

# Southern Connecticut State University

## FACULTY SENATE

### UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 23, 2022

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

The 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Faculty Senate AY 2021-2022 was held on February 23, 2022, at 12:10 p.m. via Zoom.

#### Attendance

Dave Allen <i>Accounting</i> 9/10	Matthew Ouimet <i>Counseling</i> 10/10	Sandip Dutta <i>Finance</i> 5/10	Shibiao "Bill" Ding <i>Marketing</i> 10/10	Rex Gilliland <i>Philosophy</i> 10/10	Angela Lopez-Velasquez <i>Special Education</i> 7/10
William Farley* <i>Anthropology</i> 7/10	Natalie Starling <i>Counseling &amp; School Psychology</i> 10/10	Lawrence Brancazio <i>Health &amp; Movement Sciences</i> 10/10	Joe Fields <i>Mathematics</i> 10/10	Christine Broadbridge <i>Physics Sciences</i> 10/10	Douglas Macur <i>Theatre</i> 7/10
Melanie Uribe <i>Art</i> 10/10	Helen Marx <i>Curriculum &amp; Learning</i> 9/10	Robert Gregory <i>Health &amp; Movement Sciences</i> 10/10	Klay Kruczek <i>Mathematics</i> 10/10	Jonathan O'Hara <i>Political Science</i> 7/10	Luke Eilderts <i>World Languages &amp; Literatures</i> 10/10
Kevin Siedlecki* <i>Athletics</i> 6/10	Maria Diamantis <i>Curriculum &amp; Learning</i> 10/10	Troy Paddock <i>History</i> 10/10	Jonathan Irving* <i>Music</i> 2/10	Christopher Budnick* <i>Psychology</i> 2/3	
Sean Grace <i>Biology</i> 9/10	Dushmantha Jayawickreme <i>Earth Science</i> 10/10	Carmen Coury <i>History</i> 10/10	Andrea Adimando* <i>Nursing</i> 7/9	Kate Marsland <i>Psychology</i> 9/10	Deborah Weiss <i>Faculty Senate President</i> 10/10
Mina Park <i>Business Information Systems</i> 10/10	Jia Yu <i>Economics</i> 10/10	Yan Liu <i>Information &amp; Library Science</i> 10/10	Kelly Martinez* <i>Nursing</i> 4/10	William Faraclas <i>Public Health</i> 10/10	
Jeff Webb <i>Chemistry</i> 10/10	Peter Madonia <i>Educational Leadership</i> 7/10	Cindy Simoneau <i>Journalism</i> 10/10	Obiageli Okwuka <i>Part-time Faculty</i> 10/10	Michael Dodge <i>Recreation, Tourism &amp; Sport Management</i> 10/10	Meredith Sinclair <i>Undergraduate Curriculum Forum</i> 10/10
Barbara Cook <i>Communication Disorders</i> 10/10	Mike Shea <i>English</i> 10/10	Patrick Crowley <i>Library Services</i> 7/10	Michele DeLucia <i>Part-time Faculty</i> 7/7	Sebastian Perumbilly <i>Social Work</i> 10/10	Cynthia O'Sullivan <i>Graduate Council</i> 8/10
Wes O'Brien <i>Communication, Media &amp; Screen Studies</i> 9/10	Paul Petrie <i>English</i> 10/10	Jacqueline Toce <i>Library Services</i> 9/10	Michael Sormrude* <i>Part-time Faculty</i> 5/7	Stephen Monroe Tomczak* <i>Social Work</i> 9/10	Kyle Mashia-Thaxton <i>Student Government Association</i> 10/10
Alaa Sheta <i>Computer Science</i> 10/10	Matthew Miller <i>Environment, Geography &amp; Marine Studies</i> 10/10	Carol Stewart <i>Management, International Business &amp; Public Utilities</i> 10/10	Virginia Metaxas <i>Part-time Faculty</i> 8/10	Gregory Adams <i>Sociology</i> 8/10	Dr. Joe Bertolino* <i>SCSU President</i> 7/10
Guests:	T. Bennett T. Brolliar C. Hlavac	P. Levatino M. Kingan D. Pettigrew R. Prezant	R. Regos K. Swanson		

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

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

- I. Announcements
  - A. L. Eilderts asked Senators to indicate the academic year they began their 3-year term to the Faculty Senate by filling out this form: <https://forms.office.com/r/Kv3ba0xyE9>.
  - B. B. Cook reminded Senators to encourage them to reach out to their colleagues and students regarding the Wellness Survey.
  - C. D. Weiss asked if there were any interested Senators in serving on the Admissions Open House committee;
  - D. D. Weiss shared that President Bertolino has purchased copies of the book *The Great Upheaval* by Art Levine for all Senators.
  - E. D. Macur shared that the next Theatre production would be *Antigone* and its opening night would be Thursday February 24<sup>th</sup>. The show will run for the weekend.
  
- II. Minutes of the previous meeting held on February 9, 2022, were accepted as distributed. <https://inside.southernct.edu/faculty-senate/meetings>
  
- III. Reports of Faculty Senate Standing Committees
  - A. Reports of the Standing Committees were received.
  - B. M. Diamantis (Student Policy): committee met February 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss pass/fail, incompletes, and to look over the data of the number of credits taken over winter break and the grades students received with A. Carroll.
  
- IV. Faculty Senate President's Report  
<https://inside.southernct.edu/faculty-senate/meetings>
  
- V. Special Committees
  - A. Grad Council: No report
  - B. UCF: Senators asked M. Sinclair questions regarding the LEP taskforce, its recommendations, and the next steps. M. Sinclair shared that the changes would come to a referendum most likely Fall 2022, and that additional meetings/fora will be planned so that faculty will have an opportunity to discuss.
  
- VI. New Business
  - A. Department Proposal: Marriage and Family Therapy. P. Levatino and S. Perumbilly presented the proposal.
    - i. M. Diamantis **moved to support** the proposal to create a distinct Department of Marriage and Family Therapy.
    - ii. **Seconded.**
      - 1. Vote tally
        - a. Yes ..... 38
        - b. No ..... 1
      - 2. The motion to support the proposal was **approved**.
  
  - B. K. Kruczek **moved to poll** the Senators on which proposed modification to the Faculty Scholar award had the most support (see documents below).
    - i. After discussion Senators moved to vote.
      - 1. Option 1 ..... 1

- 2. Option 2 ..... 0
- 3. Option 3 ..... 9
- 4. Option 4 ..... 20

ii. The results of the poll will now be considered by the committee.

VII. Adjournment

A. B. Cook moved **to adjourn** the meeting. **Seconded.**

i. Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

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L. Eilderts, Secretary

Proposal for Department Status: Marriage and Family Therapy



**To:**

Dr. Deb Weiss  
Faculty Senate President  
Southern Connecticut State University

**From:**

Paul Levatino, Associate Professor  
Program Director, Clinic Director  
Marriage and Family Therapy Program

**Dear Faculty President Weiss:**

Attached find MFT's proposal and plan for Department status for Senate advisement. A letter of support from the chairperson of Social Work, Dr. Loida Reyes, is also included.

**History:**

The Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) program at SCSU traces its roots back to 1975 within the Counseling and School Psychology Program. Over time, the demand for specialized training in Family Therapy increased, and in 1982 Dean Anthony Pinciario and the MFT program agreed the program was best served as its own department. The MFT program officially became a free-stranding graduate-level Department in 1983. The Department was unique in offering a specialized Masters in Family Therapy degree.

The program immediately established itself. It applied for and was granted accreditation by the Commission on the Accreditation of Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COMAFTE) in 1984, making SCSU's MFT program one of the first in the nation to receive national accreditation and one of the few programs in the world to offer the specialized Masters of Family Therapy credential.

The MFT department operated as a department from 1983 until 2008. At that time the Dean of HHS elected to combine the MFT Department with the Social Work Department, designating MFT as a program within the Social Work Department. This move was made because (at that time) MFT's Department consisted of only three full-time faculty. Previous SCSU guidelines recommended that department status required a minimum of four full-time faculty members.

In 2011, under the leadership of Dean Gregory Paveza, the MFT program applied for and was granted an additional faculty line. A national faculty search was successfully completed and in August 2012 Dr. Sebastian Perumbilly was hired, increasing the MFT full-time faculty number from three to four.

Following a series of faculty retirements and successful faculty searches the MFT program gained its current faculty structure in 2016: Dr. Sebastian Perumbilly, Dr. Rebecca Harvey, Dr. Julie Liefeld, and Mr. Paul Levatino. Each of these MFT faculty members has obtained tenure. The program is grounded by eight stable, committed part-time faculty members.

Since 2011, the MFT program operates in a highly successful two- or three-year cohort model, admitting 26 to 28 students each Fall. The program's retention and graduation rates are high: 91% of all admitted students graduate within six years of admission.

**Challenges to Existing Structure Within Social Work:**

For those unfamiliar with graduate level clinical mental health credentials, the placement of the MFT program within Social Work may seem appropriate. However, from an operations perspective, the current structure of MFT within Social work presents significant challenges:

- While both programs specialize in preparing master's level mental health clinicians, Marriage and Family Therapy is a distinct profession with its own history, theories, clinical models, professional organizations, professional journals, accreditation standards, core competencies, training focus (i.e., systemically focused psychotherapy and unique clinical supervision education), code of ethics, and national standards for clinical practice.
- Our involvement in one another's operations does not complement faculty member's professional academic development nor is there room in either of the program's accreditation mandated program coursework for cross-program student registration.
- The organizational structure of having the MFT program within Social Work is not efficient. Most Social Work committees do not benefit from nor relate to the development of Marriage and Family Therapy. MFT faculty involvement in Social Work activities siphons faculty time and resources away from developing new MFT curriculum offerings as well as limits our ability to refine the current MFT curriculum. The two programs' accreditation standards do not align, and this lack of alignment complicates each program's re-accreditation process, adding an additional layer of explanation to each program's reaccreditation portfolio, and an additional level of scrutiny from site-visitors. Separate Department status addresses these concerns.
- The placement of MFT within the Social Work program places a burden on Social Work leadership. MFT, as a separate and distinct profession, has its own principles, practices, and standards. Requiring Social Work faculty leaders to oversee a program they have little knowledge of and investment in is an unreasonable burden on Social Work's Chairperson. This is also unfair to committees within the Social Work Department. Asking their personnel committee to review faculty performance in the promotion and tenure or six-year review process is a strain on Social Work's Promotion and Tenure Committee. MFT's placement within Social Work requires that their Department Curriculum Committee review and approve MFT course modifications. Social Work faculty members have no knowledge in MFT pedagogy and accreditation requirements, nor should they need to. Asking them to learn these guidelines and practices while doing their own work and department management is unfair and inefficient.
- Placement of MFT in Social Work, negatively impacts MFT's representation on University Committees (Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, Council of Academic Chairs, etc.). While most committees on campus have accommodated representation of MFT within their membership, the placement of MFT in Social Work translates to MFT having to advocate for and justify our presence within these structures. In addition, the placement of MFT within Social Work translates to MFT faculty running against Social Work faculty for committee member positions (Promotion and Tenure, Personnel Committee, Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, Department Curriculum Committee, etc.) in faculty elections. MFT cannot effectively represent itself within committees unless it is fully and fairly represented. Social Work faculty are more familiar with and naturally inclined to support their own faculty in department-wide elections. With MFT placed as a program within Social Work, the deck is stacked against equitable MFT faculty representation.
- The MFT program currently and historically maintains its own budget and program resources, and this move will place no additional fiscal burdens on the College of Health and Human Services, the University, or on the Social Work Department. MFT program was moved into the Social Work program in 2007, however MFT consistently operated and managed a distinct Operating Budget (HHS 055) overseen by the MFT Program Director and Dean of Health and Human Services. The MFT program has a Department Secretary, serving MFT Clinic, faculty, and student needs. *No additional resources will be required to operate MFT as a distinct Department, nor will any resources be taken from the Social Work Department in this modification.*

- Often the professional advocacy organizations for MFT's and Social Workers are not aligned and on opposing sides of Connecticut legislative initiatives. This poses challenges for shared academic resources and challenging conversations regarding professional advocacy goals. These non-aligning advocacy situations contribute to a strained relationship between the two professions and faculty professionals. While current SCSU faculty within the two programs navigate these differences in a collegial manner, there have been varying challenges and complex dynamics in the past. Historically when consensus between the two programs could not be reached these impasses were solved by MFT faculty being outvoted and/or their opinion relegated to a secondary priority. These disagreements distract us from work within our individual disciplines and set up unnecessary and unproductive conflicts. Asking two competing professional organizations to operate under the same umbrella is not efficient. It puts the smaller profession at risk of having its values, principles and practices minimized. Noting the observations and challenges noted above, conversations and preparations for initiating the separation of Social Work and MFT began in the 2019-2020 academic year. Social Work and MFT faculty are in favor of this change. Former Chairperson Dr. Rofuth and current Chair Dr. Reyes, support the move of MFT back to its own Department. This move was approved by Social Works's Management Team committee members in 2020.
- Social Work has petitioned for and is positioned to become its own school in 2023. Remaining a program within Social Work would leave MFT especially vulnerable. As the profession with fewer professionals and professional advocacy resources, the MFT program is already in danger of having its professional goals circumvented by its larger peer profession. Currently, the Dean of Health and Human Services, Dr. Sandy Bulmer, manages and advocates equally for the two programs, overseeing each as distinct and separate entities. Recent chairpersons of Social Work (Drs. Rofuth and Reyes) have navigated the relationship with deliberate attention and emphasis on operating them as equal, distinct, and separate entities. However, if the current leadership structure or personnel within the Dean's Office, Social Work and MFT faculty were to change, MFT would be left especially at risk to relegation to second tier status within a larger, more powerful School of Social Work. This dynamic is not unique to SCSU. In other programs in the United States, the placement of MFT within larger master's level mental health programs (e.g. counseling and/or social work) has negatively impacted MFT's enrollment and program delivery. MFT was separated from CSP in 1983 to promote the department's growth and to isolate MFT from this dynamic.

**Future Structure:**

Making Marriage and Family Therapy to its own Department within the College of Health and Human Services will solve all the matters addressed above. In addition, this modification requires no additional financial resources from any stakeholder (MFT, Social Work, the College of Health and Human Services, and/or the University).

- Marriage and Family Therapy will operate as an individual Department under the leadership of the Dean of Health and Human Services.
- The Marriage and Family Therapy Department's four core faculty will serve as members of its Department Curriculum Committee and Promotion and Tenure Committee.
- One core faculty member will serve as a Faculty Senator within SCSU's Faculty Senate.
- One faculty member will serve on the Graduate Council as Department Representative.
- The Program Director position will become the role of Department Chair. This position already receives re-assigned time which will be converted to Chairperson credits.

In preparation for this transition, the MFT faculty implemented coverage of the roles outlined above in 2019:

- Graduate Council and Faculty Senate and meeting coverage is provided via Drs. Harvey (GC) and Perumbilly (FS).
- MFT core faculty meet 1.5 hours every three weeks following Robert's Rules of Order, and self-manage Personnel, Promotion and Tenure, and Curriculum Committee issues.

- The MFT Program Director already attends meetings of the Dean's Chairs Meetings, and the Council for Academic Chairpersons.

As evidenced, the structure for MFT department status is in place, functional, and sustainable in a long-term capacity under this model.

**Outcome:**

Marriage and Family Therapy training at SCSU has a historical legacy and reputation of excellence within SCSU and the State of Connecticut. Transitioning MFT to its own Department will reduce layers of administrative bureaucracy, incurring no additional costs to Southern Connecticut State University. The MFT Department will have greater visibility and enhanced reputation within the University and community-at-large, and this will translate to greater distinction of future MFT graduates. The move ameliorates all the concerns outlined above and positions both Departments to operate more efficiently and effectively. By focusing on our individual disciplines more precisely and with fewer distractions, both programs can commit to growth initiatives that foster enrollment and retention. Finally, this move brings to fruition a strategic collaboration between Social Work, MFT and the Dean of Health and Human Services, initiated three years ago, designed to position MFT and Social Work to meet long-term strategic goals and streamline accreditation processes.

## Faculty Scholar Award Modifications (proposed but not approved)

The Faculty Scholar Award will be awarded in the following manner:

There will be four categories for consideration:

1. Monograph
2. Textbook
3. Journal Article(s): A series of related journal articles can be considered as one product
4. Technology/Art/Performance/Invention

**Option 1:** The categories for the full award (currently \$2500) will alternate as follows:

- Technology/Art/Performance/Invention and Journal Article(s) (2022, 2024, 2026, ...)
- Monograph and Textbook (2023, 2025, 2027, ....)

**Option 2:** The categories for the full award (currently \$2500) will alternate as follows:

- Journal Article(s) (2022, 2026, 2030, ...)
- Technology, Art, Performance, and Invention (2023, 2027, 2031, ...)
- Monograph (2024, 2028, 2032, ...)
- Textbook (2025, 2029, 2033, ...)

**Option 3:** Hand out awards to two categories (currently \$1250 for each of the two awards) as follows:

- Technology/Art/Performance/Invention (2022, 2024, 2026, ...)
- Journal Article(s) (2022, 2024, 2026, ...)
  
- Monograph (2023, 2025, 2027, ....)
- Textbook (2023, 2025, 2027, ....)

**Option 4:** Hand out one award to each of four categories (currently \$625 for each of the four awards) as follows:

- Journal Article(s)
- Technology, Art, Performance, and Invention
- Monograph
- Textbook