

**SCSU Faculty Senate President's Report – December 6, 2023, meeting**

**1) Fiscal Impacts / State Budget / University Budget –**

Important upcoming events:

1. Tomorrow (Wednesday) morning beginning at 10:30am, the BOR will hold its **Finance & Infrastructure Committee** meeting. You can view the agenda and watch the meeting [here](#).
2. Recent conversations with the President, including at the FLC/Admin 12/4 meeting, highlighted the upcoming **Virtual Town Hall scheduled for Thursday 12/7** and the potential for a University Budget Committee meeting in the coming weeks or soon after the start of the Spring semester. More information will be forthcoming. **Faculty should strongly consider attending and engaging in the 12/7 Virtual Town Hall held by President Smith** and members of his Senior Leadership Team focusing on: Deficit Mitigation, Enrollment, Retention and Degree Completion, and Strategies for Campus Safety.

A reminder that the Finance Committee continues to gather senators'/faculty perspectives and suggestions regarding budgetary issues. Please reach out to [Cindy Simoneau](#), FS Treasurer/Finance Committee chair.

**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 12/4 to discuss and monitor multiple topics.

1. **The proposed Undergraduate Professional Advising Plans**– On 11/17, the Council of Academic Chairs (CAC) formally requested SCSU-AAUP and Faculty Senate's review of the proposed changes to undergraduate advising processes. Following an initial review of the matter and prior Resolution (attached), the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, in collaboration with the FLC, shared the following with the President and Provost ahead of the 12/4 meeting. The agreed upon outcome at the FLC/Admin meeting was that the Provost will call for a stakeholder meeting.

*On behalf of Faculty Senate and the FLC, we strongly urge a pause to the proposal for undergraduate academic advising changes for several reasons: 1) the Resolution F-07-02 (attached), 2) the current lack of data-driven rationale for the changes, 3) the concerns, opposition, and observations of issues by chairs, deans, and professional advisors. We also strongly urge a task force or similar group representing all concerned stakeholders be formed immediately through selection and election. Some, though not all, of the questions such a group should consider are:*

1. *What will happen to the faculty receiving credit load for advising activities? Are these roles phasing out because of professional advising increasing? What will happen to these advising credits?*
2. *What are the contingency plans for course cancellations, special topics, independent studies, discipline-specific issues, concentration-specific issues, etc.?*

3. *How will faculty bond/connect with students if the proposal changes do not include encouragement to connect with students until their third semester / 15 months?*
4. *There exists evidence from current students who have received advisement from outside their home department that shows a lack of understanding about the nuances of course selection and program options in some cases. How will this be addressed?*

*Until such a task force completes its study, we also strongly urge that—in order to increase retention and persistence through the best means--all resources and funds devoted to the new model be invested in the current faculty-centric model to compensate the faculty members in each department who choose to advise their department's students.*

Additionally, Gary Winfield of SCSU-AAUP developed and shared the following contractual-related questions with Human Resources and the FLC, which were also shared at the 12/4 FLC/Admin meeting.

1. *The contract establishes advising as AAUP bargaining unit work and while by agreement the professionals can supplement that work are we sure that the plan does not violate the contract?*
2. *There is a Senate resolution f-07-02 that deals with pins. Are we sure that the plan is not violative of the resolution?*
3. *Does the plan make a distinction between students with a declared major and those without (ties to a particular department)?*
4. *In order to be faculty in the bargaining unit a member who teaches must be attached to a department (CBA 5.14) which takes into account commonality of interest and academic purpose. Are the faculty involved all thus designated in order to give advising that takes into account both the needs of the student and the goals of the discipline as established through a department?*

2. **Consortia degree programs**– Discussion highlighted that while there had been some conversations about blending aligned disciplines, the Provost shared that this topic comes from the System Office and there has been no major movement/progress of such initiatives at SCSU, and that outside of SCSU, there have been conversations about online consortia (fully online programs), though the current perception is there is little interest in widespread or broad participation among the CSUs.

3. **Transfer policy (alignment of general education requirements from CT State Community Colleges to SCSU requirements)**– The Provost held a meeting on 11/27 to discuss “General Ed Transfer Alignment”. The FLC shared the understanding that UCF will continue addressing this item with the plan that their work will conclude by March 2023. Meghan Barboza, chair of UCF, shared that progress is well-underway.

- 3) **Student Government Association (SGA) Board of Academic Experience Visit** –Luke and I visited the SGA Board of Academic Experience Committee on 11/29. Discussion focused on student experiences with academics and impact of fiscal issues. Student leaders shared concerns about the reduction in part-time faculty, course cancellations, interest in a wider range of program

opportunities, and financial challenges students face (e.g., needing employment while matriculated). **An SGA Conference is scheduled to be held on February 9<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon and evening, please consider attending and sharing this information with your constituencies.** We wish to thank Kyle Mashia-Thaxton, SGA President, Trevor Boczer, SGA President-elect, Derrick Arnold, SGA representative at-large, and Daphney Alston, Associate Director of Office of Student Involvement & Leadership Development, and all members of SGA for the listening opportunity.

- 4) *Senate visits to departments* – A reminder that, continuing with these outreach efforts from last academic year, Luke Eilderts, Faculty Senate Secretary, and I are again offering our availability to meet with faculty via department visits. This is an optional and open opportunity and will remain open for the academic year. I found these visits to be some of the most helpful opportunities to learn from and listen to faculty in preparation for much of the work encountered last year. Please email me and Luke with any questions and to schedule a visit.

I wish to thank the Department of Earth Sciences for the recent opportunity to visit.

- 5) *Travel Funds Report for FY2024 AAUP Full Time & Part-Time Travel Funds, Creative RG & Travel (as of 12-1-23)* – 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	Budget	Expenses (spent as of 12/1)	Encumbered	Balance Remaining
AUP768	AAUP Conf Workshop & Travel FT - 2024	\$ 853,068.10	\$ 75,361.72	\$ 211,474.26	\$ 566,232.12
AUP771	AAUP Conf Workshop & Travel PT - 2024	76,835.70	4,698.65	16,535.40	55,601.65
VPA017	Faculty Creative Activity-RG	85,000.00	69,833.78	1,204.28	13,961.94
VPA018	Faculty Creative Activity-Travel	85,000.00	1,068.81	-	83,931.19
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 1,099,903.80</b>	<b>\$ 150,962.96</b>	<b>\$ 229,213.94</b>	<b>\$ 719,726.90</b>

6) *Preparation for the 12/6/2023 meeting–*

- a) *Resolution Regarding Presidential Searches at the Connecticut State Universities*– This Resolution is being presented by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and is in response to the recently shared concern from ECSU about “no candidate will appear on campus” appearing in the “Process for the Appointment of a CSCU University President”. ECSU’s and CCSU’s senates have responded with Resolutions opposing this change to the process. **Please review the packet for details.**
- b) Please be advised that the Working Group for Governing Bodies & Documents may seek Faculty Senate’s support to continue its work beyond the conclusion of the Fall 2023 semester.
- 7) 2023-2024 – [Resolutions approved by Faculty Senate](#) – Updates on the resolutions and their status may be found on the FS website.

Senate Resolution Number F-07-02

**Faculty Senate Resolution**

To: SCSU President Cheryl Norton

From: Brian Johnson, President of the SCSU Faculty Senate

The attached Resolution of the Faculty Senate regards: The Importance of PINs in Student Advisement

The Resolution is presented to you for your ☒ APPROVAL  
☐ INFORMATION

After considering this resolution, please indicate your action on this form and return it to the President of the Faculty Senate.

In accordance with the CSU-AAUP Contract (Article 5.10), the President of the University will return the Resolution to the President of the Senate within 15 school days of the receipt of the Resolution.

cc: Dr. Selase Williams

  
Brian Johnson, President, Faculty Senate

Date

12/6/07

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**ENDORSEMENT of Faculty Senate Resolution, F-07-02**

To: Brian Johnson, President SCSU Faculty Senate

From: Cheryl Norton, President of the University

1. Motion APPROVED ☒  
2. Motion DISAPPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ (attach statement)  
3. Motion NOTED \_\_\_\_\_  
4. Comments \_\_\_\_\_

The Faculty Senate must take responsibility and help promote this policy by encouraging the adoption of best practices in advising.

12/10/07

Date

  
Signature

### **The Importance of PINs in Student Advisement**

Whereas SCSU exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence;

And whereas meaningful student advisement plays an important role in achieving academic excellence;

And whereas a system is in place whereby each student must receive an alternate PIN from his or her academic advisor in order to register for classes, and this system is intended to ensure that students see their advisors every semester;

And whereas for this system to work, persons other than a student's advisor should not be giving out an alternate PIN;

**Therefore, be it resolved that:**

**All students who have declared majors be directed to their program or departmental advisor in order to receive their alternate PIN, and**

**be it further resolved that administrative and support staff outside of academic advisement, counseling services and the disability resource center never give a student an alternate PIN, and**

**be it further resolved that under no circumstances may a student worker give a student an alternate PIN, and**

**be it further resolved that a faculty member who is not the student's advisor can give a student a PIN only with departmental or program permission, and**

**be it further resolved that the administration communicate this policy to all faculty, administrators and staff, and**

**be it further resolved that SCSU continue to explore better ways of fostering good communication between students and their academic advisors.**