

SCSU Faculty Senate President's Report - September 18, 2019

Reminder

Faculty Creative Activity Research Grant (FCARG) - This is a reminder that the FCARG applications are due on Wed., Oct. 2nd by 4:00pm. The Guidelines and Application in Word format are available on the FS website.

Event

President Bertolino's State of the University Address will take place on Tuesday, Sept. 24 at noon in the Adanti Student Center Ball Room, followed by a faculty and staff lunch at the same venue.

Updates

1. *Faculty website profiles* - The pilot invitations have gone out for faculty department profiles. Once these are completed, a plan will be put into place for all faculty profiles to be uploaded.
2. On 9/12, a meeting took place to discuss the use of Notetaking Express software for students with disabilities who have identified needs for accommodations. Present at the meeting were representatives from the Senate, AAUP, Disability Resource Center, Student Affairs, and Provost Prezant. This software use has been implemented in order to address concerns regarding difficulty finding note takers (60-70% success rate in matching), variability in quality of note taking, reliability, etc. The software enables students to record a lecture; the recording is then transmitted to the software company which employs professional note takers who create notes which are returned to the students within 48 hours. Some of the concerns that had been raised by faculty included questions regarding potential use of recordings, violation of intellectual property rights, etc. Further, no discussion had taken place with faculty prior to implementation of the software. DRC stated that recordings have been used for several years already via smart pens and student phones for the purpose of accommodations for identified students and they did not believe this to be substantially different. Concerns were raised about the lag time of 48 hours which would not enable students to study their notes prior to the next class, in many instances. Student choice was another issue that was discussed, exploring whether students would be able to elect to utilize campus note takers as an option.

Solutions included:

- DRC will look into whether turnaround time for notes can be changed to 24 hours
 - Students will sign a 'contract,' to be designed by the DRC, agreeing that recordings are only to be used for purposes of course preparation, study, etc. and will not be shared with others.
 - In cases where students can demonstrate that the software or smart pen systems are not effective for them, campus note takers can be considered.
 - Senate and AAUP stressed the need to discuss this type of change with faculty when considering implementation of new classroom accommodations that might impact their instruction.
3. I met with Julianne Fowler from SPAR on 9/17. Our discussion focused on how we can consolidate information for all grants available to faculty in one location. It is often confusing for faculty to know exactly what is available, how to apply, and when the applications are due. Consolidating this information would facilitate accessing it.
4. I met with Suzie Huminski, Sustainability Coordinator on 9/17. Two students from the Department of Computer Science are designing software that will categorize faculty research into the 17 sustainable development goals identified by the United Nations, e.g., zero hunger, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, etc. The students have already identified and categorized a significant amount of faculty research (based upon department websites). The end result of this could be to assist faculty, students, and others in finding common interests and identifying the research that is taking place by faculty around these goals.

