

SCSU Faculty Senate President's Report – March 6, 2024, meeting

- 1) ***Fiscal Impacts / State Budget / University Budget*** – Please continue to closely attend to announcements related to this item. 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 Meetings*** – At our February monthly meeting, senate presidents expressed concern about a potential contract with Barnes & Noble for student textbooks, primarily regarding the lack of shared governance in advance of the potential agreement, opposition to a potential “one size fits all” approach, and implications related to potential automatic textbook billing of students. The contract does not appear to be an executed contract at the writing of this report.

Thank you to the FS Academic Policy Committee (APC) for the continued monitoring and review of bookstore and textbook-related issues. The APC has been working with the bookstore since last Spring—please see APC minutes and Faculty Senate records for more information. APC co-chairs are inquiring with the Provost about a recent invitation from the Provost to join the First Day Complete committee (a group that appears to be a committee related to this topic). More information will be shared when available.

- 3) ***Guidelines for Department Mergers/Splits*** – As described in previous reports, discussion is underway, and updates will be shared at future FLC meetings and at upcoming Faculty Senate meetings. Please reach out to me or any member of the Executive Committee with questions and input. Thank you to the FS Finance Committee for supporting additional review of this topic alongside the FS Executive Committee.
- 4) **Faculty Leadership Council (FLC) Meetings with President and Provost:**
 - a) **Proposed Advising Plans and Writing Center / Coordinator** – As described in more detail in previous President's Reports in December 2023 and those for Spring 2024, faculty leaders shared concerns at FLC meetings with administration (Provost was not in attendance on 3/4). On 3/4, in support of continued questions and rising concerns from faculty leaders, it was reshared with the administration that faculty are very concerned about the lack of consultation and advance communication with the faculty on these matters. The FS Executive Committee continues to monitor these issues alongside the FLC. I am hopeful that conversations at the two most recent FLC meetings with administration will result in solutions to the faculty's satisfaction. It is strongly recommended that faculty senators remain informed of these matters.
 - b) **Campus Climate, Safety, & Belonging** – At the 3/4 meeting, faculty leaders expressed concern about the safety and sense of belonging in our campus community in light of international, national, and state-level events. This conversation served as an initial step to help foster awareness of faculty concerns. Faculty shared some specific examples wherein events, gatherings, and/or displays in celebration of diversity or with goals to help share information within our community have been interrupted or damaged.

- 5) **Travel Funds Report for FY2024 AAUP Full Time & Part-Time Travel Funds, Creative RG & Travel (as of 3-4-24)** – 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 3/4)	Encumbered	Balance Remaining
AUP768	AAUP Conf Workshop & Travel FT - 2024	\$ 853,068.10	\$253,951.01	\$217,294.77	\$381,822.32
AUP771	AAUP Conf Workshop & Travel PT - 2024	76,835.70	20,060.03	14,433.78	42,341.89
VPA017	Faculty Creative Activity-RG	85,000.00	71,038.06	2,500.00	11,461.94
VPA018	Faculty Creative Activity-Travel	85,000.00	1,068.81	-	83,931.19
	Totals	\$ 1,099,903.80	\$346,117.91	\$234,228.55	\$519,557.34

- 6) **Preparation for the 3/6/2024 meeting**– Please see the meeting packet for additional information about each agenda item.
- a) *Resolution Regarding Syllabus Statements: Use of AI in courses*– This Resolution is being presented by the Academic Policy Committee in response to the growing influence of AI in higher education. There are three statements the resolution proposes the Faculty Senate endorse: (1) Students May NOT Use AI Tools, (2) Yes, Students May Use AI Tools, and (3) Students Are Fully Encouraged to Use AI Tools.
- b) *Resolution (for Information) Regarding the Upcoming Presidential Search at Southern Connecticut State University* – This Resolution is being presented by the Executive Committee. This resolution serves as the Executive Committee’s recommendation for next steps following the many related events that have transpired. The resolution aims to represent the SCSU faculty’s expectations regarding the upcoming presidential search and is based upon the attachments and references therein.
- c) *Scheduling the Referenda on proposed revisions to Faculty Senate Constitution and proposed revisions to the LEP* – The intent of a motion related to this item is to schedule the Referenda and any related informational forum(s). The goal of any forum(s) is to support the informed voting of faculty. **A reminder that in all meetings and forums no suggestions can be made to modify the proposed changes to the LEP Program at this time. The proposal must be voted on via a Referendum in its current form. This is also true for the revisions to the Faculty Senate Constitution; revisions must be voted on in their current form.**

The following proposal would require a motion and an affirmative vote of the Faculty Senate:

1. Informational Forum for LEP changes to be held Friday 3/22/2024 from 1:00pm-2:00pm, with a virtual option for attendees, and the FS Elections Committee Chair serving as the forum moderator.
2. Referendum opens for electronic voting on Friday, 3/22/2024 at 2:00pm and closes on Friday, 4/5/024 at 4:00pm.

A motion can be made by any faculty senator to include within the above referendum the recently approved changes to the Faculty Senate Constitution (approved by the body at the 2/21 meeting). Alternatively, a motion can be made by any faculty senator that two separate referenda be hosted. Either motion would require an affirmative vote of the Faculty Senate.

Voter Eligibility: The Senate Constitution allows for opening voting eligibility in referenda beyond full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty: “*Faculty Senate may also include part-time faculty and/or faculty on special appointments by a majority vote before a faculty referendum*” ([Constitution, V.A](#)). A reminder to senators and departments to connect and discuss how the department would like to be represented in the event there is a motion for inclusion of part-time faculty and/or faculty on special appointments. If there is no motion for inclusion of part-time faculty and/or faculty on special appointments, only full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty will be able to vote in the referenda.

d) *Proposed statement on Value of Service*— This statement was initially presented by the Personnel Policy Committee (PPC) for discussion at the 2/21 meeting. Because it was necessary that Faculty Senate business conclude by 1pm at the 2/21 meeting to welcome Chancellor Cheng, there will be an opportunity at the 3/6 meeting to revisit this statement. At the 2/21 meeting, the PPC and Executive Committee recommended the statement be shared by faculty senators with their constituencies to inform further discussion. Following discussion at the 3/6 meeting, the statement will be shared with the faculty bodies represented by the FLC for further exchange of communication among the faculty before the statement returns to the Faculty Senate for a vote.

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