JOINT MEETING OF THE FACULTY SENATE FINANCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEES
Wednesday, March 24, 2021

Present: Lawrence Brancazio, Sandip Dutta, Bill Faraclas, Joe Fields, Stephanie Fischer, Sanja Grubacic, Jonathan Irving, Yan Liu, Douglas Macur, Obiageli Okwuka, Carol Stewart, Derek Taylor, Binlin Wu

Agenda: Review of IT report on expenditures for academic technologies for our university, provided by Edward L. (Rusty) May, Jr., Director of Technology Administration on October

The meeting began with the members of both committees expressing gratitude to Rusty May for his obvious and sincere effort and complimenting him on the forthcoming nature of the report.

Questions and concerns raised include:

1. The cessation of bond fund monies for academic technology.
2. The possibility of using Covid monies to offset technology costs.
3. Other grant funding that may be available to support academic technology.
4. How the technology needs of the academic community are assessed, and the extent of faculty engagement in decisions on how resources are allocated.
5. Similarities or differences between how our sister schools are dealing with technology budget cuts.
6. The excessive cost of paying for so many services/systems – some of which appear not to be working to the satisfaction of instructors (especially Blackboard, but also with concerns about MS Teams WebEx, Kaltura, etc.
7. The effect on students of using a variety of platforms, balanced with the needs of instructors to determine the best way to present curriculum.
8. Lack of focused support on faculty teaching needs causes student learning outcomes to suffer.
9. Changes happen very quickly in technology, making it difficult to develop competence.
10. The effort to develop Hyflex classrooms quickly was acknowledged, but it was noted that many HyFlex courses were not well attended.

Possible next steps:
1. Consider a faculty survey to collect data on needs, preferred platforms, etc.
2. Hold discussions in a Faculty Senate meeting or have the Senate sponsor a faculty forum for open conversation on the state of technology of the university with Rusty May.
3. Establish a special committee under the direction of the Senate Technology Committee to comprise faculty at large who are not in the senate to address these issues.
4. Ask Senators to get input from respective departments.
5. Reach out to sister universities to gain insight into their selection and fiscal support of resources.

6. Seek input from the University Budget Committee on how dollar amounts are allocated to the IT department, with emphasis on ascertaining the level of faculty input.
7. Distinguish the amounts spent by the system office and the University on academic technology, and find ways to assert our preferences and participate in the negotiation of prices.
8. Reduce spending on systems purchased, to increase monetary allocations for replacing classroom equipment.
9. Find ways to promote training for the faculty.

Action step: The chairs of the Technology and Finance committees will prepare a joint statement for the Faculty Senate from this discussion.

Recommendation: A structure be set in motion by September for the Faculty Senate to more fully address academic technology resource needs, priorities, redundancies and effectiveness, with particular emphasis on the role of the faculty in making decisions, and preferably with the involvement of the other CSU campuses.