Southern Connecticut State University

FACULTY SENATE

November 4, 2020 | 12:10 p.m. | WebEx

To join the meeting, please click here to be connected via WebEx.
Alternatively, copy and paste this link:
https://southernct.webex.com/southernct/j.php?MTID=m15d8e7f21288f095f7bf6c051f494514

AGENDA ............................................................................................................................................... 2

UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF OCTOBER 28, 2020 ............................................................................. 3

DOCUMENTS TO ACCOMPANY MINUTES (OCTOBER 14, 2020 MEETING) ........................................... 6
Resolution Regarding Undergraduate Pass/Fail Option for Fall 2020 (With track changes) .............. 6
RESOLUTION Regarding Undergraduate Pass/Fail Option for Fall 2020 (Clean copy) ...................... 8
Resolution Regarding Graduate Student Pass/Fail Option for Fall 2020 (With Track Changes) ....... 10
RESOLUTION Regarding Graduate Student Pass/Fail Option for Fall 2020 (Clean Copy) ............... 12
RESOLUTION REGARDING FACULTY CHOICE IN ADMINISTERING STUDENT OPINION SURVEYS IN THE FALL 2020 AND SPRING 2021 SEMESTERS ........................................................................................................ 14

DOCUMENTS/MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS FOR REVIEW FOR THE NOVEMBER 4, 2020 SPECIAL MEETING ........ 15
RESOLUTION REGARDING BOARD OF REGENTS’ RESOLUTION FOR REVISED FY 2021 SPENDING PLAN ......... 15
AGENDA
Special Meeting
November 4, 2020
12:10 p.m.

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I. Announcements Relevant to the Faculty Senate

II. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting held on October 14, 2020

III. Unfinished Business
   a. Resolution Regarding Board of Regents’ Resolution for Revised FY 2021 Spending Plan

Fall 2020 meetings: September 2, September 16, September 30, October 14, October 28, November 4 (special meeting)
                           November 11, December 2.

Spring 2021 meetings: January 27, February 10, February 24, March 10, March 31, April 14, April 28, May 5.
The Fifth Meeting of the Faculty Senate AY 2020-2021 was held on October 28, 2020, at 12:10 p.m. via WebEx.

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<td>Sandip Dutta*</td>
<td>Finance</td>
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<td>Atul Kulkarni</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
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<td>Rex Gilliland</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
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<td>Angela Lopez-Velasquez*</td>
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<td>Natalie Starling</td>
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<td>Carol Stewart</td>
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<td>Dr. Joe Bertolino</td>
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<td>Guests:</td>
<td>R. Prezant (Provost)</td>
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<td>J. Edstrom (EM)</td>
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An asterisk denotes an absence. Overall attendance recorded below each member.
Faculty Senate President D. Weiss called the 4th meeting of the Faculty Senate to order at 12:10 p.m.

I. Announcements
   A. M. Diamantis: Renewal Workshop will take place November 6 at 1 p.m. An email was distributed by the SCSU-AAUP office.
   B. L. Eilderts: The call-for-proposals for the Faculty Development Grant scheme will be announced soon. Application will be submitted via the Kuali grant system. The deadline to submit proposals is set for February 1, 2021.

II. Minutes of the previous meeting held on October 14, 2020 were accepted as distributed. https://inside.southernct.edu/faculty-senate/meetings

III. President’s Report https://inside.southernct.edu/faculty-senate/meetings

IV. Unfinished Business
   A. **Motion to approve** Resolution Regarding Search for Next CSCU President
      i. Vote tally
         1. Yes ............................................. 41
         2. No .............................................. 2
            a. **Motion to approve passed.**

V. New Business
   A. K. Marsland **moved to approve** the Resolution Regarding Undergraduate Pass/Fail Option for Fall 2020.
      i. After discussion, slight revisions were made to the resolution (see documents below) and approved.
         1. Vote tally of the motion to approve the resolution as amended
            a. Yes ............................................. 41
            b. No .............................................. 3
               i. **Motion to approve** the resolution as amended **passed.**
   B. K. Marsland **moved to approve** the Resolution Regarding Graduate Pass/Fail Option for Fall 2020.
      i. After discussion, slight revisions were made to the resolution (see documents below) and approved.
         1. Vote tally of the motion to approve the resolution as amended:
            a. Yes ............................................. 38
            b. No .............................................. 1
               i. **Motion to approve** the resolution as amended **passed.**
   C. **Motion to approve** the Resolution Regarding Faculty Choice in Administering Student Opinion Surveys in The Fall 2020 And Spring 2021 Semesters.
      i. Vote tally of the motion to approve the resolution:
         1. Yes ............................................. 45
         2. No .............................................. 3
            a. **Motion to approve** the resolution **passed.**
   D. **Motion to approve** Resolution Regarding Board of Regents’ Resolution for Revised FY 2021 Spending Plan
      i. W. Faraclas **moved to postpone** the resolution until a special meeting to take place on November 4, 2020, from 12:10-1:00 p.m.
1. **Motion seconded.**
   a. **Motion to postpone approved** by unanimous consent.

VI. **Adjournment**
   A. Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

_______________________________________
L. Eilderts
Secretary
RESOLUTION Undergraduate Pass/Fail Option for Fall 2020

Whereas, Southern Connecticut State University exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence; and

Whereas, The SCSU Faculty Senate is the official representative body of the Academic Faculty; and

Whereas, The extenuating circumstances caused by the on-going COVID-19 pandemic continue to present unprecedented challenges to students; and

Whereas, Students may be disadvantaged by these changes, resulting in poorer class performance that does not reflect their typical classroom performance; and

Whereas, Faculty wish to provide students with every opportunity to achieve successful completion of their courses this semester, stay on track towards their graduation, and reduce the level of stress that they are likely experiencing; and

Whereas, Allowing students to take courses on a Pass/Fail basis could provide them with an option that will help to achieve the above; and

Whereas, The current Pass/Fail option is not adequate to accomplish this given its restrictions and given the fact that Students would have needed to elect a course as Pass/Fail by the fourth week of the semester, which has already passed; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the following revised Undergraduate Pass/Fail policy be approved for the Fall 2020 semester:

☐ With the approval of their adviser, matriculated students are eligible to register for certain courses on a Pass/Fail basis.

☐ The Pass/Fail option may be used for electives, the Liberal Education Program, or the requirements of a major or minor (as decided by the department housing the major or minor).

☐ During the Fall 2020 semester, there is no limit on the number of courses that may be taken under the Pass/Fail option.

☐ The Pass/Fail option is non-reversible. Students will be advised that once they have selected the Pass/Fail option, it will not be possible to revert to a graded option.
The process for electing the Pass/Fail option shall be automated to the greatest extent possible via a web form. This web form shall provide the student with information about the policy, provide the students with a link to courses that have been designated as exempt by departments (i.e., are not available for Pass/Fail under this revised policy), require that the students indicate that they have read and understand the Pass/Fail policy, and shall direct students to their academic advisor or chair for consultation. After consultation, the advisor/chairs shall endorse the forms, and the forms shall be routed automatically to the Registrar's office.

- The deadline for submitting a Pass/Fail request shall be extended to December 15th (the last day of final exams).

- The Pass/Fail option is blind in that the instructor is not aware of the student's use of the Pass/Fail option until after the grades are submitted, except where the instructor is also the advisor or chair.

- The final grade will be reported as "P" if the final grade earned is "D-" or higher. This grade earns zero quality points and has no effect on the GPA but does count as attempted credit. If the final grade earned is not passing, the final grade will be reported as "F". This grade earns zero quality points, but will impact the GPA, and does count as attempted credit. Courses taken for Pass/Fail might not be accepted for transfer credit when attending another institution; are excluded from GPA calculations which may impact a student's ability to meet certain GPA requirements needed for their major, graduation, or honors; and may not be satisfactory in meeting prerequisite requirements when applying to graduate programs.
Whereas, Southern Connecticut State University exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence; and

Whereas, The SCSU Faculty Senate is the official representative body of the Academic Faculty; and

Whereas, The extenuating circumstances caused by the on-going COVID-19 pandemic continue to present unprecedented challenges to students; and

Whereas, Students may be disadvantaged by these changes, resulting in poorer class performance that does not reflect their typical classroom performance; and

Whereas, Faculty wish to provide students with every opportunity to achieve successful completion of their courses this semester, stay on track towards their graduation, and reduce the level of stress that they are likely experiencing; and

Whereas, Allowing students to take courses on a Pass/Fail basis could provide them with an option that will help to achieve the above; and

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Resolution Regarding Graduate Student Pass/Fail Option for Fall 2020 (With Track Changes)

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE
RESOLUTION Graduate Student Pass/Fail Option for Fall 2020

Whereas, Southern Connecticut State University exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence; and

Whereas, The SCSU Faculty Senate is the official representative body of the Academic Faculty; and

Whereas, The extenuating circumstances caused by the on-going COVID-19 pandemic continue to present unprecedented challenges to students; and

Whereas, Students may be disadvantaged by these changes, resulting in poorer class performance that does not reflect their typical classroom performance; and

Whereas, Faculty wish to provide students with every opportunity to achieve successful completion of their courses this semester, stay on track towards their graduation, and reduce the level of stress that they are likely experiencing; and

Whereas, Allowing students to take courses on a Pass/Fail basis could provide them with an option that will help to achieve the above; and

Whereas, The current Pass/Fail option is not adequate to accomplish this given its restrictions and given the fact that Students would have needed to elect a course as Pass/Fail by the fourth week of the semester, which has already passed; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the following revised Graduate Pass/Fail policy be implemented for the Fall 2020 semester:

☐ On a department-specific basis, and with the approval of their graduate program adviser, matriculated students in some graduate programs are eligible to register for certain required or elective courses on a Pass/Fail basis. Undergraduate courses listed in any program that students are required to take to strengthen their academic backgrounds may not be taken under the Pass/Fail option.

☐ During the Fall 2020 semester, there shall be no limit on the number of courses that may be taken under the Pass/Fail option.
The Pass/Fail option is non-reversible. Students will be advised that once they have selected the Pass/Fail option, it will not be possible to revert to a graded option.

The process for electing the Pass/Fail option shall be automated to the greatest extent possible via a web form. This web form shall provide the student with information about the policy, provide the students with a link to courses that have been designated as exempt by departments (i.e., are not available for Pass/Fail under this revised policy), require that the students indicate that they have read and understood the Pass/Fail policy, and shall direct students to their graduate program advisors or chairs for consultation. After consultation, the advisor/chair shall endorse the forms, and the forms shall be routed automatically to the Registrar’s office.

The deadline for submitting a Pass/Fail request shall be extended to December 15th, the last day of final exams.

The Pass/Fail option is blind in that the instructor is not aware of the student’s use of the Pass/Fail option until after the grades are submitted, except where the instructor is also the advisor or chair.

The final grade will be reported as “S” if the final grade earned is “C” or higher. This grade earns zero quality points and has no effect on the GPA but does count as attempted credit. If the final grade earned is C or below, the final grade will be reported as “F”. This grade earns zero quality points, but will impact the GPA, and does count as attempted credit. Courses taken for Pass/Fail might not be accepted for transfer credit when attending another institution; are excluded from GPA calculations which may impact a student’s ability to meet certain GPA requirements needed for their major, graduation, or honors; and may not be satisfactory in meeting prerequisite requirements when applying to other graduate programs.
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RESOLUTION REGARDING FACULTY CHOICE IN ADMINISTERING STUDENT OPINION SURVEYS IN THE FALL 2020 AND SPRING 2021 SEMESTERS

Whereas, Southern Connecticut State University exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence; and

Whereas, The SCSU Faculty Senate is the official representative body of the Academic Faculty; and

Whereas, The extenuating circumstances caused by COVID-19 have resulted in most Faculty being required to change their pedagogy; and

Whereas, Student Opinion Surveys are instrumental in Faculty evaluations utilized for renewal, promotion, tenure, and professional assessment; and

Whereas, Although the Collective Bargaining Agreement mandates the use of Student Opinion Surveys (4.11.7), the CBA does not state that these must be collected every semester, or for each class. Further, per the CBA (4.11.8), “...the procedure for collecting, routing, and disposition of the surveys shall be recommended by the Senate and approved by the President.”; and

Whereas, Faculty would be disadvantaged by the results of Student Opinion Surveys that do not reflect their typical teaching performance; and

Whereas, There are alternative methods of assessing teaching effectiveness (e.g., peer teaching reviews, student opinion surveys from previous semesters, course materials, and statements of teaching philosophy); and

Whereas, Providing faculty with the option to administer or not administer Student Opinion Surveys for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters will ensure that they are not disadvantaged unfairly by the results of these surveys; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That faculty be given the option to choose whether or not they shall administer Student Opinion Surveys for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters; and be it further

Resolved, That after being tabulated, the Student Opinion Surveys shall be routed only to the faculty member and not to any other third party; and be it further

Resolved, That faculty shall not be penalized in any manner by evaluators at any step of the evaluation process if they choose not to include Student Opinion Surveys from the Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021 semesters in their evaluation files.
SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

RESOLUTION REGARDING BOARD OF REGENTS’ RESOLUTION FOR REVISED FY 2021 SPENDING PLAN

Whereas, Southern Connecticut State University exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence;

Whereas, The SCSU Faculty Senate is the official representative body of the Academic Faculty;

Whereas, The Board of Regents has a lengthy history of fiscal mismanagement dating back to at least 2010 as documented in the APA\(^1\) Executive Summary, dated 10/1/2020 for fiscal years ending 2016 and 2017, which identified 32 areas requiring improvement and violations that included unspent allocations, budgetary miscalculations, and non-compliance with the 2017 SEBAC Agreement;

Whereas, Nearly all of the universities and colleges voted no confidence in President Ojakian and the Board of Regents last year;

Whereas, The Board of Regents is largely comprised of individuals who have limited to no experience and knowledge regarding institutions of higher education, and who have spent virtually no time on the campuses they are supposed to lead;

Whereas, Taking the COVID-19 pandemic into consideration, each college, university and the System Office submitted a budget for FY 2021 to the Board of Regents, which duly adopted a FY 2021 spending plan for CSCU on June 18, 2020 based upon these budgets;

Whereas, The System Office and the Board of Regents miscalculated revenue in these budgets, in particular, that of the community colleges by grossly overestimating enrollment numbers which resulted in a reported budget shortfall of $69 million;

Whereas, The Board of Regents, at its September 17 and October 15, 2020 meetings, stated that “everything is on the table” and tasked the administration to consider alternatives, including measures that have not been taken in the past and measures that “require extensive analysis, negotiation, and restructuring within the organization” to reduce the budget shortfall;

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\(^1\) The Auditors of Public Accounts (APA) is a legislative agency of the State of Connecticut with the primary mission to audit state agencies.
Whereas, The Board of Regents has stated that “everything is on the table,” in order to justify ‘placing on the table’ the income of the most vulnerable and poorly-compensated employees, including Graduate and University Assistants and part-time faculty;

Whereas, The Board of Regents has stated that “everything is on the table,” in order to justify attempting to ‘place on the table’ the income of thousands of faculty and staff responsible for teaching and providing services to our students and to try to break the Collective Bargaining Agreement;

Whereas, The Board of Regents has stated that “everything is on the table,” but, has failed to ‘place on the table’ reducing the salaries of administrators in the System Office and throughout the system who are the most highly-compensated employees, an action that would not require “extensive analysis, negotiation, and restructuring within the organization;”

Whereas, The Board of Regents has stated that “everything is on the table,” however, has also stated that it will not ‘place on the table’ the exorbitant costs associated with One College and its top-heavy administrative structure, including the additional planned hiring of over $10 million worth of managers;

Whereas, The Board of Regents has stated that “everything is on the table,” and has implemented a hiring freeze and a comprehensive effort to “review and identify savings in areas including staffing, academic programming, shared administrative services and collective bargaining;” yet is proceeding with a search to hire a CSU President, an expensive position with largely figurehead responsibilities, and will not ‘place on the table’ the System Office’s bloated staffing and administrative costs, an action that would not require “extensive analysis, negotiation, and restructuring within the organization;”

Whereas, The Board of Regents has stated that “everything is on the table,” however, has failed to ‘place on the table’ the System Office reserves of $22.42 million that could be utilized to cover revenue shortfalls;

Whereas, The Board of Regents has stated that “everything is on the table,” but has stated that SCSU, CCSU, and ECSU should contribute $1.2 million each from their reserves to make up for WCSU’s shortfall, failing to ‘place on the table’ the System Office reserves of $22.42 million that could cover this shortfall;

Whereas, The described proposals by the Board of Regents are harmful to our students, who comprise the largest population of minority and underserved students in the state;

Whereas, The described proposals by the Board of Regents would result in a reduced number of academic programs and classes and larger class sizes, and would threaten the integrity of our educational institutions; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That when the Board of Regents states that “everything is on the table,” it truly should consider all alternatives with open-mindedness in order to act in the best interests of the students and the institutions it is charged with protecting and nurturing; and be it further
Resolved, That the Board of Regents cease targeting the most vulnerable and underpaid university and college employees, while failing to take action in reducing the salaries of the most highly-compensated employees in the system; and be it further

Resolved, That the salaries of the highly-compensated, higher-level administrators in the System Office and on the campuses be reduced by 25%, as has been done at many other institutions of higher education in the country in order to deal with COVID-19 budgetary shortfalls; and be it further

Resolved, That the System Office be required to follow any cost-saving measures required of the colleges and universities, including the hiring freeze that would encompass the CSU President position and One College hires; and be it further

Resolved, That reserves from the System Office be utilized to cover revenue shortfalls of the individual universities and colleges and that the Board of Regents cease the practice of raiding one university’s reserves to pay off another university’s debt; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Regents consider alternatives to the System Office or at the very least, major restructuring of the organization, including measures that have not been taken in the past and measures that require extensive analysis; and be it further

Resolved, That any cost-cutting measures directed towards the colleges and universities not be circumscribed in a top-down manner, but rather demonstrate respect and invite the knowledge and experience of those who understand and work in higher education in our institutions; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Regents is called on to be advocates for and supporters of higher education and the CSCU campuses, rather than to act as agents of dismantlement.