School of Natural Sciences
Executive Committee
Minutes of Meeting
October 15, 2012

Attendees: Peggy O’Day (Senate Chair), Ignacio Lopez-Calvo (Senate Vice Chair), Erik Menke, Teamrat Ghezzehei, David Kelley, Francois Blanchette, Henry Forman (phone), Juan Meza, Simrin Takhar

I. Meeting
Pursuant to call, the Executive Committee met at 3:30 pm on Monday, October 15, 2012, in Room SE 370K, Chair Erik Menke presiding.

II. Authority of School Executive Committee in Senate governance
Academic Senate chair Peggy O’Day summarized the purpose of the meeting which is to reiterate the importance of the Natural Sciences Executive Committee (NSEC) as the main body of faculty representation in Senate issues. Faculty members’ rights exist both in the School and at the Senate.

O’Day suggested the following as the main role of the NSEC: 1) an executive committee is considered a committee of the Division. As such, it is charged with the review of Senate items and reporting back to Divisional Council. NSEC can create subcommittees as long as it is not in violation of UC, Merced, or School bylaws. 2) Faculty, through the NSEC, have jurisdiction over degree programs and curriculum. The NSEC must have a governance structure in place that ensures that the Natural Sciences curriculum committee is functioning and reporting to the NSEC. 3) APM 245 grants authorization for department chairs. While duties and compensation of chairs are mentioned in the APM, it is the responsibility of the NSEC to decide on the details.

NSEC must ensure the proper faculty consultation and maintain a consistent voting system so there is a discernible record of Senate business being opined and voted on in the School. NSEC needs to decide what authority it wants, what tasks it wants to delegate, and ensure that Senate functions and requests are carried out.
III. Consultation on Budget and Resource Allocation

O’Day announced that Chancellor Leland and CAPRA chair Susan Amussen plan to meet with each School’s executive committee to talk about the budget process. One of the main issues that the Academic Senate will be working on with the NSEC this academic year is FTE lines and budget allocation. NSEC will act as the CAPRA of the School of Natural Sciences and therefore must have a governance structure in place for this issue.

Another issue that NSEC may consider is whether a School-level review of personnel cases is needed before transmitting cases to the Senate CAP. In the absence of a specific committee, the NSEC holds Senate authority over academic personnel matters within the School.

NSEC must also decide how to incorporate the graduate groups in the governance structure to ensure the groups’ proper representation. NSEC also needs policies and procedures perhaps using cross-School collaboration with other ECs. A brief discussion followed about graduate group funding and the flow of communication from the EVC office to the NS Dean’s office. Also, there is a need to establish procedures with graduate groups on how to spend funds and how to allocate NRT slots. An EC member inquired about a presentation that was given by Acting Graduate Dean Chris Kello to the graduate group chairs regarding graduate funding and responsibilities of chairs.

ACTION: Dean Meza will contact Acting Graduate Dean Kello to obtain the PPT slide presentation. Meza will email the slides to the EC members.

IV. Revision of School Bylaws

NSEC must revise the School of Natural Sciences bylaws to further establish the details of governance and organization within the School. O’Day mentioned that the Senate Committee on Rules & Elections is available to help the NSEC with bylaws revision.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Attest:
Erik Menke, Chair

Minutes prepared by:
Simrin Takhar, SNS Liaison to the Academic Senate
Attendees: Erik Menke, Teamrat Ghezehei, David Kelley, Francois Blanchette, Henry Forman (phone), Juan Meza, Simrin Takhar

I. Meeting
Pursuant to call, the Executive Committee met at 3:00 pm on Monday, October 22, 2012, in Room SE 370K, Chair Erik Menke presiding.

II. Graduate Financial Aid
The Executive Committee (EC) members discussed the EC’s role in graduate funding issues in relation to the role of graduate group chairs. There were also inquiries regarding the flow of funds – does it go through the VCR, then Graduate Division, then to the Schools, or, does it go from the VCR to GRC who then decides how to allocate funds to Schools?

It was pointed out by an EC member that graduate student funds come from UCOP and cannot be used for GSRs. The funds must essentially be treated as fellowships. Another EC member brought up the issue of TAs and the need for Schools to have input on TA assignments.

There was concern over the lack of clarification on how much money is available for graduate funding and what restrictions are attached to its use. The EC members discussed the PPT slide presentation that Acting Graduate Dean Chris Kello previously did for the NS graduate group chairs. Several EC members suggested speaking to VCR Traina and Kello about the amount of money and restrictions.

The EC then held a discussion on NRT slots. The main concerns were who will decide on the algorithm to allocate the slots (GRC? Schools?) and whether the Schools will have the NRT slots in time for graduate student recruiting this fall.
**Action:** EC Chair Menke will ask Acting Graduate Dean Chris Kello for clarity on NRT slots at this Thursday’s meeting of the SNS graduate group chairs.

### III. NS Bylaws Revision

Before the meeting, EC Chair Menke distributed a revised copy of the NS Bylaws via email for review amongst all NS faculty members. Chair Menke said his intention is to incorporate the comments into a revised draft to present at the November 6 EC meeting.

One of the comments received from the faculty was that clarification is needed for the word “instructor” in section 3 “Membership”. Discussion among the EC revealed that the term, in that context, is antiquated within the UC system.

**ACTION:** The language about “instructors” will be removed from the Bylaws.

An EC member objected to Section 4 “Officers”, specifically, the language that states the Vice Chair automatically assumes the office of Chair on the following September 1. The EC member pointed out that the Chair and Vice Chair should be elected by the NS faculty each spring; the Vice Chair should not be automatically appointed as Chair.

**ACTION:** The language about Vice Chair will be revised to reflect that the position, along with the Chair, goes up for election every spring.

The EC members discussed the Natural Sciences Curriculum Committee (NSCC). The committee felt that the NSCC adds an extraneous layer of approval to the CRF process. While the Dean’s approval is necessary for the purpose of resources, the NSCC’s approval is almost always a “rubber stamping” and therefore unnecessary. EC members agreed that undergraduate CRFs should be created and approved at the level of the undergraduate program leads, and graduate CRFs should be under the domain of the graduate group chairs. Once approved by the Dean, the CRFs then go on to the Registrar, and then UGC or GRC.

**ACTION:** All reference to the NSCC will be eliminated in the Bylaws and a new CRF workflow will be included.

### IV. Graduate CRF Workflow

There is a need to have a policy that specifies the workflow for graduate CRFs as there is some ambiguity over the roles of the graduate group chair, Graduate Programs Coordinator, and the Dean’s office. The EC members agreed on the
main point that graduate group chairs will continue the creation and approval of graduate CRFs.

**ACTION:** EC Chair Menke will create a workflow that reflects the proper roles of the graduate group chairs, Dean’s office, Registrar, and GRC.

Ex-officio member Dean Meza requested advice from the EC on the future of the Biology LP SOE position. In the last recruiting season, the Biology LP SOE position was a joint position between the LES and MCB Bylaw 55 units. It became problematic and the position was not filled. After a brief discussion on interdisciplinary issues and voting issues within units, the EC members advised Dean Meza that for the future, the position should be placed in either LES or MCB but not both.

An EC member inquired about compensation for undergraduate program leads similar to that of Bylaw 55 unit leads. Dean Meza explained that the unit leads created a proposal based on their duties and a parallel proposal from the Academic Senate. They are compensated for doing the duties stated in the unit leads’ proposal. However, the Dean does not appoint undergraduate program leads. An EC member pointed out a problem of ambiguity as in some cases, unit lead duties overlap some program lead duties. It was suggested that the disciplinary groups meet to discuss how to handle these issues e.g. ownership of curriculum in order to clear up the ambiguity.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Attest:
Erik Menke, Chair

Minutes prepared by:
Simrin Takhar, SNS Liaison to the Academic Senate
Attendees: Erik Menke, Teamrat Ghezehehi, David Kelley, Patti LiWang, Linda Hirst, Francois Blanchette (phone), Henry Forman (phone), Juan Meza, Simrin Takhar

I. Meeting
Pursuant to call, the Executive Committee met at 1:30 pm on Tuesday, November 6, 2012, in Room SE 370K, Chair Erik Menke presiding.

II. Graduate Financial Aid
On October 25, the NS graduate group chairs, Dean Meza, and Acting Graduate Dean Chris Kello met to discuss graduate funding. The NS graduate groups will create their own proposals for how they will spend the funds and will then submit the proposals to Dean Meza the last week of November. The Dean, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will decide how funds will be spent. Dean Meza reiterated that funds must be used only on those activities that directly benefit students graduate such as fellowships and travel grants. NRT money is separate.

ACTION: Upon receiving the graduate groups’ proposals at the end of November, Dean Meza will make his funding decision in December.

III. FTE draft proposal
Prior to the meeting, Dean Meza emailed Chair Menke and Vice Chair Forman a draft strategic focusing proposal that originated from CAPRA. The proposal outlined plans in AY 12-13 to have graduate groups decide on FTE requests rather than Bylaw 55 units. The Executive Committee members discussed their concerns that graduate groups may become splintered. Not every graduate group aligns with a Bylaw 55 unit. In addition, FTE lines get awarded to the units even if graduate groups request them. Dean Meza pointed out that this is a transition year.
ACTION: Chair Menke will draft a memo from the Executive Committee to CAPRA requesting the following alternatives to its draft proposal: make a limited number (no more than one-third) of the campus wide FTEs available to the graduate groups or give the Schools more independence in soliciting proposals from a variety of groups (graduate groups and Bylaw 55 units) rather than stating that the proposals must come solely from the graduate groups. Committee members were asked to provide comments by Tuesday, November 13.

IV. **NS Bylaws**
Prior to the meeting, Chair Menke distributed a revised version of the NS Bylaws.

ACTION: Executive Committee members will review the revised bylaws and submit comments to Chair Menke before the December 12 meeting.

V. **CRF memo**
Prior to the meeting, Chair Menke distributed a revised CRF workflow memo that will eventually be distributed to all NS faculty.

ACTION: Committee members will review the memo and provide comments to Chair Menke by November 13.

VI. **All-faculty meeting**
At the suggestion of the Leadership Council, the Executive Committee members discussed the idea of an all-faculty meeting in NS, with Dean Meza, in early December.

ACTION: The Dean’s office will schedule an all-faculty meeting with Dean Meza in early December and will solicit agenda items from the faculty.

In response to an inquiry by a committee member, a discussion was held regarding the role of the Executive Committee in approving FTE allocations. It was reiterated that the Dean, in consultation with the Executive Committee, makes the final decision.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Attest:
Erik Menke, Chair

Minutes prepared by:
Simrin Takhar, SNS Liaison to the Academic Senate
Attendees: Erik Menke, Henry Forman, David Kelley, Patti LiWang, Linda Hirst, Francois Blanchette (phone), Juan Meza, Simrin Takhar

I. **Meeting**
Pursuant to call, the Executive Committee met at 4:00 pm on Wednesday, December 12, 2012, in Room SE 370K, Chair Erik Menke presiding.

II. **Early Progress Policy**
There is a concern among Physics faculty that advisors are suggesting to students not to take Physics courses in their first year even if the students are qualified.

III. **Approval of November 6 Minutes**
Committee members approved the minutes as presented.

IV. **Revised CAPRA Policy for FTE Allocations**
CAPRA’s revised version now states that FTEs can be submitted from ORUs and CRUs in addition to graduate groups. The Executive Committee held a discussion on MCB members being a minority in every graduate group and the difficulties in getting enough votes for their MCB proposals. Committee members also discussed the line in the proposal that states that Schools can develop their own criteria for ranking proposals.

**ACTION:** In January, the Executive Committee will determine the criteria it wants to use for ranking proposals. The criteria will then be submitted to the graduate groups.

V. **Revised Bylaws**
Chair Menke briefly explained the revisions.
**ACTION:** Executive Committee members will send any comments to Chair Menke by this week. The revised bylaws will then be sent to the School for comments.

**VI. USAP Funds**
The graduate groups submitted their proposals to Dean Meza. Dean Meza asked the Executive Committee if it had any concerns with the proposals. He also asked for suggestions on how he should rank the proposals and what metrics he should use. Vice Chair Forman mentioned being a part of a biomedical workforce working group report implementation plan which he’d previously sent to Chair Menke and Dean Meza. The report was an example of a set of guidelines needed for evaluation.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Attest:
Erik Menke, Chair

Minutes prepared by:
Simrin Takhar, SNS Liaison to the Academic Senate
Attendees: Erik Menke, Henry Forman, David Kelley, Patti LiWang, Francois Blanchette, Mike Dawson, Juan Meza, Simrin Takhar

I. **Meeting**
Pursuant to call, the Executive Committee met at 9:00 am on Wednesday, January 30, 2013, in Room SE 370K, Chair Erik Menke presiding.

II. **Approval of Minutes from December 12, 2012 Meeting**

**ACTION:** Minutes were approved as presented.

III. **FTE Evaluation Criteria**
The committee discussed how to proceed with the criteria for evaluating FTEs as requested in the CAPRA plan (previously distributed and discussed). It was pointed out that the School’s FTE requests should align with the campus budget initiatives as listed in the 2013-2014 budget call. The committee agreed that the School’s criteria should be: need, fit, align with campus strategic goals and initiatives, and research expenditures.

The committee also discussed creating a separate FTE plan for replacing faculty members that have separated. As the positions, curriculum, and salary are already in place, the committee agreed that the justification should be a separate process from that of requesting new FTEs.

**ACTION:** Chair Menke will draft a memo of School criteria and email it to all faculty next week.
IV. **Other Issues**

A committee member raised the issue of the disenfranchisement of lecturers. Lecturers lack support; and apart from their union bargaining agreement, there are no coherent policies to guide them in their careers. This is especially problematic with lecturers approaching their sixth year as there is confusion on what documents they must submit to be considered for continuing appointment and uncertainty about who reviews the documents. While this problem is not exclusive to UC Merced, there needs to be clarity and transparency in policies relating to lecturers and a concerted effort to integrate lecturers with faculty and the campus community.

**ACTION:** Printed copies of the lecturers’ bargaining agreement will be provided at the next meeting for further discussion.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

Attest:
Erik Menke, Chair

Minutes prepared by:
Simrin Takhar, SNS Liaison to the Academic Senate
School of Natural Sciences  
Executive Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
February 27, 2013

Attendees: Erik Menke, Henry Forman, Mike Dawson, Francois Blanchette, Linda Hirst, Juan Meza, Simrin Takhar

I. Meeting
Pursuant to call, the Executive Committee met at 9:00 am on Wednesday, February 27, 2013, in Room SE 370K, Chair Erik Menke presiding.

II. Approval of Minutes from January 30 meeting

ACTION: Minutes approved upon striking the sentence stating three vacant MCB positions will be filled.

III. FTE Requests
FTE requests from the graduate groups are due to Dean Meza on March 1. Committee members held a discussion on how to rank them. One committee member suggested the following criteria: need of the university, need of the graduate group, and interdisciplinarity. The Executive Committee’s rankings will be sent to the Dean who then has the authority to change or keep the rankings. Both sets of rankings will be sent to CAPRA. A committee member inquired whether the issue of resources should be considered while ranking. Dean Meza responded that while the Executive Committee should consider resources, its primary focus should be on academic need. Dean Meza will consider both resources and academic need while reviewing. An extra meeting should be held for the purpose of ranking as the next regularly-scheduled Executive Committee meeting of March is past FTE requests submission deadline.

ACTION: The Executive Committee will submit its rankings to Dean Meza on March 15. Simrin will poll the committee to schedule an extra meeting to be held before March 15.
IV. Faculty recruitment
Committee member Dawson raised the issue of streamlining faculty recruitment following attrition. A document was distributed to the committee prior to the meeting that stated the problem (the attrition of tenure-track faculty), the need (refilling the necessary positions in a timely manner), and the proposed course of action (streamlined rapid-response process to fill vacated needed positions by opening a search during the first available recruitment season).

The committee discussed the need for a structured process for filling vacant positions. It was pointed out that the Provost – who owns the FTE lines – has expressed interest in a more streamlined process. The committee also discussed the possibility that challenges with the bylaw 55 units or graduate groups are contributing factors to faculty attrition; if that is the case, these challenges will also need to be addressed.

ACTION: Professor Dawson will draft a proposal based on today’s discussion which will be distributed to the Executive Committee before the next meeting of March 20.

V. CAOB Telecommunications
Prior to the meeting, a document was submitted to Chair Menke from Professor Michael Spivey from SSHA that described the capabilities of the upcoming CAOB building. Professor Spivey asked the Executive Committee for any comments and feedback, particularly regarding the proposed A/V capabilities of the classrooms.

The committee held a brief discussion and decided the following comments should be related to Professor Spivey: the lighting system in the rooms needs to be fixed to allow the rooms to darken completely in order to conduct demos; the rooms need more board space; the rooms’ A/V systems need to be simplified; rooms that only hold eight people do not need A/V systems; the rooms need infrared for the hearing impaired and the rooms need improved clicker technology.

ACTION: Chair Menke will send these comments to Professor Spivey.

VI. Systemwide Review Items
Prior to the meeting, two systemwide review items, sent by the Merced Academic Senate office, were distributed to the faculty: financial and funding policies and APM 700. The Executive Committee had no comments.

ACTION: Simrin will inform the Senate office that the Executive Committee has no comments on the systemwide review items.
VII. **Roundtable**
A committee member suggested the Executive Committee take the responsibility of nominating fellow faculty members for Academic Senate and Sigma Xi awards. SNS faculty should be more fully recognized for their accomplishments but are not always nominated by their peers due to the extra workload required by various nomination processes. Another committee member suggested the Executive Committee could also nominate fellow faculty members for national academy awards in addition to campus awards.

Chair Menke reminded the committee about the upcoming Academic Senate elections. The Senate is holding elections for four members of the Committee on Committees and one at-large member of Division Council.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

Attest:
Erik Menke, Chair

Minutes prepared by:
Simrin Takhar, SNS Liaison to the Academic Senate
School of Natural Sciences  
Executive Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
March 20, 2013

Attendees: Erik Menke, Dave Kelley, Patti LiWang, Mike Dawson, Francois Blanchette, Linda Hirst, Juan Meza, Simrin Takhar

I. **Meeting**  
Pursuant to call, the Executive Committee met at 9:00 am on Wednesday, March 20, 2013, in Room SE 370K, Chair Erik Menke presiding.

II. **Approval of Minutes from February 20 meeting**  
Minutes approved pending two changes: clarify that both the Dean and the Executive Committee considered resources when ranking FTE requests and remove the sentence referring to distance learning under the CAOB Telecommunications agenda item.

III. **Streamlining FTE Replacement**  
Prior to the meeting, a committee member distributed a draft memo on the need to streamline the process of replacing FTEs due to faculty attrition. The committee discussed the fact that a process is desirable, but situations and budgets are on a case-by-case basis. The main issue is start up rather than FTE lines or salary.

**ACTION:** The draft memo will be revised and distributed to the Executive Committee members for comments.

IV. **Faculty Workload**  
Faculty workload varies across UC campuses. A committee member suggested perusing the IPA website for data on faculty workload. It was also pointed out that the Dean creates the faculty workload policy but policies are not uniform across campuses. A discussion followed about the need to re-examine the service load and the types of committees on which faculty members serve. Some faculty members also feel that leading a research or graduate group should count towards teaching. The committee debated various teaching
relief suggestions such as offering two semesters of teaching relief to Assistant Professors rather than one. It was also pointed out that mentoring Lecturers takes a significant amount of time and should count towards teaching.

V. Systemwide Review Items

Prior to the meeting, two systemwide review items were distributed to the Executive Committee at the request of the Academic Senate office: proposed revisions to SR 478 and revisions to APM 430. The Executive Committee had no comments on either item.

ACTION: The Academic Senate office will be informed that the Executive Committee had no comments.

VI. Revised MAPP

Prior to the meeting, the revised MAPP was distributed to all faculty members at the request of the Academic Senate office. Comments from SNS faculty members are currently being compiled for transmittal to the Senate. The Executive Committee had no further comments.

ACTION: The Academic Senate office will be informed that the Executive Committee had no further comments.

VII. Space

Prior to the meeting, the Executive Committee members were shown maps of the proposed space changes in SE 1. There is concern among several faculty members that there will not be enough space for Castle faculty, current on-campus faculty, and new hires.

VIII. FTE Priorities

Dean Meza asked for clarification on the rankings as he was unable to attend the extra meeting of the Executive Committee that was convened for the purposes of ranking the graduate groups’ FTE requests. After a brief discussion, it was confirmed that the Executive Committee had chosen not to rank the FTE requests and instead provide the Dean with tiers of priorities. It was also confirmed that the MCB LPSOE position had not been discussed at the rankings meeting.

ACTION: The Executive Committee will conduct an email discussion about the MCB LPSOE position.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.
Attest:
Erik Menke, Chair

Minutes prepared by:
Simrin Takhar, SNS Liaison to the Academic Senate
Attendees: Erik Menke, Dave Kelley, Patti LiWang, Mike Dawson, Francois Blanchette, Juan Meza, Simrin Takhar

I. Meeting
Pursuant to call, the Executive Committee met at 9:00 am on Wednesday, April 24, 2013, in Room SE 370K, Chair Erik Menke presiding.

II. Approval of Minutes from March 20 meeting
Minutes approved pending one change: under the Faculty Workload agenda item, the first sentence should reflect the fact that faculty workload varies across UC campuses, rather than disciplines.

III. Relocation of Graduate Students
There are varying opinions across disciplines whether graduate students should work inside the PI’s labs or outside of them. In some cases, it is unsafe for the students to work in the labs when they are not running experiments. In other cases, faculty members prefer their students to work inside the lab.

A brief discussion followed on where to place graduate students if they are not allowed to work inside the labs. Due to space shortages on campus, there are limited options for graduate students.

ACTION: Dean Meza will ask EH&S what the rules are for graduate students working inside labs.

IV. FTE Requests
The committee held a discussion on new hires versus replacement hires and the role of the Provost. The Provost requires justification even for replacements. The main issue is start up packages.
Committee members discussed options for making the resignation process more efficient and the timing necessary for requesting an FTE replacement.

Regarding the SNS faculty FTE requests, some committee members asked for a clarification on which requests were new and which were replacements so that information can be transmitted to the Provost and CAPRA. After a discussion, it was decided that that action would not be taken.

V. Streamlining Faculty FTE Replacements
The committee discussed the Division Council’s response to the committee’s memo to the Provost that requested a process to streamline the replacement of faculty FTEs. Division Council’s memo suggested that the APO and Provost revise 2012-G to accommodate all requests for FTE that take place outside of the annual budget allocation process and to explicitly include replacement hires.

ACTION: Chair Menke will send a memo back to Division Council that states the Executive Committee is supportive of the suggestion to revise the MAPP.

VI. Campuswide Review
The Academic Senate office solicited comments from the faculty on the newly-revised version of the MAPP. The committee discussed issues such as voting and rank, and the Dean appointing search committee chairs.

The Academic Senate also sought comments on the faculty relocation policy. The Committee discussed the $8,000 limit. It was pointed out that this policy is not new and was taken straight from the APM. The dollar limit listed in the policy is an IRS rule. The amount can be adjusted by the Schools if necessary.

ACTION: The Executive Committee’s comments on the MAPP will be compiled and transmitted to the Senate office. The Senate office will also be informed that the Executive Committee has no comments on the relocation policy.

VII. NMR Manager Budget
Due to time constraints, Dean Meza mentioned only that there should be money in the budget next year for a NMR Manager.

Chair Menke asked the Executive Committee members to encourage their colleagues to submit nominations for next academic year’s Executive Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.
Attest:
Erik Menke, Chair

Minutes prepared by:
Simrin Takhar, SNS Liaison to the Academic Senate