

SCSU Faculty Senate President's Report – March 31, 2021 meeting

- 1) ***Preparation for 3/31/21 meeting*** – We have one statement, three resolutions, and one discussion topic on the agenda for our meeting tomorrow.
 - a) Faculty Senate Statement on Anti-AAPI Violence, Racism, and Hate Crimes (please see in your packet and at the end of this report). This statement was written by Bill Faraclas, Tricia Lin and Deb Weiss, and reviewed by the FS EC which presents it for approval at the meeting.
 - b) Revision to *Faculty Senate Bylaws* (IX.D.2) – The current FS Bylaws allow for two special elections to be held in the fall if there remain vacancies after the spring election for All-University Committees. In the second special election, school/college restrictions are removed. The rationale for this proposed revision is to avoid holding a second special election during the fall semester, which is time-consuming and typically yields a small number of self-nominations. The proposed change would remove school/college restrictions in the first (and only) special election, but would give priority to faculty from the designated school/college. Please review the changes proposed by the committee prior to our meeting.
 - c) *Resolution revising size of Academic Strategic Plan Committee* – This resolution reduces the number of committee members from 16 to 12.
 - d) *Resolution revising size of the Robert E. Jirsa Service Award Committee* – This resolution reduces the number of committee members from five to four by eliminating the at-large position, but provides for an alternate member to be elected from each school/college in the case that a member is unable to serve.
 - e) *Discussion regarding simplification of the P&T process* - After an extended period of time sponsoring focus groups that included a broad range of campus constituencies, the Academic Policy Committee (APC) will present the results of its exploration. Prior to the meeting, please read the report in the packet. Only select portions of the report will be presented at the meeting in order to allow for more discussion time.
- 2) ***Updates***
 - a) ACME – Despite negative feedback from faculty in the system through Senates, departmental and personal initiatives, the revised ACME proposal has not changed significantly. This proposal changes the CT Community College English and Math requirements in several ways. If approved, the proposal would initially impact the community colleges to a greater degree than the CSUs, however, community college students transfer to Southern based upon carefully-constructed agreements that require students to complete equivalent requirements; this would no longer be the case with ACME and the CSUs would have no say in these curricula.

The proposal would change the current Math requirement to ‘align’ with a career direction; only STEM students would be required to take algebra. This change is being undertaken without true faculty input. In addition, the current pre-requisite model would be changed to a co-requisite model for both Math and English. This means that all students, regardless of level, would take the gatekeeper courses in Math and English without meeting the prerequisites. All students who do not place into the gatekeeper courses, regardless of level, would receive the same support through a co-requisite course to be taken concurrently with the gatekeeper course. Students may also refuse to take the co-requisite support course. Research demonstrates that the co-requisite model may be effective for students who are close to meeting the placement requirement, but would disadvantage students who have greater needs. Although the proposal touts equity, it would actually result in an inequity in that all students would receive the same support regardless of their needs. Following a marketing, quasi-educational presentation to the BOR Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASA) by the [Dana Center](#) (the consulting group hired by the BOR for the purpose of originating the proposal), Merle Harris, ASA Chair, strongly lent her support to the proposal at last week’s BOR meeting (Watch from around the 2 hour, 3 minute point <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DC39BeD9NDY>). Our English and Math faculty have many concerns about ACME, as should we all, given the erosion of shared governance and academic freedom.

- b) CBA Negotiations – Recently, we received two TableTalk summaries (attached to my email). During the 3/18 session, the BOR withdrew its 5-5 teaching load proposal. Discussion is still to take place on the AAUP proposal of 9 credits for teaching and 3 credits for service. Both reports provide a detailed summary of what transpired at the meetings. Please contact the AAUP Office with any questions. Actions include:
- Contacting representatives in the Connecticut General Assembly to let them know that the Board of Regents is attacking academic freedom and trying to corporatize Connecticut public higher education, eliminate research funds and curriculum development grants, shred any semblance of shared governance, and pursue unbridled union busting. Ask for legislator support of public higher education as a public good. Click [here](#) for a template that can be personalized and sent to state representatives. Click [here](#) to find contact information for legislators and send them an email or give them a call. Some legislators have been very supportive of our campaign.
 - Signing up and encouraging students to sign up to speak at the next Board of Regents meeting on April 22 at 10:00am.
- c) Report from Julie Edstrom, Interim Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Among the CSU institutions, Southern's enrollment results for 2020-2021 were consistent. Southern did better with graduate enrollment.
 - Generally, colleges and universities that offered more of an in-person experience seemed to have better Fall 2020 enrollment results than those that were all or mostly online. Some families were reluctant to invest in a mostly online learning experience.
 - Flagship publics and more selective institutions had stronger enrollment than community colleges, regional publics and less selective private schools. These differences were sharper in New England than other regions, based on data from EAB.

- Lower income, first generation and other underserved populations were less likely to enroll in college in Fall 2020, and this is a gap that may persist in 2021-2022 based on nationwide decreases in FAFSAs filed. Universities and colleges with higher percentages of these students have seen enrollment drop more than those with more affluent, traditional students.
- Looking ahead to SCSU's Fall 2021 new student enrollment:
 - Application numbers are down for both first years and transfers.
 - Admitted student numbers are stable compared to the last two years, due to a higher number of completed apps since we are not requiring test scores or letters of recommendation.
 - Deposits are steady to higher compared to Fall 2020, and down 12-15% compared to Fall 2019.
 - We have increased the number of both merit and need based financial aid offers, with the intent of shoring up yield among admitted students. The Foundation and SCSU have committed to an additional \$1M in scholarship funding for 2021-22, which will benefit mostly continuing students to support retention and completion.
 - The department of Transfer Student Services has been reorganized and is providing more robust and proactive service to prospective transfers, including credit evaluations at the point of admission.
 - May 1 will be an important indicator for first year enrollment. Typically, SCSU has about 75% of fall enrollment deposited by that date. In 2020, only 60% of those who ultimately enrolled had deposited by May 1.
- Factors that are confounding predictions about enrollment in Fall 2021 and the next few years:
 - Test optional policies and their impact on traditional admissions search, which has relied on direct marketing to purchased names of test-takers.
 - The number of students not participating in online learning in the K-12 system, and whether they will come back.
 - The impact of real gaps in learning outcomes for K-12 students during the pandemic.
 - Enrollment declines in community colleges and what they will mean for transfer pipelines.
 - Potential higher value of in person learning environments and opportunity for universities to distinguish themselves.
 - Opportunity to continue online and hybrid recruitment and engagement of prospective students as a supplement to traditional outreach.
- Undergraduate enrollment is likely to see additional decline over the next 3-5 years.
 - The impact of the smaller Fall 2020 class will be felt over 4 years.
 - Competition to recruit an already contracting market of prospective students in CT and New England will intensify.
 - Enhancing Southern's academic reputation and enhancing market position will not be fully accomplished in that timeframe.

- What can we do about it?
 - An aggressive transfer strategy will help mitigate this decline. We have an opportunity to set Southern apart in the transfer realm.
 - Emphasis on affordability and value with an optimized financial aid strategy.
 - Focus on career readiness with structured co-curricular programming and documented outcomes.

Travel Funds

Travel Fund Report on Current Balance				Date: 3-29-21
Full Time	Beginning	Spent	Encumbered	Remaining
FT Rollover	\$192,472.58	\$4,368.99	\$11,666.70	\$176,436.89
FT New	\$298,700.00	\$8,333.36	\$6,923.24	\$ 283,443.40
Combined Total	\$491,172.58	\$12,702.35	\$18,589.94	\$459,880.29
Part Time	Beginning	Spent	Encumbered	Remaining
PT Rollover	\$6,247.79	\$0.00	\$534.02	\$5,713.77
PT New	\$33,189.00	\$1375.00	\$625.00	\$31,189.00
Combined Total	\$39,436.79	\$1375.00	\$1,159.02	\$36,902.77

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



Faculty Senate Statement
on Anti-AAPI Violence, Racism, and Hate Crimes

Institutions of higher education exist to seek truth and promote understanding based on knowledge. Given the commitment of Southern Connecticut State University to social justice and human rights, the SCSU Faculty Senate expresses its outrage at incidents of discrimination, harassment and violence against Asian, Asian American and Pacific Island (AAPI) peoples in this nation and the senseless murders of eight victims on 3-16-21 in Atlanta. We condemn in the strongest terms demeaning and dehumanizing hate speech and acts of emotional and physical violence towards any individual or group based on national origin or culture, whether on our campus or anywhere in society.

Further, the Faculty Senate affirms its unconditional support for and solidarity with our AAPI colleagues and students. In alignment with SCSU's "Policy Statement on Pluralism," the Faculty Senate denounces discrimination, hate speech, and other forms of violence against all members of our community and seeks to nurture a culture on our campus that advances human rights and social justice for everyone. We will continue to foster an ongoing dialogue at our University that promotes the common sense of humanity that we all value so dearly.