

SCSU Faculty Senate President's Report – January 24, 2024, meeting

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

On December 14—right at the end of the Fall 2023 semester--[the Board of Regents \(BOR\)](#) **voted to approve an average tuition increase of 5%**. (See BOR resolution--the BOR determines tuition rates for the 12 community college campuses, the four university campuses, and Charter Oak State College.)

The [Faculty Advisory Committee \(FAC\)](#) **opposes that tuition increase** because of the burden it adds to students' already-too-busy lives because the increase in cost coincides with over \$85 million dollars of cuts to their institutions. The FAC, charged by statute with advising the BOR, is composed of elected faculty and staff members from each campus. After [The Finance and Infrastructure Committee](#)—a standing committee of the BOR--met on December 6 and voted to propose raising student tuition, the FAC met on December 8 and passed a resolution opposing the tuition increase (also attached). Despite the FAC Resolution, along with its formal presentation to the BOR today, the BOR approved the tuition increase. The meeting's recording is available [here](#).

Please share this message and the resolutions with students, staff, and faculty members.

Any students or staff or faculty members interested in joining the effort to protest a state funding system that asks students to pay more for less can contact Cindy Stretch stretchc1@southernct.edu

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) ***Senate Presidents Monthly Meetings*** – ECSU has shared a Resolution re No Confidence in Chancellor Cheng (below/attached). **The FS Executive Committee strongly recommends ALL senators thoroughly read the Resolution in its entirety including all links.** While the Executive Committee is not bringing forth a similar Resolution for 1/24, many variables outlined in Eastern's Resolution have impacted or may impact our community in the future and therefore the Executive Committee recommends faculty senators be informed and share with their constituencies.

3) ***The Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Faculty Leadership Council (FLC) meetings with administration*** – As introduced in previous reports, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Faculty Leadership Council (FLC) meet monthly with administration –The group is scheduled to meet again on 2/5.

1. Some members of FLC, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Chairs Council, have been informed of faculty concerns regarding proposed department mergers/splits. FLC will be meeting as soon as possible to discuss.

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.

5) *Travel Funds Report for FY2024 AAUP Full Time & Part-Time Travel Funds, Creative RG & Travel (as of 1-22-24)* – 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 1/22)	Encumbered	Balance Remaining
AUP768	AAUP Conf Workshop & Travel FT - 2024	\$ 853,068.10	\$ 186,377.05	\$ 175,127.27	\$ 491,563.78
AUP771	AAUP Conf Workshop & Travel PT - 2024	76,835.70	13,551.99	15,141.95	48,141.76
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
	Totals	\$ 1,099,903.80	\$ 270,831.63	\$ 191,473.50	\$ 637,598.67

6) *Preparation for the 1/24/2024 meeting*– There will a call for a representative from Faculty Senate:

Faculty Senator to serve on Dean of College of Education Search Committee:

In preparation for a national search for a new dean, a representative from the Faculty Senate is needed to serve on the search committee. The Faculty Senate Elections Committee will call for nominations at the 1/24 meeting and the election will be held at the 2/7 meeting. As selection of the search firm and consultant is still underway, information about the service commitment is forthcoming.

7) 2023-2024 – [Resolutions approved by Faculty Senate](#) – Updates on the resolutions and their status may be found on the FS website.

No Confidence Resolution in CSCU Chancellor Terrence Cheng

Authoritarian Management and the disregard for shared governance and transparency

Whereas Chancellor Cheng has ignored traditional shared governance protocols.

- The CSCU system office forced an academic planning review process onto all CSCU campuses with zero faculty input, unrealistic goals and timelines, that produced a largely unusable product, wasting thousands of hours of faculty and staff time across the system;
- Interim campus presidents are now appointed without a search or input from faculty & staff.
- An ECSU presidential search committee was formed with no representation from ECSU (a change occurred only after [significant pressure from the ECSU senate](#))
- New CSCU presidential search policies remove all decision-making authority from campuses.

Whereas the CSCU system office continues to create and hire new positions at high salaries, without the necessary searches and procedures to carry them out, in violation of shared governance and BOR past practices (while also simultaneously demanding significant budget cuts from CSCU institutions);

Whereas Chancellor Cheng refuses to work with CSCU institutions in good faith.

- on September 5, 2023 the ECSU University Senate [passed a resolution](#) expressing concerns about the Academic Planning Process and offered reasonable solutions to address their concerns but received no response.
- On September 19, 2023 the ECSU University Senate [passed a resolution](#) expressing concern about no representation on the ECSU presidential search committee, as well as who was chairing the search committee. Ultimately, we were given token representation that would be easily outvoted to whatever interests were expressed by the system office, and our concerns about the chair were ignored.
- On October 23, 2023 the ECSU University Senate president [sent an email](#) to the BOR expressing concern about the NDA he was asked to sign. There were ten overly broad restrictions on the NDA, and the Senate President asked for two of the restrictions to be removed so he could report back to the senate as to the status of the search. The Senate President was told the changes “cannot be accepted.”
- On October 31, 2023 the ECSU University Senate [passed a resolution](#) expressing concern about presidential candidate finalists not visiting campuses, as has always been past practice and in the interest of shared governance. Unfortunately, this past practice will not be continued.

Whereas CSCU is a public higher education entity required to be transparent both as a state agency AND as a [standard for NECHE accreditation](#), yet transparency is not a priority within the CSCU system office:

- Many CSCU administrators and members of presidential search committees are now required to

sign [NDAs \(non-disclosure agreements\)](#) which limit both transparency and accountability- despite the fact that there are already confidentiality agreements in place for CSU faculty and staff that allow transparency and accountability to take place.

- Preventing faculty, staff and students from having public forums [to meet potential presidential candidates](#), despite all four CSU Senates passing resolutions and/or motions to endorse such forums ([CCSU](#), [ECSU](#), [SCSU](#), WCSU).

Lack of financial accountability and due diligence

Whereas the consolidation of the community colleges and the mismanagement of the merger has created financial and structural instability for the entire CSCU system, [fueling massive enrollment declines](#) at CT State, but [not other CSCU institutions](#) or [nearby community college systems](#);

Whereas the Chancellor fails to take any accountability for the problems within the CSCU system, but rather blames the institutions themselves;

Whereas Chancellor Cheng has consistently eroded the autonomy of CSCU institutions, including the ability of campus leaders to independently engage the services of outside contractors at their discretion;

Whereas Chancellor Cheng failed to secure adequate funding through the disastrous CSCU 2030 plan, which has led to [significant staff reductions, cuts in student services, and tuition increases throughout the CSCU system](#), while simultaneously ballooning the CSCU system office budget, yet unable to fully explain where all the money has gone.

Whereas there is a total lack of transparency with internal and external stakeholders by CSCU and CCCC as evidenced by [countless claims and lawsuits](#) citing abuses of power, mismanagement of taxpayer money, acts of retaliation, discrimination, and an intentional creation of a work environment that is based on intimidation to silence faculty, staff, and administrators who might raise concerns.

Resolved, that the ECSU University Senate, as the representative body for faculty and staff of Eastern Connecticut State University, votes No Confidence in CSCU Chancellor Terrence Cheng.