



SPECIAL MEETING – ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Thursday, July 18, 2024 @ 1:30 p.m.

Regents Present: Committee Chair Ira Bloom, Regent James McCarthy, Regent Juanita James

Members: Professor Colena Sesanker

Staff Present: Aynsley Diamond, Pamela Heleen, Lori Lamb, Vita Litvin, Lesley Mara,
Tamara O’Day Stevens, Kim Pacelli, Shannon Walsh, Kaylah Davis

The meeting was called to order at 1:31 p.m. by Committee Chair Ira Bloom.

1. Call to Order and Declaration of Quorum
2. Adopt Agenda
3. Action Item – Interim Student Code of Conduct

Committee Chair Ira Bloom introduced the Interim Student Code of Conduct and advised that this interim policy includes substantive changes because of revised mandated regulations by the United States Department of Education and changes required by the United States Department of Justice. The development of the interim policy has been a monumental effort put together in a short period of time. This interim policy includes other non-substantive changes that bring the policy up to date, such as changes in titles and the inclusion of CT State. Committee Chair Ira Bloom added that there are various legal challenges underway in other states that may impact the overall implementation of Title IX regulations, and that additional consultation with stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, and students will be needed.

Committee Chair Ira Bloom introduced Interim General Counsel Vita Litvin, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Aynsley Diamond, and Interim Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management Dr. Tamara O’Day-Stevens. CSCU retained a consultant to aid in the revision of the Title IX policy.

Interim General Counsel Vita Litvin and Associate General Counsel Shannon Walsh provided background on the Department of Education and Department of Justice regulations, and referenced the proposed policies, Affirmative Action and EEO and Interim Harassment and Nondiscrimination, that moved through the BOR Human Resources Committee on July 17th, 2024. Interim General Counsel Vita Litvin shared that the Student Code of Conduct required numerous updates due to the April 2024 Department of Education amendments to Title IX regulations that are scheduled to take effect on August 1st, 2024. Amendments were also needed as the current policy refers to situations such as stalking and intimate partner violence; the proposed Student Code of Conduct removes those references and now refers to the new Interim Harassment and Nondiscrimination policy. Additionally, because of state and federal law, provisions were made in reference to disciplinary measures for self-harm

behaviors. Given the pending legal challenges and remaining necessary revisions, the Student Code of Conduct was put forward for approval as an interim policy.

Interim Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, Dr. Tamara O'Day-Stevens shared information regarding student needs and ensuring fair processes for student support. She advised that the COVID-19 pandemic caused students on a national level to identify their struggles with anxiety and depression, and today, there are state and federal regulations that require all institutions to adjust their practices and policies on the subject.

Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Aynsley Diamond shared that there is a need to establish a separate academic integrity policy with language regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI), as well as review and revision to behavior misconduct policies. As the Student Code of Conduct is an interim policy, this work will continue throughout the coming academic year.

Regent James McCarthy expressed his appreciation to the group that took on this complicated and necessary work, adding that those implementing the policy will need to adjust to the new procedures. Regent McCarthy asked about the major differences and changes that are involved between the old and new policy. Interim General Counsel Vita Litvin advised that there are multiple policies (3) currently that cover the same subject matter and include references to sexual misconduct that is regulated by Title IX. On a systematic level, the discriminatory and harassing behavior references are being streamlined under one comprehensive policy. The changes can be looked at in buckets, the first being general changes to the preamble, definition, jurisdiction, and scope sections; the second includes changes to the prohibited conduct section, Title IX, self-harm provisions, and added language with input from campus police chiefs that helps administrators handle protests on campus. Other changes are editorial. Regent McCarthy advised that this clarification was helpful.

Regent Juanita James agreed that the explanation was helpful and requested that the clarification on the differences and changes among the policies are presented at the full board meeting. Regent James asked about the training for the various constituents who need to understand and administer the policy and its regulations. Interim General Counsel Vita Litvin advised that as this is an interim policy, there remains a significant amount of work regarding the procedural aspect. Student code administrators and leaders will require training to understand the shift in policy and implement the changes. Dr. Tamara O'Day Stevens confirmed that the procedures will be updated with a team from across the system and campuses, and that a plan for training and roll out will take place. She added that CT State holds a multi-day compliance retreat that addresses many of these issues, and that Kim Pacelli also handles Title IX training across the system.

Committee Chair Ira Bloom asked if there are Title IX coordinators at each campus, and asked if the Dean of Students will also be involved in this training, as it must be carried out on the campus level, as well. Kim Pacelli, System Title IX Coordinator confirmed the campuses have coordinators across the system. She advised that there are trainings regarding the technicality of the policy requirements, and cultural and consciousness trainings. All the

coordinators have worked closely with Kim on this matter, and individuals in this space not only understand the need, but also have the necessary skill set for this work.

Regent James McCarthy added that this policy as an interim effort makes sense, but may make trainings nuanced, as there will inevitably be changes from the old, current, and future policies.

Committee Chair Ira Bloom commented regarding training at the President and Provost level, adding that it is important for this group to understand the policy fully. Regent James McCarthy seconded this suggestion.

Committee Chair Ira Bloom asked for a motion to approve the Interim Student Code of Conduct policy. On a motion by Regent Juanita James, second by Regent James McCarthy, a vote was taken, and the interim policy was approved unanimously.

Committee Chair Ira Bloom called for a motion to adjourn. On a motion by Regent James McCarthy, and second by Regent Juanita James, a vote was taken, and the meeting adjourned at 2:09 p.m.