

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

ACADEMIC SENATE

ELECTIONS AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

EP-001-190

Adoption of More Inclusive Language in Senate Constitution and Reports

Elections and Procedures Committee

Date: 10/18/2019

**Executive Committee
Received and Forwarded**

Date: 10/30/2019

Academic Senate

**Date: 12/04/2019
First Reading
01/29/2020
Second Reading**

BACKGROUND:

The CPP Academic Senate Constitution is currently "gender-neutral" in that it uses "him/her"-type constructions throughout. This is not completely inclusive as non-binary persons do not identify with either label. This can be remedied by the adoption of different descriptors and pronouns. This has the added benefit of being stylistically less awkward.

There is also the associated question of whether or not the use of such language would be required (by provisions in the Bylaws) in senate reports. (See: CSU Fullerton Bylaws, attached)

RESOURCES CONSULTED:

1) Individuals

- a) Susan Hua, Interim Assistant Vice President, Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance, Cal Poly Pomona
- b) Bri Carmen Sérráno, Coordinator, Pride Center, Office of Student Life & Cultural Centers, Cal Poly Pomona
- c) Executive Committee, Cal Poly Pomona Academic Senate

2) Documents

- a) The Constitution of the Academic Senate of Cal Poly Pomona, 2018
- b) The Bylaws of the Academic Senate of Cal Poly Pomona, 2019
- c) Chancellor's Memorandum, SUBJECT: Gender Recognition Act, 2018
- d) ASI Resolution in Support of Gender-Inclusive Policies and Practices throughout California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, 2017-2018
- e) State of California Senate Bill 179, 2017
- f) Academic Senate Bylaws, California State University, Fullerton, 2019
- g) Academic Manual, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, 2019

DISCUSSION:

There is a not-insignificant fraction of the population that does not identify with either of the two "feminine" or "masculine" poles traditionally used to distinguish gender or that identifies themselves as somewhere intermediate to the two. Recent California legislation recognizes these possibilities and has implemented policies throughout the State to promote inclusion, such as the "nonbinary" option for gender on driver's licenses in the State of California. Additionally, the Chancellor's Office has directed, via memorandum, that campus documents be written in a way that is inclusive as possible with respect to nonbinary identities. This relatively recent shift in consciousness has manifested itself locally at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (CPP) as a resolution put forward by the Associated

Students, Inc. (ASI) Senate that exhorts the administration, faculty, and Academic Senate of CPP (AS-CPP) to write policies and other documents with inclusivity in mind.

Currently, the Constitution of the AS-CPP does not reflect the existence of these individuals in a number of locations. Language like “he/she,” “him/her,” or “his/hers” occurs four times. This is easy enough to change; the use of “they,” “them,” “their,” etc. as singular pronouns that are not strictly binary is commonplace. Most individuals referred to in the constitution also possess titles (“chair,” “senator,” etc.) so there are other ways to refer to individuals that obviate the use of pronouns.

Additionally, it should be the goal of the AS-CPP to produce reports and policies that reflect a commitment to inclusion. The CPP President is constrained to operate under the direction of the Chancellor’s Office and is unable to sign any AS-CPP Senate report or policy that does not incorporate inclusive wording. It is the opinion of this committee that the authors of senate reports use inclusive pronouns or other suitable language so that it is not incumbent upon the president to make the necessary corrections. Simultaneously, we do not want to legislate how committees write their reports, introducing lengthy components of our governing documents that resemble style guides. We have introduced some unobtrusive language indicating that senate reports are subject to rejection by the Recording Secretary for not incorporating completely inclusive language in Art. II, Sec. 3(C):

Section 3 The Recording Secretary shall:

[...]

(C) Supervise the preparation of reports from committees of the Academic Senate, ensuring that proper form **and inclusive language are** ~~is~~ used, sufficient copies are printed, and reports are properly distributed.

We wish to emphasize that it is not the Recording Secretary’s job to correct reports, but to alert committees that their reports are not up to AS-CPP standards. We recommend that a

directive (in the form of an easily removed annotation or other technologically convenient form) accompany the report templates disseminated to committee chairs.

RECOMMENDATION:

The proposed revised language in the AS-CPP constitution and bylaws is attached. In summary:

- **Art. II, Sec. 3(E):** “his/her” → “their”
- **Art. III, Sec. 7:** “to an alternate designated by him/her” → “their designee”
- **Art. III, Sec. 8(B):** “his or her” → “their”
- **Art. III, Sec. 10:** “his/her” → “their”

in the Constitution, and the modification of **Art. II, Sec. 3(C)** of the Bylaws as above.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION:

The AS-CPP constitution is still referred to as “Appendix 17” of the University policy manual, which does not exist in the same form as it did when the AS-CPP constitution was first adopted. We recommend renaming this document header to “Policy 121” to reflect the current University manual. It is unclear if such a document-control–related matter requires ratification by the CPP faculty