

SCSU Faculty Senate President's Report – December 2, 2020

Announcements:

- ***Thank you, Senators!*** I'd like to thank all of you for your hard work and diligence this Semester in tackling all of the issues that came our way. It has been a privilege working with you. I wish you all a wonderful break and a happy and healthy holiday season.
- ***Jirsa Service Award nominations due*** – The due date for nominations is December 4, 2020, 3pm. Details regarding the award may be found under Awards:
<https://inside.southernct.edu/faculty-senate/grants-faculty-resources>
- ***Revised FS calendar for spring 2021*** – Please refer to the Senate website (home page) where the revised dates for the FS meetings for spring 2021 have been posted. The FS calendar has been changed due to the revised academic schedule for the spring. The standing committees will meet on 1/27, prior to the first full Senate meeting on 2/3.
- ***College of Education LTEC GOV position*** - I have posted this for several weeks already, and will leave this opportunity open until Friday, Dec. 4th for a Senator to volunteer for the Learning Technologies Governance Committee position (LTEC GOV) that remains open. If no one volunteers by then, I will open the position to the entire COE faculty.
- ***Follow up on survey sent to students by Student Affairs*** – As expressed in previous reports, faculty had concerns regarding this survey due to no faculty participation in its creation. It had been agreed by administration that student comments would be consolidated into meaningful units, however, this did not happen and ultimately the comments were removed since it was determined that consolidating them would have been too time-consuming. It is also proposed by the administration that there be a series of department-specific reports; two of these were presented to AAUP and the FS EC as samples for review. AAUP found that both contained information that would have made it possible to identify individual faculty members. Faculty recommended that these department-specific reports not be disseminated since, especially for smaller departments, it is very difficult to present the data in a manner that deidentifies faculty and failure to do this could lead to grievances. Also, given that the data are aggregated, it was felt that the reports provide little to no useful information.
- ***AAUP initiatives regarding Zoom*** - On Friday, CSU-AAUP will file a grievance over the system office's refusal to support Zoom as a resource for online teaching and learning. Faculty engagement and push back on all four CSU campuses over the summer succeeded in convincing the BOR to extend the "stay" on the IT policy until the end of the fall semester. AAUP has been pushing for discussions to resolve the matter informally, to no avail. Chris Henderson, the counsel for the system office HR, responded to the last AAUP communication

requesting a meeting with a doubling-down on the prohibition. Therefore, AAUP will engage the grievance process to resolve the matter formally.

The plan is to continue to build pressure on the BOR to reverse their position by asking faculty from all four campuses to sign on to the grievance as grievants in a kind of “class action” initiative. The plan as it stands now is to have CSU-AAUP and campus AAUP leadership sign on this week so that we can file in a timely fashion. On Friday of this week or Monday of next, AAUP will reach out to senators on all four campuses to ask them to add their names. And further, they will reach out to the general membership to ask them to sign on ahead of the December 17th BOR meeting where we will join students from all four campuses to voice our concerns about this issue in the public commentary segment of the agenda. AAUP has been provided with the Senate commentaries on Zoom that were collected earlier this semester and will also be collecting additional anecdotes and rationales to support the grievance from membership. If any Senators wish to write an op-ed about this issue, the CSU-AAUP communications director can help get it placed. Even if individual faculty are not using Zoom, the principle is still at stake: the contract gives faculty the right to exercise our professional discretion in the conduct of our courses (and by extension, our professional duties). Prohibiting the use of a resource that works—in the context of a pandemic, no less—is anti-student and anti-faculty, as well as a violation of the contract.

Preparation for the 12/2/20 meeting:

Resolutions

- ***Resolution regarding BOR ACME proposal*** –presented by the Executive Committee. Please read the resolution and commentary (in the packet and attached to this email) carefully in order to prepare for our discussion. I have attached an additional article that I feel is an excellent summary of the pros and cons of the corequisite model, if you should have time to read it. To help put some perspective on the BOR proposal, there are two distinct issues that drive our concerns:
 - The first issue violates the CBA faculty responsibility for curriculum. Changes proposed to mathematics will directly affect the agreed-upon TAP transfer pathways and thus the programs completed by community college students who receive equivalent status to Southern students upon transfer. This type of curricular encroachment has been evident in recent years on the community college curriculum and is now being imposed on the CSUs.
 - The second issue is the mandated and exclusive use of the corequisite model. The proposal would eliminate prerequisite developmental sequences at the community college level in favor of the corequisite model. This wholesale change is not supported by the literature; the proposal has selectively included information from articles while ignoring broader conclusions, such as the model not being appropriate for students who are not on the cusp of meeting the cutoffs, the fact that claims to corequisite success are compounded by the change to an easier math requirement, the finding that completion

of degree isn't improved and in fact, may even be negatively affected when certain variables are controlled, and the finding that students who are not on the cusp of meeting cutoff requirements and need more supports benefit from a stronger prerequisite developmental model and would be harmed by this model. Our stake in this is clearly concern for the CT student population, whether they be community college or university students as well as the concerns for students who will transfer to Southern and how this may affect their level of preparedness.

- **Resolution regarding questions to be added to the Student Opinion Survey** – presented by the Technology Committee – This resolution may be found on page 29 in the meeting packet. To provide some context to this resolution, unbeknownst to the Senate at some point a number of years ago, a group of questions had been inserted into the student opinion survey for online courses only. When we used this online survey for all of our courses in the spring, we noted the addition and requested that the questions be removed since they were not created nor approved by faculty. The Technology Committee has reviewed the questions that were removed and is recommending a new group of questions they believe would be helpful to faculty for online courses. Their charge, at this time, did not include changes to the original paper survey, the content of which matches up with the online version, with the exception of these added questions. Therefore, no changes are being recommended to the paper survey at the current time. The committee will take on a broader review of the paper survey content, survey administration procedures, and a potential survey policy in the spring. In the interim, however, these questions can be helpful in providing faculty with additional information. They would not be included for this semester, but could be first used for eight-week courses in the spring.

Travel Funds

Available Faculty Travel Funds as of November 29, 2020				
Fund	Starting Balance	Spent	Encumbered	Balance
FT "AAUP" Travel	\$491,172.58	\$4,619.26	\$14,065.07	\$472,488.25
PT "AAUP" Travel	\$39,436.79	\$90.00	\$1,284.02	\$38,062.77
Creative Activity	The Faculty Creative Activity Travel Fund was voluntarily forfeited this year by the faculty.			

2020-2021 [Resolutions approved by Faculty Senate](#) – The latest updates on the resolutions and their status may be found on the FS website.