

# Southern Connecticut State University

## FACULTY SENATE

December 2, 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=m9a93221f8ac348f92e4e7c724651fad4>

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**Southern Connecticut State University**  
**FACULTY SENATE**

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**AGENDA**

December 2, 2020

12:10 p.m.

To join the meeting, please click [here](https://southernct.webex.com/southernct/j.php?MTID=m9a93221f8ac348f92e4e7c724651fad4) to be connected via WebEx.

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- I. Announcements Relevant to the Faculty Senate
- II. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting held on November 11, 2020
- III. Faculty Senate President's Report
- IV. Reports of Faculty Senate Standing Committees
  - a. Academic Policy
  - b. Elections
  - c. Finance
  - d. Personnel Policy
  - e. Rules
  - f. Student Policy
  - g. Technology
- V. Reports of Faculty Senate Special Committees
  - a. UCF
  - b. Graduate Council
- VI. Unfinished Business
- VII. New Business
  - a. Resolution Regarding BOR ACME Policy Statement
  - b. Resolution Regarding Revisions to the Student Opinion Survey
- VIII. Guest(s)

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

Spring 2021 meetings: February 3, February 17, March 3, March 17, March 31, April 14, April 28, May 5.

Southern Connecticut State University  
**FACULTY SENATE**

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UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 11, 2020

<https://inside.southernct.edu/faculty-senate/meetings>

The 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Faculty Senate AY 2020-2021 was held on November 11, 2020, at 12:10 p.m. via WebEx.

Attendance

Dave Allen <i>Accounting</i> 7/7	Matthew Ouimet <i>Counseling</i> 7/7	Sandip Dutta* <i>Finance</i> 4/7	Atul Kulkarni <i>Marketing</i> 7/7	Rex Gilliland <i>Philosophy</i> 7/7	Angela Lopez-Velasquez* <i>Special Education</i> 5/7
William Farley <i>Anthropology</i> 7/7	Natalie Starling <i>Counseling &amp; School Psychology</i> 7/7	Lawrence Brancazio <i>Health &amp; Movement Sciences</i> 7/7	Joe Fields <i>Mathematics</i> 7/7	Binlin Wu <i>Physics</i> 7/7	Douglas Macur <i>Theatre</i> 7/7
Jeff Slomba <i>Art</i> 7/7	Beena Achhpal <i>Curriculum &amp; Learning</i> 7/7	Robert Gregory <i>Health &amp; Movement Sciences</i> 7/7	Klay Kruczek <i>Mathematics</i> 7/7	Jon Wharton <i>Political Science</i> 7/7	Luke Eilderts <i>World Languages &amp; Literatures</i> 7/7
Kevin Siedlecki <i>Athletics</i> 7/7	Maria Diamantis <i>Curriculum &amp; Learning</i> 7/7	Troy Paddock <i>History</i> 6/7	Jonathan Irving <i>Music</i> 7/7	Michael Nizhnikov <i>Psychology</i> 5/7	
Sean Grace <i>Biology</i> 7/7	Dushmantha Jayawickreme <i>Earth Science</i> 7/7	Darcy Kern* <i>History</i> 6/7	Frances Penny <i>Nursing</i> 3/6	Kate Marsland <i>Psychology</i> 7/7	Deborah Weiss <i>Faculty Senate President</i> 7/7
Mina Park <i>Business Information Systems</i> 7/7	Sanja Grubacic <i>Economics</i> 7/7	Yan Liu* <i>Information &amp; Library Science</i> 5/7	Kelly Martinez* <i>Nursing</i> 4/7	William Faraclas <i>Public Health</i> 7/7	Cindy Simoneau <i>Undergraduate Curriculum Forum</i> 7/7
Jeff Webb <i>Chemistry</i> 7/7	Peter Madonia* <i>Educational Leadership</i> 6/7	Cindy Simoneau <i>Journalism</i> 7/7	Obiageli Okwuka <i>Part-time Faculty</i> 7/7	Michael Dodge <i>Recreation, Tourism &amp; Sport Management</i> 7/7	Meredith Sinclair <i>Undergraduate Curriculum Forum</i> 7/7
Barbara Cook <i>Communication Disorders</i> 7/7	Mike Shea <i>English</i> 7/7	Patrick Crowley <i>Library Services</i> 7/7	Mary Ellen Minichiello* <i>Part-time Faculty</i> 4/7	Sebastian Perumbilly <i>Social Work</i> 7/7	Cynthia O'Sullivan <i>Graduate Council</i> 7/7
Derek Taylor <i>Communication, Media &amp; Screen Studies</i> 7/7	Paul Petrie <i>English</i> 7/7	Jacqueline Toce <i>Library Services</i> 7/7	Stephanie Fischer <i>Part-time Faculty</i> 3/3	Stephen Monroe Tomczak <i>Social Work</i> 7/7	Aidan Coleman <i>Student Government Association</i> 7/7
Alaa Sheta <i>Computer Science</i> 7/7	Matthew Miller <i>Environment, Geography &amp; Marine Studies</i> 7/7	Carol Stewart <i>Management, International Business &amp; Public Utilities</i> 6/7	Virginia Metaxas* <i>Part-time Faculty</i> 2/3	Adam Pittman <i>Sociology</i> 6/6	Dr. Joe Bertolino* <i>SCSU President</i> 5/7
<u>Guests:</u> T. Milburn C. Hlavac T. Bennett	S. Arafah J. H. Kim M. Miceli				

\*An asterisk denotes an absence. Overall attendance recorded below each member.

Faculty Senate President D. Weiss called the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Faculty Senate to order at 12:10 p.m.

- I. Announcements
  - A. K. Marsland recognized Veterans Day.
  - B. D. Weiss congratulated C. Stewart for being selected as the representative for the School of Business Dean search.
  - C. M. Shea recognized the Celebration of Excellence ceremony.
- II. Minutes of the previous meeting held on November 4, 2020 were accepted as distributed.  
<https://inside.southernct.edu/faculty-senate/meetings>
- III. President's Report  
<https://inside.southernct.edu/faculty-senate/meetings>
- IV. Reports of Faculty Senate Special Committees
- V. New Business
  - A. Faculty Senate Executive Committee **moved to approve** the Resolution Regarding Student Opinion Surveys for Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021.
    - i. Previous resolution from November 4, 2020 meeting disapproved. After revisions, this new resolution was presented to the Faculty Senate.
    - ii. Vote tally
      1. Yes .....40
      2. No .....1
      - a. Motion to approve **passed**.
  - B. K. Marsland, chair of the Student Policy Committee, **moved to approve** the Resolution Regarding Course Withdrawals for Fall 2020.
    - i. Vote Tally
      1. Yes .....37
      2. No .....1
      - a. Motion to approve **passed**.
  - C. K. Marsland, chair of the Student Policy Committee, **moved to approve** the Resolution Regarding Course Incompletes for Fall 2020.
    - i. Vote tally
      1. Yes .....34
      2. No .....4
      - a. Motion to approve **passed**.
- VI. Guest
  - A. Sousan Arafeh, Institute for Justice and Social Change.
- VII. Adjournment
  - A. Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

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L. Eilderts  
Secretary

Resolution Regarding Student Opinion Surveys for Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION  
REGARDING STUDENT OPINION SURVEYS FOR SPRING 2020, FALL 2020, AND  
SPRING 2021

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 include or not include 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 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.

## Resolution Regarding Course Withdrawals 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 challenges, resulting in poorer class performance that does not reflect their typical classroom performance; and

Whereas, Faculty wish to provide students with increased flexibility to make critical decisions regarding their courses; and

Whereas, Revising the Course Withdrawal policy would provide students with increased flexibility; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the following policy be implemented for the Fall 2020 semester:

The Course Withdrawal deadline shall be extended from “prior to the twelfth week of classes” to December 15th, 2020 (the last day of final exams).

Further, the Late Course Withdrawal policy shall be extended beyond the end of classes to include any extension based upon “I” (Incomplete) or “I+” (Incomplete Extension) status.

## **SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE**

### **Resolution Regarding Course Incompletes 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 challenges, resulting in poorer class performance that does not reflect their typical classroom performance; and

Whereas, Faculty wish to provide students with increased flexibility to make critical decisions regarding their courses; and

Whereas, Revising the Incomplete Grade policy would provide students with increased flexibility; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the following policy be implemented for the Fall 2020 semester:

- A Student may request an Incomplete grade through December 15, 2020.
- Following the request, the instructor may grant a grade of Incomplete (I), if it is determined that the student has a valid reason for not meeting any particular course requirement(s) prior to the termination of the semester.
- If the Incomplete is granted, the Instructor and Student must complete and sign an Incomplete Grade Contract, in which the Instructor shall specify the remaining coursework to be completed by the Student and the provisional final grade the Student would earn if the remaining work is not completed.
- The Instructor shall submit a copy of the completed contract to the Chairperson of the department in which the course is offered by Friday, December 18, 2020.
- The Instructor shall enter a grade of "I" when submitting final grades. (Note: Instructors should not give an "I" unless the Incomplete has been requested by the Student and a contract has been completed.)
- The Instructor shall make all course materials available to students for the duration of the Incomplete period.
- The "I" grade shall automatically become an "F" 30 days after the start of the next semester, unless one of the following occurs earlier:
  - The Student completes the remaining coursework, and the Instructor enters a final passing grade;
  - The Student does not complete the remaining coursework and the Instructor enters the provisional grade specified in the Incomplete Grade Contract;
  - The Instructor issues an extension for completion of the remaining work and enters a grade change to "I+" (Incomplete Extension); or

- The Student determines that they cannot complete the course requirements and elects to submit a Late Withdrawal from the course.
- For courses taken in the Fall 2020 semester only, at any point, a student who has been given an I or I+ may elect to submit a Late Withdrawal from the course.





# INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Southern Connecticut  
State University

## An Overview of the Institute

- The Institute is a collaborative effort between the Southern Connecticut State University and the community, focused on addressing social justice issues and promoting equity.

- The Institute's mission is to create a more just and equitable society through research, education, and advocacy.



## The Work of the Institute

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## Values & Intentions

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## Extending/ the Vision of the Division

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## The Timeline/ Taskline and The Ask

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**Thank  
You!**

## STANDING COMMITTEES

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### ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE (APC)

#### APC MINUTES 11/18/2020

Present: Allen, Crowley, Gilliland, Jayawickreme, Kulkarni, Petrie (chair), Siedlecki

- Plan of action for analysis of focus group results and presentation of results and recommendations to Senate:
  - Analysis organized by . . .
    - 1) Focus group topics / questions in powerpoint slides
    - 2) Areas of general consensus
    - 3) Areas of disagreement and/or issues / questions requiring longer-term conversation and consensus-building in and beyond Senate
  - Siedlecki volunteered to organize and take lead on analysis, with input from at least one participant and one non-participant in each focus group. Petrie will send list of APC members and the focus groups in which they participated.

AAUP—Petrie & Crowley
Newly Tenured Faculty—Petrie, Gilliland, Crowley
Newer Faculty (Untenured)—Petrie & Siedlecki
Department Chairs—Jayawickreme & Allen
Provost & Deans—Perumbilly & Kulkarni
University P&T Committee—Petrie, Allen, Jayawickreme
DEC Chairs and Members—Petrie & Jayawickreme

- Initial analysis back to APC for further consideration at beginning of Spring 2021 semester, with report to Senate as soon thereafter as feasible.
- Preparation of Senate for reception of report by . . .
  - Pre-report reminders of focus group history and process
  - Reminders that recommendations come not from APC alone but are based in stakeholders' input through focus group process
  - Asking senators to bring report results and recommendations back to their departments to generate more feedback
- Question of whether to schedule a university-wide faculty meeting to discuss report and recommendations tabled for future consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul R. Petrie, Chair

11/20/2020

## ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (EC)

Faculty Senate  
Elections Committee  
Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2020

Attendance: Darcy Kern, Klay Kruczek, Mina Park, Frances Penny, Jonathan Wharton, Cindy Simoneau, chairperson.  
Guest: Corinne Blackmer

Discussion centered on Corinne Blackmer's suggestion for the university to consider a free speech proposal similar to one adopted by the University of Chicago. Blackmer reported about a dozen students have come to her citing faculty and student comments and actions against them for exercising free speech that may not be considered popular or mainstream.

The committee, at a future meeting will discuss a university resolution. In addition, we will pursue discussions with Faculty Development Advisory Committee and administrators about hosting training and possibly a forum on the theme that all speech matters and all opinions are respected on campus.

FINANCE COMMITTEE (FC)

**Minutes of the November 18, 2020, Meeting**

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**(Unapproved)**

Present: Dr. Carol Stewart, Dr. William Faraclas

1. Minutes from the 10-7-20 meeting were approved.
2. Dr. Carol Stewart reported that the expanded Budget and Planning Committee, on which she represents the Faculty Senate, held its first meeting. It was suggested at the meeting that with hiring cuts, reserves and a possible (small) legislative infusion of funds it may be possible to balance this year's budget. However, the committee will look at ways to reshape the budget to ensure it can be balanced in future years. Changes in the budget imply changes in University operations. One area mentioned for growth is continuing education/certificate programs.
3. The Finance Committee will attempt to better understand departmental operating expense (OE) funds and their distribution.
4. For purposes of clarification, the Finance Committee will create a budget table for inclusion in the FCARG application, with a goal of Faculty Senate approval and inclusion in next year's FCARG competition.
5. The Finance Committee noted its thanks to Edward (Rusty) May, Jr., Director of Technology Administration, for providing a report on expenditures for academic technologies for our university. The report will be shared with the Faculty Senate via the FS President, and the Finance Committee will ask the Executive Committee to decide if there would be value in inviting Mr. May to a full Senate meeting to answer questions after Senators have had time to read the report.

Respectfully submitted,



William G. Faraclas

## PERSONNEL POLICY COMMITTEE (PPC)

Minutes

*November 18, 2020*

### **Teams Meeting**

**Members:** Toce, Jacqueline; Slomba, Jeffrey; Lopez-Velasquez, Angela; Tomczak, Stephen; Shea, Michael; Martinez, Kelly (absent); Pittman, Adam; Metaxas, Virginia; Starling, Natalie (chair)

12:10

Approval of Minutes: PPC approved minutes from 10/21/2020.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEW BUSINESS:**

The PPC continued reviewing and making edits to the P&T Procedures document



## RULES COMMITTEE (RC)

**Date:** Wednesday, November 18, 2020

**Time:** 1:00 PM

**Attendees:** Barb Cook, Maria Diamantis, Robert Gregory (chair), Matt Miller, Troy Paddock, & Jeff Webb

**Topic/Charge for the Meeting:** To discuss the inclusion of advising activities in faculty evaluation documents. This meeting was a follow-up to our meeting with Liz Keenan & Helen Marx on 9/23/2020.

### Agenda items:

1. Develop recommendations for including advising activities in faculty evaluation documents
  - Section 10.9 of the CBA establishes that advising is a responsibility of faculty members: “The Board and CSU-AAUP agree that all students will be given adequate advising by members during registration and throughout the school year to assure the pursuit of sound educational objectives.”
  - It is not clear if advising belongs in the Load Credit or Service categories. While a number of universities include advising as part of the Teaching/Load Credit category (e.g., Eastern Connecticut State University), other universities include advising as part of the Service category (e.g., Central Connecticut State University).  
**Recommendation #1: Advising should belong to the Service category; however, if an individual receives release credits for advising, then advising should belong to the Load Credit category. This recommendation is analogous to the way in which Creative Activity is evaluated.**
  - SCSU currently does not have any guidelines or established criteria for what constitutes “adequate advising”. This is in contrast to WCSU, in which the Faculty Handbook clearly establishes the roles and responsibilities of faculty as they pertain to advising.  
**Recommendation #2: While we agree with the efforts of E. Keenan & H. Marx to support the value of faculty advising, we are not in favor of being overly proscriptive and implementing their criteria in university faculty evaluation documents.**
  - The other CSUs utilize department guidelines that establish the criterion for evaluating faculty members in each of the categories.  
**Recommendation #3: Departments, through their bylaws, shall articulate the expectations by which quality of performance in advising is to be judged. This information should be made available to the Dean, the Promotion and Tenure**

**Committee, and the Provost. The suggestions of L. Keenan & H. Marx should be provided to departments to assist them in establishing advising guidelines.**

Meeting adjourned at 2:25 PM.

Minutes prepared and respectfully submitted by Robert Gregory, SCSU Faculty Senate Rules Committee Chair

## STUDENT POLICY COMMITTEE (SPC)

### **Student Policy Committee November 18, 2020 Minutes**

**Present:** B. Achhpal, W. Farley, M. Dodge, K. Marsland, M. Minichiello, M. Nizhnikov, M. Minichiello

1. Meeting via Webex called to order at 12:15
2. SP2021 Pass/Fail, Withdrawal and Incomplete resolutions. Unanimous decision to withdraw resolutions and reevaluate on 1/27.
3. Academic Misconduct Policy: Committee supports development of ad hoc committee to review current revision and submit suggested revisions to SPC by end of January
4. Post-BAC academic standing resolution: Awaiting feedback from Senate EC.
5. Feminine hygiene product concerns: Awaiting feedback from SGA
6. Discussed SP2021 meeting schedule. Will continue to meet via Webex starting 1/27
7. New Business for SP2021
  - Exigent P/F/W/I policies
  - Possible permanent revisions to the standing/existing P/F/W/I policy regarding process and deadlines
  - Improvement of general communication regarding policies to students/faculty
  - Suggested changes to attendance reporting timeline: follow-up with registrar and financial aid office
  - Academic standing & dismissal policy: Awaiting input from faculty advising team

Respectfully submitted by K. Marsland

## TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE (TC)

### **Faculty Senate Technology Committee**

Minutes of meeting 11/18/2020

The committee convened at 12:15 via Microsoft Teams.

- As a follow-up to our previous work on the Student Opinion Survey (SOS), we looked at the “additional questions” that had been added to the SOS for online courses.
- The additional questions fell into 3 categories
  - Questions that were inappropriate because they did not relate to the instructor. (But rather to IT and/or Student Support)
  - Questions that were redundant. (That is questions that, although rephrased in terms of online delivery, were already present in the existing approved question list.)
  - Questions that were in some sense valid suggestions for collecting reasonable information about quality of instruction.
- The Committee discussed several aspects of the philosophy of the SOS.
  - Questions should not be specific to course modality
  - Technology can be a component of courses, irrespective of whether they are online or on-ground.
- We propose a resolution adding 4 Likert scale, and 1 open comment questions to the SOS.
- Additional revisions to the SOS are desirable (e.g. the antiquated gender identity question). However, as time is of the essence, we propose taking up those issues in the Spring.

Respectfully,  
J. E. Fields

## SPECIAL COMMITTEES

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### UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM FORUM (UCF)

#### **Undergraduate Curriculum Forum – Nov. 19, 2020 Report to Faculty Senate**

1. The UCF approved a motion to change the catalog language clarifying the policy on students' ability to select and change catalog years. (See attached wording)
2. The UCF tabled a motion to permanently change the university Writing Program allowing time for the English Department to meet with WACC and the writing director.
3. LEPC has met with representatives of the World Languages and Literatures Department and with the Student Government Association to discuss a survey SGA conducted last year with recent alumni concerning their use of WLL. The discussion is ongoing.
4. Guest speaker: DRC Director Goldie Adele concerning new platform, Accommodate, for faculty and students to utilize for DRC services.
5. Dean of Students Jules Tetreault concerning university's COVID response, number of cases this semester and reporting process.

Submitted,

Cindy Simoneau & Meredith Sinclair

## Catalog Year

The student must meet the graduation requirements for their selected undergraduate program as published in the catalog in effect at the time of the student's initial enrollment as long as they maintain continuous matriculating status. For all students, the initial enrollment shall be the first day of classes following matriculation in a regular semester at the University.

Courses listed in this catalog are subject to change through normal academic channels. New courses and changes in degree requirements are initiated by departments and approved by the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum and the Provost. The student will have the option to change catalog years to meet or substitute these program requirements.

By changing catalog year, a student becomes responsible for fulfilling all the graduation requirements for their newly chosen catalog year, including all changes in general education requirements, major requirements, or other areas. To ensure timely graduation, the director of the LEP may approve substitutions of courses in the LEP, and the Chairperson of the Department may approve substitutions of courses in the program.

Matriculated students re-enrolling at the University may elect to revert to their original catalog year provided that it is no more than 5 years prior to the current term. Students may not revert to a catalog year that is prior to their initial admission term. Students may elect to switch to a newer catalog year once enrolled.

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**Deleted:** Courses listed in this catalog are subject to change through normal academic channels. New courses and changes in degree requirements are initiated by departments and approved by the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum and the Provost. Subsequent changes in program requirements, as published in the catalog, or amended by proper authority, may be substituted at the option of the student.

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**Deleted:** Additional recommendations for the catalog: Keep the names of the degrees, certificates, certification for teacher preparation, double baccalaureate, double major, double major in education, honors college & subject abbreviations Change: Curriculum to Major, Minor, and LEP curriculum requirements Keep Graduation create separate tab for Catalog Year & Requirements

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## GRADUATE COUNCIL

## DOCUMENTS/MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS FOR REVIEW FOR THE DECEMBER 2, 2020 MEETING

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### PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON BOR ACME POLICY

#### **DRAFT**

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

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

Whereas, The Board of Regents (BOR) has presented for commentary an Executive Summary of a draft policy (hereafter referred to as 'Proposal,' found in Appendix A) regarding Alignment and Timely Completion of Mathematics and English Implementation at Connecticut State Community College in fall 2023 (ACME);

Whereas, by necessity, given the close coordination between the colleges and the universities in the CSCU system, especially given efforts since 2012 to design, approve, and provide seamless transfer opportunities through the Transfer and Articulation Policy (TAP) Pathways, what occurs at the colleges, will subsequently affect what occurs at the universities;

Whereas, The Proposal violates faculty purview over curriculum (Collective Bargaining Agreement, 5.17<sup>1</sup>) in removing Algebra as the "required prerequisite for any math pathways" and dictating "transfer of and applicability of mathematics courses," thus co-opting this responsibility from the departments, and subsequently also violating the Framework portion of the TAP Transfer Pathways;

Whereas, The Proposal mandates utilization of 1) a new corequisite delivery of support (rather than the current prerequisite developmental course sequences), 2) course placement based solely on high school GPA, and 3) utilization of self-reported high school GPA for course placement in lieu of transcripts at the community colleges (Appendix A), but fails to support those proposed changes due to citation inaccuracies and the presentation of incomplete information (Appendix B);

Whereas, despite evidence in the research literature that clearly differentiates between the needs of students with marginal levels of academic preparedness and the needs of students who are more severely underprepared, the Proposal calls for a one-size-fits-all corequisite program for students, which simplified approach could jeopardize the academic success of the most vulnerable students;

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<sup>1</sup> "The department shall have responsibility for the content and development of courses, curriculum and Programs of study within its discipline, research and service within its area..."



Whereas, Although the proposal purports to address Connecticut's racial and socioeconomic achievement gap, in actuality, it would reinforce these disparities by lowering academic standards and expectations for community college and state university graduates; and

Whereas, The BOR Proposal would be damaging to students and would violate the principles of shared governance set forth in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA); now therefore be it

Resolved, That we reject the BOR proposal; and be it further

Resolved, That the BOR follow appropriate pathways of engagement with the faculty to create a more thoughtful and nuanced approach; and be it further

Resolved, That the BOR must respect that changes to curricula are to be decided through the curricular approval processes established by each university and the CBA, and that any changes to the TAP Transfer Agreements are to be made only through mutual agreement between the faculty of the colleges and the universities.

COMMENTARY ON THE BOARD OF REGENTS POLICY:  
Alignment and Timely Completion of  
Mathematics and English Implementation at Connecticut State Community College in fall 2023  
Executive Summary DRAFT

These comments relate to the draft of the policy regarding alignment and timely completion of math. Although the policy is proposed as related only to the community colleges, by necessity, given the close coordination between the colleges and the universities, especially given efforts since 2012 to design, approve, and provide seamless transfer opportunities through the TAP Transfer Pathways (and other venues), the colleges and universities cannot be separated, since what occurs at the colleges, will subsequently affect what occurs at the universities. This commentary is divided into several sections to address a number of points.

**Mathematics Pathways** – Aligning Mathematics to Program and Career - The proposal states, “For programs that do not require algebra-based math, algebra is no longer a required prerequisite in order for the college-level mathematics courses to be accepted and applied at four-year schools to which students transfer.”

This is a decision that can only be made with the agreement of the CSUs. Neither has a discussion taken place nor has an agreement been reached; in fact this math model has been rejected by the CSUs in the past. The TAP Transfer Pathways have been worked out cooperatively between the CSUs and the community colleges over a period of five or more years. This change would negate those negotiated agreements and would render the TAP transfer pathways as invalid since the agreed-upon math requirement would no longer be met (as defined in the original framework of the program from 2012).

**Placement Based on High School GPA**

The proposal advocates for placing students in classes primarily based solely upon high school GPA, citing the Bahr et al. article:

“Bahr and associates (2019) report that “cumulative high school grade point average (GPA) is the most consistently useful predictor of performance across levels of math and English coursework” (pp. 178-179).”

While Bahr et al. (2019) support using high school GPA for placement, they acknowledge that there is “limited research to date” on the subject, and they recommend using the data in a much more nuanced manner than advocated in the proposal, which on a practical level might be difficult to apply. Among other conclusions, Behr et al., state that an overall higher GPA would be needed to “signal a given level of math competence than is necessary to signal the corresponding level of English competency.” It is also unclear how reliable GPA would be for students who are not recent high school graduates with the authors stating, “More research is needed on the relationship between the length of delay between high school graduation and college enrollment and the extent to which measures of high school achievement can be used to predict performance in math and English coursework.” They further state that if high school

GPA is used, a differential model would need to be employed for various college-level math courses and that the information should be used in conjunction with subject-specific skill milestones that come late in the high school career. Therefore, “the most up-to-date transcript information” should be utilized for incoming college students. This leads to the next issue of the suggestion in the proposal that “Students may opt to self-report their high school GPA” because simple reporting of a cumulative number will not allow for the nuanced placement criteria described in the article and self-reporting has not been demonstrated to be reliable in place of transcripts.

### **Self-reporting of high school GPA**

The proposal states that according to Kadlec and Dadgar (2020), “the latest research indicates that students self-reporting of high school course grades and GPAs can be reliably used in place of official high school transcripts.” The Kadlec and Dadgar report, however, is not a peer-reviewed article, but rather a compilation of information with citations that are not clearly linked to the statements that are made. In fact, the most recent article cited by Kadlec and Dadgar on this subject is the Bahr article from 2019 which states “It will be important for future research to investigate the viability of students’ self-reported information about high school achievement in place of information reported directly by high schools.” Further, the Kadlec and Dadgar article is actually produced by an organization called Strong Start to Finish, which self-describes on its website as “a network of like-minded individuals and organizations from the policy, research, and practice spaces who’ve come together for one reason – to help all students, not just the select few, find success in postsecondary education.” This is not a credible source to utilize in the development of policy that will determine student course placement.

### **Corequisite rather than Prerequisite Delivery of Support**

The proposal advocates for elimination of prerequisites and utilization of a corequisite model with all students to be enrolled directly in college-level English and mathematics with supports to maximize success as needed. In the proposal there are a number of conclusions that have been drawn based upon selectively citing some statements from the Ran and Lin article (2019) and other articles without presenting a complete picture.

Several conclusions from this article, however, indicate that the corequisite model is not supported as a one-size-fits all solution:

“We found no significant impacts of placement into corequisite remediation on enrollment persistence, transfer to a four-year college, or degree completion. This suggests that corequisite reforms, though effective in helping students pass college-level math and English, are not sufficient to improve college completion rates overall.”

Further, more importantly, the success of the corequisite model in the article refers specifically to the group of students who have taken an alternate math model. Therefore, the predicted

effects in the proposal of utilizing a corequisite model are not supported based on this article, since the results are due to the alternate math model and not the corequisite model.

“In the current study, we were able to disentangle the effects of these two approaches and found that the positive effects of corequisite reform in Tennessee in math, relative to prerequisite remediation, were largely driven by efforts to guide students not interested in a STEM program to take statistics, math for liberal arts, or other types of math that align with their program requirements. Students placed into corequisite algebra had gateway completion rates similar to those of students taking prerequisite remedial math on the algebra-calculus track.”

Boatman and Long (2018) also do not conclude in favor of unilateral application of a co-requisite model stating that, “Importantly, while most of the literature only examines the effectiveness of developmental courses for students at the margin of needing any remediation, our results suggest that more, rather than less remediation may be beneficial for students with weaker preparation. These results suggest that states and institutions need not treat remediation as a singular policy but instead should consider it as an intervention that might vary in its impact according to student needs.”

They describe a distinct difference between students who are “on the margin of needing one remedial course,” and those who are less prepared by stating, “However, students with lower levels of academic preparedness experienced much smaller negative effects from remediation, and in some cases, remedial courses are estimated to improve later student outcomes, particularly for students attending 2-year colleges. For example, we estimate that students placed in reading and writing courses two levels below college level are more likely to persist or attain a degree than similar students who were placed one level below college courses. These results suggest that remedial and developmental courses can either help or hinder students differently depending on their level of academic preparedness.”

Therefore, the proposal should not be approved based upon its faulty premises regarding course placement based solely upon GPA, utilization of self-reported GPA, and use of the co-requisite model. This proposal would serve to disenfranchise our least academically-prepared students by denying them the preparation that would help them to succeed. It is suggested that, based upon the literature, a more thoughtful and nuanced approach be proposed that takes into consideration the fact that a one-size-fits-all approach is simplistic and not supported by the literature. Further, the unilateral proposal to not require the algebra prerequisite dictates curriculum, which is a faculty purview, in a top-down manner that violates the Collective Bargaining Agreement and invalidates the TAP transfer agreements.

**SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE**  
**RESOLUTION REGARDING REVISIONS TO THE STUDENT OPINION SURVEY**

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 Covid-19 pandemic has caused a significant shift in course delivery methods;

Whereas, Technology is often a component of courses whether they be on ground, hybrid, or online; and

Whereas, The gathering of data on technology use in the classroom could be valuable for faculty members; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the following questions be added to the Student Opinion Survey:

Open answer:

- Comment on the instructor's use of technology in the course.

Likert Scale:

- The instructor was accessible and was available to help me.
- The course content was available when I needed it.
- The course materials were well-organized and easy to navigate.
- The instructor made effective use of technology in this course.

**Revisions by Technology Committee**

**ADDED QUESTIONS HIGHLIGHTED BELOW IN YELLOW**

Strongly Agree, Agree, No Opinion, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Not Applicable

- 1) The syllabus or course outline described what I would learn in this course (“learning goals”).
- 2) This course helped me meet those learning goals.
- 3) This course evaluated how well I met those learning goals.
- 4) My experience in this course helped me appreciate this subject.
- 5) The way the course was taught helped me understand course material.
- 6) The instructor responded constructively to students’ questions.
- 7) The instructor created a supportive atmosphere in which to learn.
- 8) The assignments and exercises in this course helped me understand the subject matter.
- 9) The course readings and/or materials helped me understand the subject matter.
- 10) The instructor provided regular feedback on my performance in this course.
- 11) The instructor had high standards for student achievement.
- 12) The instructor encouraged me to take responsibility for my own learning.
- 13) I was motivated to work hard to be successful in this course.
- 14) The instructor was accessible and was available to help me.
- 15) The course content was available when I needed it.
- 16) The course materials were well-organized and easy to navigate.
- 17) The instructor made effective use of technology in this course.

Open Comments

- 18) Which aspects of this class (e.g., lectures, discussions, readings, assignments, tests) were the most helpful for learning course material?
- 19) Which aspects of this class were the least helpful for learning course material?
- 20) What other comments do you have about the strengths and weaknesses of this course?
- 21) Comment on the instructor’s use of technology in the course.

Demographics:

- 22) Are you Male or Female?
- 23) What is your age? (19 or under, 20-24, 25-29, 30 or over, no answer)
- 24) Are you registered as a part-time or full-time student? (Part-time, Full-time, Uncertain)
- 25) What is your status? (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Graduate, Other)
- 26) Which of these best describes this course for you? (Course in my major, Course in my minor, General education requirement or elective, Elective not otherwise required, Other)
- 27) What grade do you expect in this course? (A, B, C, D, F, Other, Uncertain)

**THESE QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN REMOVED**

- The instructor was easily reached by email, phone, discussion board, chat room, or other means.
- The instructor was available to help students at reasonable hours and responded to questions promptly.
- The course content was available when I needed it.
- The threaded discussion/course conference contributed to my learning.
- The course included interactive assignments and links to examples from the Web that helped me learn course content.
- There were an adequate number of online activities provided for practice.
- The course content was well-designed, easy to read, and included effective graphics.
- It was easy to navigate through course materials.
- It was easy to submit assignments to the instructor.
- I experienced only minor, or no, technical problems with this course.
- I received timely assistance with technical problems.
- Support services to help me with this course were available and easy to access.