

SCSU Faculty Senate President's Report – December 4, 2024, meeting

1) Fiscal Impacts / State Budget / University Budget –

Accessibility, Completion, and Talent (ACT) Framework

In sum, the following can be anticipated:

- Our request for an **extension to February 28, 2025**, was approved and therefore there is additional time for faculty to engage and respond to ACT.
- **BOR Chairperson Marty Guay** has accepted my invitation to join us at our first senate meeting of the Spring semester on 1/29. The ACT Framework is a core topic for discussion, though other topics are welcome.
- **University Interim President Dr. Smith** has shared his vision for Southern's response to the ACT Framework which is development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) specific to our institution and strategic plan, and that faculty, the Faculty Senate, will be involved. Information will be forthcoming from Provost Irwin about the particulars for next steps.

The following events transpired, resulting in the above outcomes:

- As shared with faculty senators on 11/14, the below letter was sent to Marty Guay:
Chair Guay, because the ACT framework and goals were created outside the shared governance process, the four CSU Senate presidents met on November 7 and November 11 to review and discuss the ACT Framework and KPI development process and timeline. We request the deadline be extended to at least February 28, 2025, so that faculty can be afforded appropriate time to review and meaningfully participate. Thank you for your consideration.

William Lugo, ECSU Senate President
Natalie Starling, SCSU Senate President
Jeff Schlicht, WCSU Senate President
Stephen Adair, CCSU Senate President
- The BOR held its [meeting](#) on 11/21 and the [ACT Framework](#) and related KPIs were discussed. The following quote is a brief excerpt and does not capture the full context of the meeting, please follow the link or visit <https://www.ct.edu/regents/archives> Brendan Cunningham (Treasurer, ESCU-AAUP) remarked that "...ACT, those three pillars did not involve shared governance, fair enough, we have to start somewhere. The President's Council is not shared governance, and it established a set of goals that are now arriving predetermined to our true shared governance bodies within CSU which is our senates. This board needs to be aware that the four senate presidents at CSU are talking about boycotting ACT as a consequence of the lack of shared governance up to this point..."

I, and the other three senate presidents, agree shared governance was not followed in the creation of ACT. Our letter above highlights this and is transparent about this being a result of multiple discussions.

At the writing of the above letter, and at the writing of this report, I have not recommended, and at this moment with the information in-hand I am not recommending that the SCSU faculty boycott ACT.

That said, I strongly recommend that:

1. we continue to engage with SCSU administration, the BOR, and the System Office/Chancellor,
 2. we make meaningful effort to participate in the development of KPIs while simultaneously evaluating the quality and purpose of this work, and
 3. we closely monitor shared governance and the way in which faculty are included, heard, and respected, and readily communicate concerns.
- The four senate presidents also met with BOR Chair Marty Guay on 11/21 to inquire directly about ACT and to share our concern about maintaining our institutional identities.

2) ***The Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Faculty Leadership Council (FLC) meetings with administration*** – The Faculty Leadership Council (FLC) meets monthly with administration – This group met on 12/2 to discuss and monitor multiple topics.

- **StAR process/procedures** - concerns for this cycle were shared at our previous FLC meetings this semester. Positive progress was reported by faculty leaders at the 12/2 meeting. Provost Irwin will call for a meeting of the relevant stakeholders to address past concerns and future planning. Concerns included procedural steps underway, clarity about number of reviewers (including external reviewers), scheduling of reviewers and related notifications, and timeline for faculty review and reflection upon receipt of feedback.
- **Surveying of students** – Provost Irwin shared that the survey regarding degree completion will undergo a revision and will not include prompts about specific departments/disciplinary areas. There was agreement that advancing sharing of the revised survey with the Faculty Senate President and SCSU-AAUP Chapter President would occur.
- **Great Learning Educational Services contract** – Provost Irwin shared that there are on-going conversations with legal counsel, HR, International Studies, SUAOF, SCSU-AAUP, and the Graduate School Dean. This is a partner MBA program with recruitment of students from India (n=49; not yet matriculated into SCSU). There remain questions about applicable credits, AACSB allowances, and next steps. The goal of this initiative is international graduate student recruitment and access to a potential student pool not previously accessible. Faculty leaders shared that the greatest concern was lack of communication to the faculty about this initiative, as it was learned by faculty leaders through meeting with the Administrative Faculty Senate in November.
- **Carnegie Classification Change/R2**– On Thursday 11/21, Provost Irwin hosted an open forum to share this news. Discussion included, but was not limited to, our institutional identity, marketing, faculty working conditions, research supports, etc. At our 12/2 FLC meeting, it was shared that the next steps will be, pending news of our provisional designation later in December, a possible panel discussion to potentially include external representatives with experience having gone through a similar process. We await more information from Academic Affairs when available.

- 3) **Travel Funds Report for AY 24-25 – as of 10/21/24.** See table below. Budget Information below includes prior year carryover. “Encumbered” reflects those TA's processed and funds committed but does not include TA's that are in transit or pending in the Provost Office.

Index	Description	FY 2025 Budget	FY2025 Expenses	FY2025 Encumbrances	FY 2025 Balance	Index	Estimated FY24 Carryover
AUP769	AAUP Conf Wrkshp & Travel FT - 2025	\$ 365,530.00	\$ 24,633.79	\$ 89,808.89	\$ 251,087.32	AUP768	171,304.30
AUP772	AAUP Conf Wrkshp & Travel PT - 2025	40,614.00	1,475.00	10,640.80	28,498.20	AUP771	10,076.66
VPA017	Faculty CrActivity-RG	85,000.00	70,244.04	-	14,755.96	VPA017	-
VPA018	Faculty CrActivity-Travel	85,000.00	-	-	85,000.00	VPA018	-
Totals		\$ 576,144.00	\$ 576,144.00	\$ 96,352.83	\$ 100,449.69		\$ 379,341.48

4) **Preparation for the 12/4/2024 meeting –**

- a) *Proposal for Ad-Hoc committee for Formalizing Faculty Advising* – This proposal is being presented by the Executive Committee and is a result of discussions from PPC and from PPC’s meeting with Provost Irwin. To support shared governance, membership invitations will be extended to a variety of stakeholders. If this proposal is supported by Faculty Senate (via vote), the senate may also wish to elect its representatives to the committee at the 12/4 meeting such that the work can begin immediately in the Spring semester. Please see packet for additional information.
- Charge 1: gather and receive recommendations and information from constituents and other groups across the university community
 - Charge 2: support both consistency and, when and where appropriate, specificity in faculty advising by establishing definitions and a general protocol for faculty advising activities and duties (e.g., what advising is/is not, internal and external accreditation needs, how to report concerns regarding students, communication among stakeholders, etc.)
 - Charge 3: support encouragement, reinforcement, and accountability for faculty advising activities by developing a recommendation for load credit assignment for faculty advising (e.g., reassigned time formula, possible course credit linkage or designation, how credits may be assigned, etc.)
 - Charge 4: establish a pilot for at least one volunteering department to implement in Fall 2025
 - Charge 5/other: upon presentation to the Faculty Senate, consideration to be given to the ad hoc committee’s recommendation for additional charge(s)
- b) *Department P & T Guidelines Feedback Poll for Academic Policy Committee* – The APC seeks senators’ input via poll to determine if the topic of Department P & T Guidelines should be discussed and/or prioritized by APC. This is not a vote to establish whether or not Department P & T Guidelines should be enacted, but simply if the topic should be deliberated by APC. There has been a wide range of faculty feedback about this topic over the past few years and APC seeks to better understand the faculty’s desire for this topic to be deliberated this academic year.

c) *Guests* –

- 1) *Presentation from Student Government Association (SGA)* – Sarah Witteman will join us from SGA. Luke and I met with Sarah on 12/2 to hear a summary. The presentation will focus on student challenges and experiences, and feedback about faculty communication to students about course changes, primarily to course modality, that may occur. While there is an understanding in our university community that changes to course modality, according to what is indicated on Banner, cannot occur in an on-going manner once a course has started, this presentation will highlight that, practically-speaking, some students are experiencing modality changes in a variety of situations. **The goal is that faculty hear students' concerns and communicate these concerns back to their departments, including their part-time faculty members. I wish to encourage all to hear these concerns, reflect on student needs and experiences that have resulted in SGA creating the presentation itself, whether or not this may apply specifically to the listener, such that we can also consider how to maintain our commitments to our students.**
- 2) *Presentation from Department of Special Education* – Similar to past practice (see example in meeting records for [11/9/22](#)), the Department of Special Education is to become Department of Inclusive Education and Behavior Science. The intent of this presentation is to clarify the department's intention for this name change. More information/rationale will be provided by a department representative at the meeting.

The role of the Faculty Senate is to provide advice to an entity seeking to become established under a new status. While this is not an official status change for Special Education, the department has been recognized in our SCSU community as the Department of Special Education and is therefore proceeding with this step to communicate the change and engage Senate's advice. We will take a vote of support following Q&A. Though this has occurred in past practice, this vote is not required for department name changes and is non-binding.

- 5) 2024-2025 – [Resolutions approved by Faculty Senate](#) – Updates on the resolutions and their status may be found on the FS website.