Meeting of the Academic Senate  
Tuesday, March 9, 2021
https://calpoly.zoom.us/j/84911494847

I. Minutes: February 23, 2021 (pp. 2-3)

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

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

IV. Special Reports:  
A. [TIME CERTAIN 4:30 P.M.] Ongoing Testing and Compliance Program: Yukie Murphy, Bret Heenan and Lori Serna

V. Business Items:  
A. Resolution to Set Cal Poly’s Carbon Neutrality Target Date: David Braun, Academic Senate Sustainability Committee Chair, first reading (pp. 4-5)

VI. Discussion Item(s):  
B. [TIME CERTAIN: 3:30 P.M.] HIST 354R, History of Network and Information Technologies, GE Area B, not recommended for approval: Lewis Call (pp. 6-9)

VII. Adjournment:
Meeting of the Academic Senate
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I. Minutes: none.

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

III. Reports:
A. Academic Senate Chair: none.
B. President’s Office: none.
C. Provost: none.
D. Vice President for Student Affairs: Refer to page 4 of agenda packet.
E. Statewide Senate: Refer to page 5 of agenda packet.
F. CFA: Refer to page 6 of agenda packet.
G. ASI: Refer to pages 7 and 8 of agenda packet.

IV. Special Reports: none.


VI. Business Items:
A. Resolution on New Academic Assessment Council Membership. Michael Nguyen, Academic Assessment Council Chair, shared a resolution revising the Academic Assessment Council’s membership in order to better “reflect campus expertise and interest in academic assessment.” M/S/P to approve the Resolution on New Academic Assessment Council Membership.
B. Resolution on Updating the United States Cultural Pluralism (UCSP) Education Objectives. Grace Yeh, UCSP Review Committee Chair, proposed a resolution revising Cal Poly’s course criteria and educational objectives for USCP courses to be more specifically targeted for this requirement rather than attempting to broadly apply across university curriculum. Some of the new criteria include focusing on one or more diverse groups whose contributions to American society have been impeded or restricted as well as covering the historical and/or contemporary social issues resulting from said conflict or restricted opportunities. M/S/P to move the resolution to second reading. M/S/P to approve the Resolution on Updating the United States Cultural Pluralism (USCP) Education Objectives.
C. Resolution on Faculty Choice of Modality. Thomas Gutierrez, Academic Senate Chair, introduced a resolution which would allow instructional faculty to work in consultation with their department heads or chairs to select the most appropriate teaching modality for their courses through spring quarter 2022 due to ongoing uncertainties about the status of the pandemic as well as the wide variation in personal and professional circumstances that may...
arise for faculty in this pandemic-related context. M/S/P to move the resolution to second reading. M/S/P to approve the Resolution on Faculty Choice of Modality with the following amendment:

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

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

D. Resolution on “Poly Access” Textbook Program. Ryan Jenkins, Philosophy, and John Hagen, Instruction Committee Chair, presented a resolution requesting that the Cal Poly Bookstore to utilize an opt-in program for “Poly Access” rather than the opt-out default as well as seek more consultation from faculty and student representatives when implementing future changes. It also asks “that Cal Poly be mindful of the ethically salient impacts of decisions that have the potential to significantly negatively impact student finances.” M/S/P to move the resolution to second reading. M/S/P to approve the Resolution on “Poly Access” Textbook Program.

E. Resolution to Set Cal Poly’s Carbon Neutrality Target Date. David Braun, Sustainability Committee Chair, suggested several versions of a resolution recommending that Cal Poly work to achieve carbon neutrality by the year 2030 or sooner through accelerating recommendations made in the university’s 2017 Climate Action Plan to better align with the city of San Luis Obispo’s and other state colleges’ courses of action with regard to reducing carbon emissions and mitigating the harmful effects of climate change. Details about this recommendation can be found here. Discussion of this resolution was postponed in order to allow time for Senators to properly consider the multitude of proposed changes.

F. Resolution to Establish Area F in the General Education 2020 Template. Gary Laver, General Education Governance Board Chair, introduced a resolution establishing Area F within General Education in response to the Chancellor’s December 2020 revised Executive Order on CSU General Education Breadth Requirements which established a new Ethnic Studies graduation requirement for all students. This resolution will return in first reading coupled with the Resolution on Subject Area Guidelines for General Education Area F: Ethnic Studies.

VII. Discussion Item(s): none.

VIII. Adjournment: 5:02 p.m.

Submitted by,

Katie Terou

Katie Terou, Academic Senate Student Assistant
WHEREAS, President Armstrong made Cal Poly a Charter Signatory to the Climate Leadership Commitment in 2016, establishing a goal for Cal Poly to achieve net zero carbon emissions from all sources as soon as possible (currently set for 2050); and

WHEREAS, The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has determined that we have less than ten years to make urgent and unprecedented changes to our carbon emissions to avoid the worst impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, The Cal Poly Statement on Diversity seeks to develop awareness and empathy for global communities, including people who are from historically and societally marginalized and underrepresented groups; and

WHEREAS, Failure to reduce carbon emissions will result in increased risk of devastating hurricanes, flooding, droughts, fire, and food scarcity for hundreds of millions of people, especially for marginalized and underrepresented global populations most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, A 2050 target date arrives too late to prevent needless adverse impacts; and

WHEREAS, The City of San Luis Obispo has set a Carbon Neutrality date of 2035; and

WHEREAS, Cal Poly’s carbon emissions link inextricably with the carbon emissions of the City of San Luis Obispo; and

WHEREAS, The entire University of California system has set a target of 2025 for carbon neutrality, and at least six CSU campuses have all set goals for carbon neutrality by 2030 or sooner, all of which are consistent with the targets of the IPCC report on climate change; and
WHEREAS, By accelerating the recommendations to decrease scope 1, 2, and 3 greenhouse gas emissions, utilizing described in the Cal Poly Climate Action Plan dated April 26, 2017, and including all benefits derived from Cal Poly land utilized for plant production (e.g. greenspace, agricultural plant production, rangeland, and forestry) in accounting for scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions, the campus can soon achieve Carbon Neutrality; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate recommends that Cal Poly update the goal it set for Cal Poly to achieve net zero carbon emissions to 2030 or sooner.

Proposed by: Sustainability Committee
Date: Nov. 17, 2020
I first proposed HIST 354 History of Network Technology twenty years ago, as part of GE 2000. At the time, I was excited that Cal Poly had created a new upper-division GE Area F (Technology), for courses that explored the social, cultural, political, and economic impact of various technologies. To me, it seemed especially fitting that a comprehensive polytechnic university would do this, as it embodied both the literal meaning of polytechnic ("many technologies") and what I understood to be the spirit of a comprehensive polytechnic education, in which discussions of science and technology are deeply informed by the concepts and methodologies of the humanities and social sciences.

Since then, I have taught the course many times. It is very popular among students, and we can reliably fill as many sections as we can offer. Over the years, I found that while students were very familiar with contemporary network technologies and used them daily, they knew little if anything about the histories of these technologies: where they came from, who built them, and why. I was glad to be teaching the course in GE. I found that students from STEM disciplines were generally willing and able to help the class understand the technical aspects of the technologies we studied, while students from the liberal arts were able to provide valuable historical, social, and cultural context. As a result, we typically had lively, productive, engaging discussions, and students frequently produced creative and compelling arguments in their written assessments.

In 2015, my colleague Brian Beaton joined the History and STS faculties. Dr. Beaton came to Cal Poly partly because HIST 354 fit very well with their teaching and research interests. They were excited to be able to teach the class. In 2018, we changed the name of the course to History of Network and Information Technologies and revised the catalog description to reflect how Dr. Beaton and I currently teach the course, and to bring the course in line with current research in the history of technology and in STS.

In 2019, we were told that GE Area F was being eliminated due to the Chancellor's Executive Order on GE. Area F courses were moved temporarily into a new Area B7, and faculty who taught Area F courses were invited to submit these courses to be considered for certification in upper-division Area B in GE 2020. GEBG chair Gary Laver told the Cal Poly Academic Senate that old Area F courses could find a new home in upper-division Area B, that the learning objectives and criteria for upper-division B had been written so as to make this possible, and that GEBG would review proposals to certify former Area F courses in Area B with compassion. Of course, we understood that there was no guarantee that Area F courses would be approved for Area B. But we were led to believe that if we made a good faith effort to satisfy the learning objectives and criteria for upper-division B in our course proposals, our courses would likely be approved.
Acting in good faith, I wrote a detailed proposal to move HIST 354R into Area B and submitted it in December 2019. The proposal was promptly approved by the History department chair, CLA curriculum committee, and CLA Associate Dean. The proposal went to GEGB in April 2020. I received my first rollback from GEGB on October 14, 2020. GEGB suggested that "a better fit for this course may be Upper-division D." As I explained to GEGB chair Gary Laver at the time (and have re-iterated several times since), moving the course into upper-division D would serve no useful purpose. History already has no fewer than twenty upper-division D courses on the books. Adding one more would not help us diversify our curricular offerings at all. Indeed, moving HIST 354 into upper-division D would mean that History's GE offerings would be 100% in Area D. This situation is partly the result of Cal Poly's longstanding past practice of putting almost all History GE courses into Area D. Cal Poly is unusual in this regard; there are at least five CSUs whose History faculties offer GE courses outside of Area D, typically in Area C.¹

GEGB said that if I wanted to pursue certification in Area B, they would need to know more about the course's connection to quantitative literacy via GE Area B4. They asked what kind of mathematics background students would need for HIST 354, and asked me to specify a course in GE B4 that would offer the necessary background. I made the requested changes within a week. I reviewed the GE B4 catalog, and selected CSC 121 Computing for All I as the course most relevant to HIST 354. I added CSC 121 as a recommended requisite, not a required prerequisite, because I did not want to bar students who had not taken that one specific course from taking HIST 354. I revised EO1 to include description of quantitative reasoning skills that HIST 354 students would develop, and assessment of such skills. GEGB rolled the course back to me again on October 26. They asked for more detail about how the quantitative reasoning would be assessed, and they asked for a consultation memo for the CSC 121 recommended requisite. I made the requested changes on November 4, adding additional assessment of quantitative reasoning to the expanded course outline and attaching a signed consultation memo from CSC. GEGB rolled the proposal back yet again on November 9, asking for "a treatment of specific computational concepts as provided in the guidelines of Upper-division B" and again pushing me to move the course into upper-division Area D.

At this point, my colleague Dr. Beaton offered to help address GEGB's concerns by developing a comprehensive Humanities Computing Project for inclusion in the course proposal. Dr. Beaton developed a cutting-edge project which would teach students to use "web-based tools to perform quantitative analysis on large volumes of structured and unstructured data." Students would use these tools to perform hands-on quantitative analysis of data that are directly relevant to the course material, such as the University of Minnesota Charles Babbage Institute's repository of historical data about the global computing professions. Dr. Beaton designed this new module to "integrate key concepts from lower-division courses in Area B (EO1), including and especially concepts pertaining to data collection and analysis, experiment design, and hypothesis testing." The Humanities Computing Project was meant to implement Cal Poly's signature "Learn by Doing" pedagogy in a way that would be appropriate for a course on the history of technology, and it aligned with what we understood GEGB to be requesting. Dr. Beaton and I were both

¹ CSU campuses whose History faculties teach GE courses outside Area D include San Diego, Sacramento, Chico, San Marcos, and Monterey Bay. Data from CFA chapter officers.
looking forward to developing this exciting new project over the Summer, prior to teaching the
class in its new form next academic year.

By now the final GEBG meeting of Fall 2020 was rapidly approaching, and I had to work
quickly to re-submit the proposal prior to that meeting. I integrated the new Humanities
Computing Project into the proposal as best I could with the very limited time available to me,
and re-submitted the proposal on November 17, 2020. GEGB rolled the proposal back to me yet
again, with no rationale or justification, just one day later. GEGB stated, without explanation,
that "unfortunately, the Board does not find that the requested changes have been met to make
this an Upper-Division B course," and suggested yet again that I should move the course into
Area D. Since GEGB provided no rationale for their decision to reject the course, and since I
had already explained why I did not want to put the course in Area D, this decision seemed
arbitrary and capricious. At this point, I realized that my only recourse would be to appeal
GEGB's decision to the Academic Senate Curriculum Appeals Committee.

On January 5, 2021, after GEGB had already rejected the course for upper-division B, GEBG
added to the course proposal a letter in which they summarized the reasons behind their decision
to deny certification. They emphasized that courses in upper-division B must include "the
application of quantitative reasoning." This is precisely what Dr. Beaton and I were trying to do
when we added the Humanities Computing Project. GEGB "found no foundational elements of
quantitative reasoning—nor evidence of where students utilize them—within the proposal." They
also found a lack of assessment of quantitative reasoning. However, the revised course proposal
that I submitted contains several examples of quantitative reasoning and assessment thereof,
including the following: "students could use evaluation of the mathematics of connective
redundancy to support an argument about the historical prevalence and success of distributed
network and internetwork architectures" (midterm exam), "students will be taught how to
determine which variables are present within the historical data set provided by the instructor,
how to sample the historical research data, how to perform analysis on the data using the
humanities computing tool, and how to document their research findings according to the
research standards of humanities computing" (Humanities Computing Project, week six), and
"students could present demographic data about gender and ethnic diversity in the information
science professions; students could compare or contrast the original HTML specification with the
current HTML Living Standard, Cascading Style Sheets, and JavaScript" (final exam).

GEGB's letter of January 5, 2021 suggests that they would like to have seen quantitative
reasoning more thoroughly integrated into the first four weeks of course material, that they
would like to have seen more frequent assessments, that they would like for students to be
required to use quantitative reasoning in the midterm and final exams rather than simply
encouraged to do so, and that they would prefer summative assessments to formative ones.
GEGB did not tell me any of this while the course proposal was under review. I would have
been happy to add more assessments, to require quantitative reasoning rather than just
encouraging it on the midterm and final exams, and to use summative rather than formative
assessments. I would still be willing to make these changes if this appeal is upheld. GEGB
further suggested that CSC 121 or other relevant lower-division GE courses should be required
as prerequisites, to ensure that students have the preparation necessary to succeed in HIST 354.
Again, GEGB never told me that during the review process. When they asked me for a
consultation memo for CSC 121 as a *recommended* requisite, I took that to imply that they agreed it was appropriate to recommend this GE B4 course, but not require it, as preparation for HIST 354. While I remain concerned that establishing CSC 121 as a required prerequisite may prevent some interested students from taking the course, I would be willing to make that change if it would permit the course to move into upper-division Area B.

Brian Beaton and I taught a great many sections of HIST 354 when it was in GE Area F (Technology). If this appeal is denied, then History will have no GE courses outside of Area D, and Dr. Beaton and I will need to teach many more courses in Area D. If tenured History faculty such as Dr. Beaton and myself teach more Area D courses, that may mean that fewer Area D courses are available for History lecturers to teach. This could lead to loss of work for our lecturer colleagues. Meanwhile, if HIST 354 loses GE certification, the History Department will only be able to offer one section of the course per year, and the class will only be taken by History majors and minors. In that event, Cal Poly students from a wide variety of other majors will have lost the ability to take a course which has provided great educational benefit to their predecessors for the past two decades.