

SCSU Faculty Senate President's Report – May 4, 2022 meeting

Preparation for meeting

I. Announcements

- 1) We have a number of business items today. If we are unable to complete them, we will hold a special Senate meeting on May 11th. However, I believe that if everyone is familiar, in particular, with the proposed amendments to the Chairs' document (see below) that we should be able to conclude our business. The Rules Committee has spent a great deal of time on this document and we need to put closure on it.
- 2) CSCU System President Terrence Cheng will be on campus May 6th for a series of community forums in the Adanti Student Center Ballroom. The schedule is as follows:
9:30 a.m. – Meet with Faculty
10:30 a.m. – Meet with Staff
11:30 a.m. – Meet with Students
- 3) The announcement has gone out for the Co-Directors of Faculty Development. Each [position](#) is for 6 credits in fall and spring and up to 2 credits for the summer. Senators, please bring this to the attention of your Chairs and faculty and encourage qualified applicants to apply for the positions. The deadline for the applications is Friday, May 13th.
- 4) Meeting format for next year – Our poll indicates that the majority of Senators prefer to continue to meet via Zoom. The following is the result from the poll: 9 on ground, 28 online. Therefore, the meetings for the fall will take place online via Zoom. I do hope that at some point, the Senate will return to on ground meetings. Notwithstanding the convenience of online meetings, the contacts and friendships that are fostered through meeting in person cannot be replicated via Zoom. This includes walking to and from the meetings together, chatting before and after meetings, grabbing a bite to eat together, etc. Some of us have never met each other in person and this is a loss.

II. Thanks to the following groups and individuals (in no particular order!)

- 1) *Retirees* – There are three (to my knowledge) Senators who will be retiring this spring, Bill Faraclas, Wes O'Brien, and I. Wes has always kept me laughing, so I'll include his quote from his email to me which doesn't disappoint: Packin' it in. Headin' off into the sunset. Droppin' the microphone. Headin' for my last round-up. Bowing out. Throwing in the towel. Passing the buck.

Wes has served as a very long-standing Senator, returning to us this year after a brief hiatus. One of the best policy writers I have ever known, Wes served for many years as the Chair of Rules, contributing to many of the policies that guide us until today.

Bill served as FS President for three years and has been another very long-standing Senator. Bill is my mentor and friend and I will ever be grateful to him for his guidance and support. His keen eye for detail, exacting standards, and dedication have contributed to the Senate in countless ways.

I hope Wes and Bill will excuse me for speaking on behalf of the three of us when I say that we have been honored to have served the Senate and the University. We leave the Senate with regret, but also with a feeling of satisfaction that we have been true to our values and hopefully have made a difference in upholding the tenets of academic freedom and shared governance.

- 2) *Senators who are not returning next year* – There are two, to my knowledge, Bob Gregory and Carol Stewart. Bob has served as a Senator for nine years, three of them as the Chair of the Rules Committee. Bob is a straight-shooter whose candor was appreciated when he was a member of the Executive Committee. As a member of the Finance Committee, Carol has been active in the prolific achievements of Finance during the past few years, not only in working on policy, but also in raising issues that need to be tackled. Thank you, Bob and Carol.
- 3) *Chairs of standing committees* – My deep thanks go to all of the members of the standing committees who also serve on the FS Executive Committee, Natalie, Paul, Jeff, Joe, Maria, Klay, and Bill. The strength of the EC is our respect and support of each other despite, or perhaps because of our sometimes diverse views. The standing committee Chairs receive no compensation for their Senate work. I don't need to tell you how much work is involved in running the standing committees. Special thanks go to Luke Eilderts, who has served as the FS Secretary and Parliamentarian for the entire period I have been President. My favorite quote from Luke, when I ask for his assistance is, "certainly." Truly, his skills have made it possible for us to run efficient and productive online meetings and have kept everything in order. He is amazing!

Three standing committee Chairs have completed their three-year terms and are rotating out. Natalie Starling, PPC, Paul Petrie, APC, and Bill Faraclas, Finance. Thanks to all of you for your dedication in fulfilling these extremely challenging positions as well as the wisdom you imparted while serving on the Executive Committee.

- 4) *Senators* – I would be remiss if I didn't thank all of you for your dedicated service to the Senate. Our Senate has been enriched by your contributions and dedication.
- 5) *FLC* - UCF, Grad Council, AAUP, Council of Academic Chairs – Many thanks to Meredith Sinclair, Cindy O'Sullivan, Kari Swanson, Cindy Simoneau, and Tricia Lin. It has truly been a privilege working with you. Cindy O'Sullivan has completed her term as Grad Council Chair where she has left her mark as an exemplary leader. Senator Barbara Cook has been elected as GC Chair for next year. Congratulations Barbara and also Meredith who has been reelected as UCF Chair, and Kari who has been reelected as AAUP President.

- 6) *Administration and staff* – Thanks to the many administrators and staff who have assisted us with Senate business, including, but not limited to, Alicia Carroll, Jules Tetreault, and Trever Brolliari.

Special thanks to the President and Provost. We've had moments of agreement and moments of disagreement—I'd like to think many more of the former than the latter. At the end of the day, you are both dedicated leaders who want the best for our campus and that is the common ground that ultimately brings all of us together.

III. Resolutions and other business

- 1) **Election of FS President** – Three Senators were nominated at our previous meeting. To date, one candidate has provided a written statement and one candidate has decided to decline the nomination. Candidates will be given an opportunity to speak for 2-3 minutes each. Elections committee will be in charge of the election process with the President position elected first followed by the Treasurer position. The speaking order of the candidates for President will be determined by lottery.
- 2) There are two resolutions for this meeting:
 - i) Resolution regarding Revisions to the Department Chairperson's Document, from Rules Committee – Please read the summary below written by Luke and sent to you on Monday regarding the amendment in progress and two amendments that will be proposed at the meeting.

First we will take up the amendment we were discussing when we ran out of time. That amendment is highlighted in **green** in the document and adds the following language to the beginning of II.G.1.(b) on page 5: “The Department Personnel Committee shall communicate to the Department’s full-time faculty a complete report of the names and number of votes for all votes cast in the preferential poll.”

Second, we would like to propose two additional amendments to the document for clarity and to avoid redundancy:

1. Highlighted in **blue** is a proposed amendment where the entirety of II.G.1.(c) on page 5 would be struck and replaced with “The Department Personnel Committee shall report to the dean and the Department the names of all members who have accepted nomination within seven (7) calendar days.” The members felt that it would be better to provide the names of all members who had accepted the nomination rather than limit it to only the top three.
2. Highlighted in **yellow** is a proposed amendment where the entirety of II.G.2 on page 6 would be struck and the language “in writing within fourteen (14) days” would be inserted into II.G.1.(b). The members felt that II.G.2 on page 7 could be removed completely by adding that small statement to II.G.1.(b), thus improving clarity and avoiding any possible confusion.

For your convenience, the document with track changes may be accessed directly by clicking [here](#). The link is also located in the packet.

- ii) Resolution Regarding Composition of the CSU Professorship Advisory Committee – from Elections Committee – The impetus for this resolution is a needed balance on this committee that cannot be achieved with the current composition which does not specify that there be a representative from each college/school and allows for up to two faculty in a department to serve despite the relative small size of the committee.
- 3) Approval of UCF documents – Per its Constitution, revisions to the UCF Constitution and related document (Flow of Proposals and Bylaws) must be approved by the Senate. These documents may be accessed from the links in the packet.
- 4) Blackboard Assessment Software – Guests, Dean Stephen Hegedus and Trever Brolliar.

IV. State of the Senate

As I complete the last year of my three-year Presidency as well as contemplate retirement, I have done a great deal of reflecting on the Senate, the University, the state of education in Connecticut and our nation. The last two-plus years have been the most turbulent that most of us have known and will ever experience. In some ways, it feels as if it was 10 years ago, and not merely a little over two years ago since we closed our campus in March 2020 and transitioned to an online environment for nearly all aspects of our lives--classes, meetings, campus social events, family gatherings, and even funerals and bereavements. I will forever remember the call I received from President Bertolino when he informed me that we would be closing the campus immediately and for an indefinite period of time, which many of us assumed might be a few weeks. Since that time, we have faced death, illness, isolation, separation from our loved ones, and fear of the known and the unknown--existential crises that have at times made continuing with business as usual in our daily lives appear to lack meaning. Yet, it was important for us to persevere--teaching our classes, holding meetings, socializing as best we could, and bringing some semblance of normalcy to our lives and those of our students. Likewise, the difficult contract negotiations were an added burden to all of us as we dealt for over a year with the threats of increased workload, loss of shared governance, and a cut to our salaries. This certainly did not contribute to faculty well-being and made the task of coping with COVID-19 exponentially more difficult.

The last three years have been the most prolific in Senate history in terms of the number of resolutions brought to the floor for approved and notification, with a total to date of 74 resolutions; the standing committees and the executive committee have been extremely prolific. We needed to deal swiftly and decisively with pressing issues, such as ensuring fairness and providing relief to our students with policies related to grading, and relief to our faculty with policies related to student opinion surveys and non-inclusion of these in evaluation materials. We finally came into the 21st century digitally, originally kicking and screaming, but ultimately embracing digital processes for faculty evaluation by elimination of paper files (this wasn't supposed to take place completely until 2024-2025), digital student opinion surveys, and gaining skills in online teaching and interactions. We learned how to hold online Senate meetings for a large group of people that were effective and efficient. All of these things would never have been achieved in this timeline had it not been for COVID-19. I guess that is the silver lining. The other topics of the resolutions are too numerous to mention—I invite you to take a look at the FS website and review the resolutions that you have been a part of.

For the future, I'd like to mention a few issues for consideration:

- 1) Simplification of P&T process - One disappointment for me was that we did not pass legislation to reduce the size and simplify the P&T file. Although initially it seemed quite straightforward, it appears, based on work done by the APC, that faculty are by no means on the same page with this, nor is the P&T Committee. I hope that we can continue to address this issue and reform the P&T process, finding a middle ground. Admittedly, having chaired my department's DEC this year, reviewing the files is much less onerous in the digital format.
- 2) Shared governance – We have continued to deal with challenges with shared governance. One of the issues that arose had to do with the drastic changes to Faculty Development, changes that were ultimately restored, but not without a great deal of time and effort. Faculty must ever be diligent in monitoring proposed changes such as this one, however, with a better model of shared governance, it may be possible to prevent some of these issues from escalating. President Bertolino has stated his commitment to continued work on shared governance issues in the coming year.
- 3) Non-teaching reassigned time – During the first year of my Presidency, the PPC tackled the issue of non-teaching reassigned time credits. Despite the incredible amount of work by the committee, this initiative ultimately failed for reasons too numerous to address here. Since a new committee has been formed to revisit the topic of reassigned time, there should hopefully be an opportunity to arrive at greater equity in the distribution of these credits.
- 4) Election of FS President - We made a step in the right direction by holding President nominations at the meeting before the election. Next year, we should take this further and close nominations at the second-to-the-last meeting. I don't believe in the future there should be surprise nominations from the floor on election day for this position since it is important for the Senators to read statements from the candidates and know who is running beforehand so that they can make an informed and thoughtful decision.

I have loved serving as President of the Faculty Senate. Thank you for entrusting me with this tremendous responsibility.

V. Travel Fund Report

<u>The Very Last AY 22 Finance Report from the FS Finance Committee</u>				
Travel Fund Report			Date:	4/24/2022
Full Time	Beginning	Spent	Encumbered	Remaining
FT Rollover	\$262,837.31	\$11,437.23	\$2,139.31	\$249,260.77
FT New	\$297,970.00	\$96,863.61	\$63,428.32	\$137,678.07
Creative Activity	\$85,000.00	\$35,846.92	\$40,751.47	\$8,401.61
Combined Total	\$645,807.31	\$144,147.76	\$106,319.10	\$395,340.45
Total Spent & Encumbered (S&E)		\$250,466.86	% S&E 39%	
Part Time	Beginning	Spent	Encumbered	Remaining
PT Rollover	\$30,078.00	\$850.00	\$0.00	\$29,228.00
PT New	\$33,108.00	\$11,510.15	\$7,948.92	\$13,648.93
Combined Total	\$63,186.00	\$12,360.15	\$7,948.92	\$42,876.93
Total Spent & Encumbered (S&E)		\$20,309.07	% S&E 32%	

VI. **Resolutions approved by Faculty Senate** – Updates on the resolutions and their status may be found on the FS website.