week
before PASS opens for students, that is, selections for Spring Quarter materials will be made in Winter Quarter 2021, and be it further

RESOLVED: The Provost should send out quarterly reminders to the faculty of the deadline at appropriate times, and be it further

RESOLVED: If course materials are not chosen by the deadline the course materials used in the most recent instance of the course will be automatically selected.

Proposed by: The Academic Senate Instruction Committee  
Date: February 18, 2020
WHEREAS, Cal Poly has a policy on the Discontinuation of Academic Programs, which requires a potentially lengthy review by two separate groups, one representing students, staff, and faculty that are involved in the program, and the other representing students, staff, and faculty that are not involved in the program; and

WHEREAS, Cal Poly’s College of Liberal Arts used to offer an M.S. in Printed Electronics and Functional Imaging; and

WHEREAS, After offering a certificate program for 2 years and graduating a single Master’s class, it was determined that there was insufficient enrollment to make the program self-support. The program stopped accepting students in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Admission to the M.S. in Printed Electronics and Functional Imaging degree program has been suspended for the past three years; and

WHEREAS, There are no students currently active in the program; and

WHEREAS, The Chair of the Graphic Communications department has requested that the M.S. in Printed Electronics and Functional Imaging program be discontinued, and the program faculty supports it discontinuation; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the M.S. in Printed Electronics and Functional Imaging program be discontinued as of AY 2020-21, and be it further

RESOLVED: That the discontinuance of the aforementioned program does not establish any criteria for the discontinuation of any other academic program.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Curriculum Committee and Academic Programs and Planning

Date: February 18, 2020
To: President Jeffrey Armstrong, Ph.D.

From: Colleen Twomey, Chair, Graphic Communication

Subject: Discontinuing the MS in Printed Electronics and Functional Imaging in Graphic Communication

Date: December 5, 2019

CC: Bruno Giberti, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Programs and Planning
Dustin Stegner, Academic Senate Chair
Amy Robbins, Academic Programs & Planning
Dina Vees, GrC Curriculum Chair

In 2014 the Graphic Communication Department launched a Master’s Degree in Printed Electronics and Functional Imaging (PEFI), which was comprised of a certificate program (first year, all online), followed by an in-residence completion for the second year. After offering the certificate program for 2 years and graduating a single Master’s class, it was determined that there was insufficient enrollment to make the program self-support. The program stopped accepting students in 2016.

The GrC faculty met fall in 2019 to discuss curriculum strategy for the short and long term, and unanimously voted to discontinue the MS in Printed Electronics and Functional Imaging. Our undergraduate Bachelor of Science includes courses in Printed Electronics, and faculty continue to publish research in this area to stay on top of their field.

As a result, I hereby formally request that the Master’s Degree in Printed Electronics and Functional Imaging be discontinued.

Sincerely,

Colleen L. Twomey
Associate Professor and Chair
Graphic Communication Department
RESOLUTION ON CLASS ATTENDANCE

Impact on Existing Policy: This resolution impacts existing policy within the Campus Administrative Policy, which superseded the Campus Administrative Manual in 1999. This resolution addresses the Campus Administrative Manual, section 485.2.

WHEREAS, The Class Attendance section (485.2) in the Campus Administrative Manual (CAM) has not been revised since March 2003; and

WHEREAS, This section outlines the excusable reasons for allowing students to make up missed work; and

WHEREAS, The last Class Attendance policy was instituted with the understanding that the policy would continue to be reviewed and updated to reflect additional appropriate excusable reasons for missing class and allowing students to make up missed work; and

WHEREAS, The current policy omits any mention of students with dependents, who are parents, guardians, or caregivers at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional school level; and

WHEREAS, Overall, the proposed policy provides clarifying language that is not stated in the current policy. As presently published, CAM Section 485.2 reads as follows:

485 Class Attendance

485.2 It is strongly urged that instructors accept the following “excusable” reasons for allowing students to make up missed work:

A. Illness with a doctor’s statement
B. Serious Illness or death of close relatives
C. Active participation in university events (an instructor may require a statement from the adviser involved
certifying that the student was actively participating in
a recognized university event)

D. Field trips
E. Religious holidays
F. Selective service and military reasons
G. NCAA athletic competitions
H. Instructionally Related Activities (IRA)/competition
I. Jury duty or any other legally required court appearances
J. Job or internship interviews;

Therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the wording in CAM Section 485.2 be changed as follows:

It is strongly urged that instructors accept the following “excusable” reasons for allowing students to make up missed work while considering implementation shall be equitable for all qualifying students:

And, be it further

RESOLVED: That the following clarifying language be added to CAM Section 485.2 as excusable reasons for making up missed class work:

B. Serious illness, death, or any extenuating circumstances of close relatives (to include but not limited to parents, legal guardian, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, spouse or partner, as well as natural, adopted, and/or in-law children)

Proposed by: Dr. Jerusha Greenwood, Ashlee Hernandez, Alan Faz, Tess Loarie, Kylie Clark
Date: February 18, 2020
Update to the Class Attendance Policy to Include Students with Dependents

In the fall of 2019, Student Affairs launched a needs assessment as part of the Students with Dependents Initiative. A survey was developed and distributed to students who identified having minor dependents (via FAFSA), patrons of the Orfalea Family & ASI Children’s Center, the Educational Opportunity Program, TRIO Achievers, the Veterans Success Center, and Cal Poly Scholars. They identified 109 incoming students for Fall 2019 with minor dependents.

The Resolution to Update the Cal Poly Attendance Policy to Include Students with Dependents addresses a specific need identified by the assessment: the clarification of the language in the course attendance policy to include students with dependents.1

The proposed resolution charges the Academic Senate Instruction Committee to revise the excused absence language in the Campus Administrative Policy/Campus Administrative Manual (CAM) Section 485.2 to be more inclusive of nontraditional students who are responsible for the care of dependents. A dependent, in the revised language, will include parent, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, spouse or partner, as well as natural, adopted, and/or in-law children.

Updating the language surrounding excused absences will provide the following opportunities for Cal Poly:

- Encourage faculty to support students with dependents to succeed in college by excusing absences and permitting them to make up missed work. Doing so facilitates achievement of the GI 20252 graduation rate goals;
- Aid movement toward the Cal Poly Diversity and Inclusion Initiative3 to recruit and maintain a diverse student body;
- Align Cal Poly better with the full scope of Title IX and California AB 8094, which address protections of pregnant students and students with dependents; and
- Align Cal Poly with California AB 22895, a policy regarding public schools, that states that students with dependents shall be excused from school due to an illness or medical appointment with their child, including absences to care for a sick child.

1 Several other needs were identified as a result of the assessment. For example, access to priority registration to reduce complications related to scheduling conflicts between parental responsibilities and Cal Poly classes and coursework; the development of resource guides with campus and community resources; the availability of more diaper/baby changing stations throughout campus, and family friendly study areas were all identified.
4 United States. California State Assembly. “An act to amend Section 66281.7 of, and to add Section 66061 to, the Education Code, relating to public postsecondary education.” AB 809. Print.
5 United States. California State Assembly. “An act to amend Section 66281.7 of, and to add Section 66061 to, the Education Code.” AB 2289. Print.
Current language in CAP/CAM Section 485.2 6 states that “it is strongly urged that instructors accept the following ‘excusable’ reasons for allowing students to make up missed work:

- Illness with a doctors statement
- Serious illness or death of close relatives

At present, the policy omits mention of students with dependents who require care but are not seriously ill. This creates complications for students who are responsible for the care, for example, of infant/small children running a fever high enough to keep them out of daycare but not serious enough to require a visit to a primary care physician or urgent care facility. According to the Orfalea Family/ASI Childcare Center, children who have experienced a fever above 100F, stomach ache, sneezing with a runny nose are not permitted to attend the program until their symptoms have been absent for at least 24 hours. When such symptoms appear suddenly (which is common with the onset of illness) Cal Poly students often experience difficulty procuring alternative care for their children, or are unable to afford that alternative care. Similarly, students with dependents who are not minors but have immediate requirements for care often find themselves unable to choose between their dependents and attending lectures, activities, or laboratories.

Other Universities in the United States have adapted their attendance policies to be more inclusive of non-traditional students:

**CSU Fresno**
Unplanned student absences should be authorized when the student has a short-term serious and compelling medical condition or when a death or serious illness in the immediate family (i.e., parent, spouse, sibling or child) prevents attending class.

**CSU Long Beach:**
Death, injury, or serious illness of an immediate family member. An immediate family member is defined as a close relative, or a person residing in the immediate household of the student.

Additionally, Mississippi State University7, Marshall University8, and Texas A & M9, are a few examples of Universities that have language that use language inclusive of dependents or immediate family.

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6 Campus Administrative Manual.” Academic Senate, 1991, academicsenate.calpoly.edu/cam
9 “Attendance.” Texas A & M University Student Rules, Rule 7: Attendance, 2019, Online. student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07/
RESOLUTION TO UPDATE THE CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY TO INCLUDE STUDENTS WITH DEPENDENTS

WHEREAS: The ASI Board of Directors serves as the official voice of students at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly), San Luis Obispo; and

WHEREAS: Current Cal Poly Class Attendance Policy\(^1\) omits mention of students with dependents, who are parents, guardians, or caregivers at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional school level\(^2\); and

WHEREAS: The United States Government Accountability Office reveals there are nearly four million undergraduate students who are raising children, representing 22 percent of all students attending United States colleges\(^3\); and

WHEREAS: California Education Code section 48213 stipulates that children with obvious signs of illness are not accepted into a childcare facility and are excluded from care for a minimum of 24 hours\(^4\); and

WHEREAS: At Cal Poly, the Orfalea Family & ASI Children's Center Policy Handbook\(^5\) states teachers assess each child’s wellbeing upon arrival and send sick children home\(^6\), creating unintended consequences for students with dependents who rely on child care providers in order to attend class; and

WHEREAS: In California policy regarding K-12 public schools, Assembly Bill (AB) 2289\(^7\) states a student with dependent shall be excused from school due to an illness or medical appointment of their child, including absences to care for a sick child; and

WHEREAS: Other institutions such as Mississippi State University have adopted explicit excused absence policies for students with dependents, excusing absences for issues regarding a student’s immediate family members including a: parent, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, spouse or partner, as well as natural, adopted and/or in-law children\(^8\); and

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\(^1\) "Campus Administrative Manual." Academic Senate, 1991, academicsenate.calpoly.edu/cam

\(^2\) California Student Aid Commission. Students with Dependent Children (SWD) FAQs. Cascc.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/swd_frequently_asked_questions.pdf


\(^7\) United States. California State Assembly. “An act to amend Section 66281.7 of, and to add Section 66061 to, the Education Code.” AB 2289. Print.

\(^8\) "Class Attendance and Reporting Absences.” Mississippi State University Policies, 2016, Online. www.policies.msstate.edu/policy/1209.
WHEREAS: In compliance with Title IX\(^9\), the California State Legislature passed AB 809 in September 2019, requiring higher education institutions to post the notification of protections for pregnant students and students with dependents on their website, emphasizing the rights of students with dependents\(^10\); and

WHEREAS: Despite evidence that nationally, students with dependents have higher grade point averages than their traditional peers, only about eight percent of students with dependents in college will obtain an associate’s or bachelor’s degree within six years\(^11\); and

WHEREAS: While the California State University system has implemented the Graduation Initiative 2025 in an effort to increase graduation rates for all CSU students by eliminating opportunity and achievement gaps\(^12\), current graduation rates suggest that students with dependents require additional support to succeed in college; and

WHEREAS: Cal Poly’s Diversity and Inclusion Initiative states the university will recruit and maintain a diverse student body\(^13\); and

WHEREAS: Nationally, students with dependents constitute one-third of first-generation college students, and nearly 37% of black students are students with dependents\(^14\); hence, this issue dramatically impacts Cal Poly’s Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives, yet no policy exists to bridge this achievement gap.

THEREFORE

BE IT

RESOLVED:

The ASI Board of Directors hereby urges the Cal Poly Academic Senate to revise the wording as it pertains to the class attendance policy to include the following:

Class Attendance

*It is strongly urged that instructors accept the following “excusable” reasons for allowing students to make up missed work while considering implementation shall be equitable for all qualifying students:*

A. *Illness with a doctor’s statement*

B. *Serious illness, death, or any extenuating circumstances of close relatives (including but not limited to parents, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, spouse or partner, as well as natural, adopted, and/or in-law children)*

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\(^9\) Title IX prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities

\(^10\) United States. California State Assembly. "An act to amend Section 66281.7 of, and to add Section 66061 to, the Education Code, relating to public postsecondary education." AB 809. Print.


\(^12\) "Graduation Initiative 2025." The California State University, Online. https://www2.calstate.edu/csu-system/y-the-csu-matters/graduation-initiative-2025.

\(^13\) "Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives – Diversity & Inclusion: Cal Poly." Diversity & Inclusion | Cal Poly, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, 2018, Online. diversity.calpoly.edu/initiatives/.

FURTHERMORE
BE IT
RESOLVED: This resolution will be sent to University President Jeffrey D. Armstrong, Interim Provost Mary Pedersen, Vice President for Student Affairs Keith Humphrey, Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion Jozi De Leon, Academic Senate Chair Dustin Stegner, Dean of Students Kathleen McMahon, College of Engineering Dean Amy Fleisher, College of Architecture and Environmental Design Dean Christine Theodoropoulos, College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences Dean Andy Thulin, College of Science and Mathematics Dean Dean Wendt, College of Liberal Arts Dean Philip Williams, and Orfalea College of Business Dean Scott Dawson.

Certified as the true and correct copy, in witness thereof, I have set my hand and Seal of the San Luis Obispo Cal Poly Associated Students, Inc. this ____ day of __________, 2020.

Attest: ____________________________
ASI Secretary

Signed: ____________________________
ASI Chair of the Board

Signed: ____________________________
ASI President

ADOPTED at the regular meeting of the Board of Directors at San Luis Obispo Cal Poly Associated Students, Inc. this ____ day of __________, 2020.

Authored By:

Ashlee Hernandez, Masters Candidate, Higher Education Counseling and Student Affairs
Alan Faz, Board of Directors, College of Engineering
Tess Loarie, Board of Directors, College of Engineering
Kylie Clark, Board of Directors, College of Liberal Arts
Dominique Morales, Board of Directors, College of Liberal Arts
February 13, 2020

ASI Student Government
California Polytechnic State University,
San Luis Obispo
Julian A. McPhee University Union
Bldg. 65, Room 202

To the ASI Board of Directors,

As a faculty member, academic senator, and member of the Cal Poly Academic Senate Executive Committee, I am very pleased to provide a letter of support for the Resolution to Update the Class Attendance Policy to Include Students with Dependents (Resolution #20-).

I believe it is the duty of the academic institution to remove structural barriers that prohibit the academic and professional development of students. This includes a close examination and revision of any policy that advises faculty about student attendance in classes, especially when the nature of student life outside of the classroom is considered. Students with dependents – including children, parents, siblings, grandparents, legal guardians, partners – require better accommodation from the university in the form of clearer policy guidance regarding excused absences.

While Academic Programs’ language about excused absences includes “serious illness or death of close relatives,” a clearer statement that supports students with dependents would provide those students an ability to appeal to their instructors for accommodation when they learn cannot attend class due to immediate and/or emergency circumstances. For example, students with dependents enrolled at the Orfalea Family/ASI Children’s Center must retrieve them if they develop a fever or cannot drop them off for care if they do. Childcare on the central coast, particularly if needed at the last minute, is notoriously difficult to find. I can attest to this both as a parent and as an instructor of students with small children.

This resolution will help the university align itself more effectively with its own childcare facility’s policies, as well as with California public school policy and education code. We will better comply with Title IX regarding pregnant students and students with dependents, and help our students achieve their educational and professional goals.

Please support the passage of this resolution.

In community,

Jerusha B. Greenwood
Associate Professor, Experience Industry Management
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
Dear ASI Board of Directors,

I am writing in support of the Resolution to Update the Class Attendance Policy to include students with dependents. As a parent of two children, I am constantly faced with the struggle of choosing parenting over school. My education is very important to me but due to limited childcare resources I often have to miss class when my children are sick. One of my children has an incurable brain disease called Moya-Moya. Her condition is monitored by Dr. 's at Stanford Hospital and she often has multiple appointments per month. Due to my daughter’s insurance and the high volume of patients her doctor sees, I do not have the ability to schedule appointments around my school schedule. During the flu season, my children were sick multiple times and were diagnosed with the influenza virus. In order to protect other children from getting sick, my children needed to stay home from school. Since childcare providers cannot risk getting other children or themselves sick as a parent I had to miss class to stay home to take care of them. When I have to miss class for my children's medical needs or illnesses it is currently considered unexcused by the school. This causes a large barrier amongst many students who have dependents. Often times this barrier can cause students to put their education on hold.

My daughter was diagnosed in the beginning of 2019 with an incurable disease and it was my first year at Cal Poly. My whole life changed and my daughters medical needs became my first priority. I often thought about withdrawing from my classes and putting my education on hold because I knew I was not always going to be able to attend my classes due to my daughters new diagnosis. I think it is very important that the school consider the students who have children and allow us to have excused absences when we need to miss class due to the needs of our children. Many of us are trying to achieve lifelong goals and we need to feel supported by the school when it comes to pursuing our education.

Sincerely,

Gabriela Perez
Undergraduate Student
To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing today in support of a resolution advanced by Ashlee Hernandez regarding students with dependents. The resolution asks that explicit language is added to the university class attendance policy in the Cal Poly Catalog and campus administrative policy, which “strongly urges” instructors to accept certain reasons, which are listed in the policy, for missing class. Among those reasons are, for example, religious holidays, illness, or an athletic competition. The policy is clearly nonbinding for faculty, but the explicit language enforces a culture of access and equity for students who must miss class for good reason. I think family is one of the most important reasons to miss class.

I believe in adding unavoidable caregiving responsibilities to what I think is a generous, explicit list of excuses for absence. This would give instructors nonbinding guidance to support our students who are parents or caregivers.

Parenthood is a significant potential student identity. By adding explicit language to the list of possible excuses for absence, I believe faculty would be encouraged toward better inclusion. The CPX initiative has revealed that there are many faculty members such as me who believe strongly in recruiting and retaining a diverse student body. The data presentations of CPX emphasized a number of identities’ perspectives on diversity, equity and inclusion. A few of the CPX discussions since have focused on intersectional identity: being a member of more than one identity concurrently. It is intersection that most strongly relates to the resolution offered by Ms. Hernandez. If we truly seek to increase racial/ethnic diversity in our student body, I remind my colleagues that up to 1/3 of our potential students of color are parents. The likelihood of parenthood among graduate students, and graduate students of color, is even higher. It is more likely that students of minoritized backgrounds are parents, than white students. So, to declare that we welcome a diverse applicant pool without explicitly reassuring a significant portion of that applicant pool, who are parents, that they will be supported at times when they must prioritize children and family, is to effectively reduce the diversity of our potential applicant pool.
We explicitly welcome and recruit athletes. They are listed in the policy already. We list jurors, and students missing for military, field trip, job seeking, or religious reasons. We support their absences and the opportunity to make up missed work, explicitly, by listing those situations. Faculty are “strongly urged” to excuse athletes for their sporting events, but our attendance policy is completely silent on the issue of a child with a fever. We have the opportunity to considerably expand our potential applicant pool’s diversity by explicitly welcoming parents to our student body. We can do this by reassuring them that we value students who are parents, as we already do for athletes, jurors, students who are ill, and others. I am requesting that Ashlee’s proposal be given serious consideration, and that explicit language be added to the excusable reasons list for students to miss class and make up the missed work.

Thank you for your consideration of this important resolution.

Sincerely,

Andrew M. Byrne, PhD, CRC, CCCE
Assistant Professor, School of Education

anbyrne@calpoly.edu
Dear Rob,

As someone who was a parent starting in my college years and as a psychologist with expertise in development across the lifespan, I am writing to express my support for the modifications to the excused absence policy to explicitly mention children and other close relations. Many Cal Poly students have multiple responsibilities that extend to the area of caregiving for children, parents or grandparents, spouses, and other relations. This refinement of the language in the excused absence policy recognizes and affirms the importance of those responsibilities, which I know our students work to balance with their responsibilities towards their studies.

Thank you for consideration,

Debra L. Valencia-Laver, Ph.D. (pronouns: she, her, hers)

Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts
Professor, Psychology & Child Development
Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
PH: 805.756.2359 FAX: 805.756.5748
dlvalenc@calpoly.edu
February 10, 2020

To Members of the Academic Senate,

I am writing to show my enthusiastic support for the student-led resolution to clarify language in the class attendance policy to include students with dependents.

The current attendance policy states excused absences include: Serious illness or death of close relatives.

This proposal would change the language to include the following: “Serious illness, death, or any extenuating circumstances of close relatives (to include but not limited to parents, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, spouse or partner, as well as natural, adopted, and/or in-law children).”

The current CalPoly attendance policy omits any mention of students with caregiving duties, thus impacting their ability to both care for their sick child and remain in good academic standing. In other words, student parents who miss class to care for their ill dependents result in a “unexcused” absence. Because much of caretaking responsibilities are gendered, the current version of the attendance policy impacts student mothers disproportionately, thereby hindering our institutional diversity and inclusion goals. This work has been led by one of my mentees Ashlee Hernandez, a former transfer student and first generation CalPoly alumna and student parent, and currently enrolled in the Master’s degree program in the School of Education and whose research and advocacy work is funded by the Baker Koob Endowment.

The goal of this resolution is to create a policy aimed toward closing equity gaps for students with dependents, but it also creates visibility for students who feel invisible on this campus. The support for this policy is part of a larger body of both existing1 and proposed2 work addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues highlighted in the CPX report with goals of increasing retention and on time graduation for this population of students.

I believe that a vote for this policy will help CalPoly move closer toward meeting CSU’s Graduation Initiative 2025—by eliminating equity gaps in degree completion for this student population.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me at tcheuk@calpoly.edu and #805-756-6775 (office).

Sincerely,

Dr. Tina Cheuk
Assistant Professor, School of Education, CSM
Diversity Cluster Hire (2019)

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1 Research work is funded through Office of University Diversity & Inclusion (BEACoN Research) and Baker Koob Endowment.

2 A Strategic Initiative proposal was submitted by Dr. Tina Cheuk and Dr. Joni Roberts (Kinesiology) with the support of Amy Gode (Assistant Director, Disability Resource Center), Genie Kim (Director of Wellbeing, Campus Health and Wellbeing), Suzanne Phelan (CSM/Kinesiology & Public Health), Charlotte Rinaldi (Retention Specialist, University Advising), and Alison Ventura, (CSM/Kinesiology & Public Health).