

SCSU Faculty Senate President's Report – September 13, 2023, Special Meeting

- 1) **Welcome & Executive Committee** – I'd like to share a message of welcome to the leadership of the AY 23-24 Executive Committee.
1. **Luke Eilderts**
 2. **Cindy Simoneau**
 3. **Maria Diamantis**
 4. **Elliott Horch**
 5. **Klay Kruczek**
 6. **Doug Macur**
 7. **Paul Petrie**
 8. **Michael Shea**
 9. **Amanda Strong**
 10. **Stephen Monroe Tomczak**
 11. **Melanie Uribe**
 12. **Jeffrey Webb**
- 2) **Preparation for the 9/13/2023 meeting** – A Special Meeting of the Faculty Senate has been called to consider the DRAFT Resolution that is being presented by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (available in the meeting's packet and sent via email to senators on 9/8 at 7:15pm). This President's Report will therefore focus on this topic.

For senators' information and quick reference given the rapid timeline of this matter, also attached at the conclusion of this report are:

1. The email announcement to all members from CSU-AAUP outlining **CSU-AAUP's Position on Academic Program Planning** dated Monday, 9/11
2. **ECSU's Resolution**, passed on Tuesday 9/5 by a vote of 31-2, and
3. **CCSU's Resolution**, passed on Monday 9/11. I attended the CCSU Senate meeting as a guest/observer. At the meeting, it was shared with those senators that the other CSU institutions were considered similar Resolutions, that CCSU would not be standing alone.

To further aid senators' preparations, I highly recommend senators also review my previous President's Reports from this semester found on the [Faculty Senate webpage](#).

Following the happenings outlined in those reports and following the Faculty Senate meeting on 8/30, the Executive Committee sent a request on behalf of the faculty to the Provost in advance of the meeting held on 9/1 regarding Academic Program Planning (APP). This message is quoted below:

“Dear Dr. Prezant, Thank you for speaking today at Faculty Senate and for referencing your meeting regarding Academic Program Planning (APP) on Friday 9/1 at 11am with the faculty. We request that the information you plan to share on Friday be sent to the faculty body at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting such that faculty can respond meaningfully and more fully engage in the meeting. As representatives of the faculty, we are sharing with our constituencies that we requested the information be made available to them in advance of the meeting.”

Sincerely, The Faculty Senate Executive Committee”

Immediately following this correspondence, the Executive Committee also informed the faculty body of this request along with sharing of the most recent FS President’s Reports. This message is quoted below:

“Dear Colleagues, Welcome to a new academic year! On behalf of Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee sends messages of welcome and emphasis of our continued service and support of the faculty and our faculty representatives to our Faculty Senate and curricular bodies, the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum (UCF) and Graduate Council (GC), in the timely communication of critical information affecting the faculty. As we prepare for this academic year, the faculty have received notice from the Provost of the scheduled meeting for Academic Program Planning (APP) this Friday, September 1, 11am-1pm in EN C112 (Garner Recital Hall). We encourage attendance and urge all departments/programs to send a representative to this meeting. We are all concerned about our colleagues, and we anticipate that information will be shared at this meeting that concerns the working lives of faculty. To that end, the Executive Committee wishes to remind all faculty that information about Faculty Senate, including agendas, minutes, and the Faculty Senate President’s Reports, are available via the Faculty Senate webpage. We believe it is important to share with you, our constituents, the most recent Faculty Senate President’s Report and Addendum (attached). We wish to emphasize Item #1 in the Addendum along with the BOR Resolution from June 28, 2023. We also wish to share that the Executive Committee has requested that the faculty body be provided with the information to be shared at the scheduled meeting for Academic Program Planning (APP) this Friday, such that faculty can respond meaningful[ly] and more fully engage in the meeting. We look forward to continuing our service to the faculty and encourage on-going communication. You can reach out to members of the Executive Committee at any time, whether directly and/or via your faculty senator(s). In solidarity, The Faculty Senate Executive Committee”

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee did not receive a response to the request made to the Provost, nor has information reached the Executive Committee of advance sharing of information for the 9/1 meeting.

As introduced in a previous report, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Faculty Leadership Council (FLC) meet monthly with administration – This group met on 9/5 to discuss and monitor multiple topics.

At the meeting, the faculty leaders introduced questions and comments related to the APP, including:

- a. Following up to faculty input and questions from Friday’s meeting on 9/1, what is the Provost’s plan for next steps? (e.g., Will there be an advisory group? Other steps?)
 - i. **We were informed that more information would be forthcoming.**
- b. Reports had reached FLC members that deans received and/or distributed and/or directly referenced the document from the Provost (This was the document referenced in my earlier President’s Report that the FS President, UCF chairperson, and GC chairperson received in hard-copy form only (and informed we could not share)). We again asked, can the document be shared widely? What if anything in the document was modified (following the 9/1 meeting)?
 - i. **We were informed that the presentation on Friday 9/1 included the same information in the document.**

- c. What is the outcome/"report" Provost intends to share to the BOR?
 - i. We were informed that this would likely take the form of a plan and that the Provost had a scheduled call with Provost Kathuria that evening and more information would be forthcoming.**
- d. Information had reached the FLC that college-level discussions and analysis of data with ranking were already underway. What are the Colleges and Schools currently doing relative to the APP that has been proposed?
 - i. We were informed that each college/school would likely determine how to proceed.**
- e. What are the data-based metrics?
 - i. We were informed that more clarity could not yet be provided.**
- f. We informed the President and Provost that reports had reached FLC members that there were comments made about personnel (salary) without data.
 - i. The President and Provost thanked the FLC for sharing this information.**
- g. What are the cost-savings of other efforts (LEP changes, reduced part-time faculty, reduced reassigned time, attrition of faculty/personnel)? When will the most recent financial data be made available?
 - i. We were informed that information about other cost-saving efforts was not yet available, and more information would be forthcoming.**

On Thursday, 9/7, the FS President, SCSU-AAUP Chapter President, UCF chairperson, and GC chairperson received correspondence from the Provost that UCF and GC's involvement in the APP process was now "off the table."

On Friday, 9/8, the FLC held an emergency meeting to hear the perspectives of the faculty leaders and share updates and all known information at that time. Following discussion, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee then drafted the Resolution which appears in the 9/13 meeting packet and was immediately shared with senators via email with a request to "share with your constituencies as quickly as reasonably possible."

Finally, a reminder that CSU-AAUP faculty leaders and other senate and curriculum faculty leaders across the system continue to engage in on-going communication regarding these matters and the fiscal issues impacting the system. Please closely attend to all announcements related to this topic as the year progresses.

- 3) 2023-2024 – [Resolutions approved by Faculty Senate](#) – Updates on the resolutions and their status may be found on the FS website.

Email announcement dated Monday, September, 11, 2023; 12:58PM



CSU-AAUP's Position on Academic Program Planning

Statement by CSU-AAUP Leadership

Faculty on all four CSU campuses recently have been asked by Presidents and Provosts to participate in an **Academic Program Planning review** of all departments and programs. This is a process different from the regular program reviews that departments complete every five years. In June 2023 the Board of Regents required that Chancellor Cheng conduct this additional review.

CSU-AAUP asked about the purpose of this exercise and were told that it was in response to the state budget that Chancellor Cheng believes is inadequate to fund our system, especially in FY 25 and FY 26. We were told that there was a need to find **cost savings and "efficiencies"** to demonstrate to Governor Lamont's advisors that we were "doing things differently" and were willing to "right-size" our system and **live within reduced means**.

Given that substantial budgetary savings from closing or reorganizing programs seems inconceivable and could not possibly address the very large projected deficit in FY 25, and given that departments regularly review their programs, CSU-AAUP encourages members to keep the following contractual interpretations in mind:

1) Who completes the report: According to the CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), decisions about curriculum and programs come from "**departments**," not individuals. Therefore, the department must be consulted, and must make decisions through a majority vote, about what appears in their APP report. Chairpersons should not make recommendations on their own or without the consent of the department.

The department is the body that has the "responsibility for the content and development of courses, curriculum and programs of study within its discipline." [Art. 5.17] It is via the department that faculty "participate in academic and personnel matters." [Art. 5.15]

- The role of the department Chairperson is as a leader of the department only. They are supposed to lead "the department in fulfilling its responsibilities in academic and personnel areas and of facilitating the functioning of the department." [Art. 5.23]

- Departments also make “decisions by majority vote of its full-time members.” [Art. 5.16]
- As “the normal channel of communications between the department” and the administration, Chairpersons can convey what the department decides, but they do not make those decisions by themselves. [Art. 5.23]

2) What to include in the report: CSU-AAUP’s position is that in assessing programs departments and other faculty bodies should primarily consider “*bona fide educational needs.*” Faculty are not required to address financial implications of programs.

- Art. 5.20 of the CSU-AAUP CBA states clearly that the assessment of proposals for recommendations of program discontinuance “shall include consideration of bona fide educational needs” by all parties. [Art. 5.20]

In addition, both faculty and management must consider “*balanced academic offerings*” in assessing whether programs and departments should continue or change, and they cannot make evaluations based solely on *enrollment numbers* or changing student interests, either in the short or long term.

- The CSU-AAUP CBA states clearly that both AAUP and the BOR “recognize that the role and importance of a department/area of study to balanced academic offerings is not accurately and properly evaluated on the sole basis of number of students studying courses in the department/area. From year to year student interests will change in both short- and long-term cycles.” [Art. 5.18]

If University Presidents are concerned about the financial impact of long-term enrollment declines in a department or program, they can invoke Art. 5.18. It is not necessary or prudent for departments or faculty bodies to address finances or long-term trends in their APP review.

- If management invokes Art. 5.18, an “*in-depth study*” of that department or program would be conducted by a University Commission that the Senate creates and in which it participates. [5.18]
- CSU-AAUP believes it is more ethical and prudent to have such a thorough study, conducted by impartial faculty bodies, if management recommends a fundamental change to the nature of university departments and programs.

3) Whether to recommend closure of programs of academic value:

It is CSU-AAUP’s position that departments, Curriculum Committees, and Senates should **not** be pressured into making recommendations for discontinuance of programs they believe have academic value, regardless of the reasons management gives for doing so. There **is no need or requirement** that faculty address any

other considerations than educational needs and academic value. By making such recommendations, AAUP faculty also may unintentionally initiate a process that is unnecessary and irreversible.

- If departments, Curriculum Committees, or Senates recommend a program discontinuance they will start the process in Art. 5.20 of the CSU-AAUP CBA. This requires that the Curriculum Committee and Senate “investigate the impact of such discontinuance” within 60 days, and make a recommendation to the President, who takes “appropriate action.”
- There is no need for faculty to do this because Presidents can initiate such a recommendation on their own, and the same process must be followed.
- If faculty make recommendations against their better judgment, management may claim that they have the consent of the faculty for those changes and that they have respected shared governance. It will be very difficult to change this after the fact. Again, it is best to let Presidents make such decisions and initiate such proposals.

4) Compensation for APP work: The current APP review is outside of the normal workload of faculty. Faculty members who agree to do it may ask for reassigned time or compensation for their work. [Art. 10.6.5, 10.12]

CSU-AAUP believes that instead of succumbing to the pressure of Governor Lamont’s advisors to cut and shrink our universities, CSU managers should focus on student needs and student success. Enrollment decline is not inevitable if the CSUs become schools that serve residents of the state, regardless of age, zip code, or economic, social or racial background, and if they provide those students all the help they need to stay in school and graduate with an excellent degree. This not only will **open minds**, it also will **open doors** to careers that individuals value, to an enhanced workforce, and to stronger communities. It is not necessary in a time of record budget surpluses for higher education to be denied to the people of Connecticut. Our residents need expanded opportunities for quality higher education, not diminished ones.



Eastern Connecticut State University Senate Resolution SR 23/24-02

University Senate Resolution on CSCU Academic Planning

WHEREAS Chancellor Cheng pledged transparency and respect for shared governance from himself and the system office;

WHEREAS Chancellor Cheng notified the system on June 28, 2023 that the system office would "develop and administer procedures for all CSCU institutions to undertake a system review of academic offerings..." pursuant to a BOR Resolution dated that same day;

WHEREAS this decision was made over the middle of the summer, when faculty, who are in charge of curriculum, were off-contract and given little notice or opportunity to respond publicly to the resolution;

WHEREAS the FAC and university shared governing bodies, including Senates, have not yet received a draft program review form to be considered and revised;

WHEREAS Chancellor Cheng on 8/23/23 in a meeting of the Finance and Infrastructure meeting stated that the data needed for the academic planning and assessment had already been gathered, unbeknownst to elected union leaders, senate presidents, and FAC representatives;

WHEREAS faculty at all four CSUs have now been notified that they are ordered to assess EVERY academic program at their institutions, a process which normally takes one year for one major;

WHEREAS faculty have the subject expertise needed to properly design the metrics and assessment tools to evaluate their academic programs;

WHEREAS faculty also understand the urgency in the academic realignment process in order to meet budgetary shortfalls;

WHEREAS faculty should be actively be involved in every step of the academic planning process;

BE IT RESOLVED that the ECSU University Senate calls on the CSCU System Office to fulfill its pledge and make its intentions and process transparent around academic planning, so it can be reviewed, discussed, and debated by all stakeholders- including students, faculty, and staff- in a democratic process and so each program review is aligned with the missions of each institution;

BE IT RESOLVED that, in the interest of shared governance, all currently collected data and reports (completed or in progress) regarding the academic planning process be given to the university senates so faculty can participate and properly evaluate the validity of the proposed metrics and results;

BE IT RESOLVED that, in the interest of shared governance, the currently proposed timeline by the office be removed and redesigned in consultation with the university senates.



1amllugo, Senate President September 5, 2023

(Central Connecticut State University)

Faculty Senate Resolution on CSCU Academic Planning

WHEREAS Chancellor Cheng pledged transparency and respect for shared governance from himself and the system office;

WHEREAS Chancellor Cheng notified the system of June 28, 2023 that the system office would “develop and administer procedures for all CSCU institutions to undertake a system review of academic offerings...” pursuant to a BOR Resolution dated that same day;

WHEREAS this decision was made over the middle of the summer, when faculty, who are in charge of curriculum, were off-contract and given little notice or opportunity to respond publicly to the resolution;

WHEREAS the FAC and university shared governing bodies, including Senates, have not yet received a draft program review form to be considered and revised;

WHEREAS Chancellor Cheng on 8/23/23 in a meeting of the Finance and Infrastructure meeting stated that the data needed for the academic planning and assessment had already been gathered, unbeknownst to elected union leaders, senate presidents, and FAC representatives;

WHEREAS faculty at all four CSUs have now been notified that the CSCU system office and BOR are ordering the CSUs to assess EVERY academic program at their institutions, a process which can take one year for one major, but now is expected to be completed in less than one semester;

WHEREAS faculty are the only ones with the expertise to properly design the metrics and assessment tools to evaluate their academic programs;

WHEREAS faculty also understand the urgency in the academic realignment process in order to meet budgetary shortfalls;

WHEREAS faculty should be actively be involved in every step of the academic planning process;

BE IT RESOLVED that the CCSU Faculty Senate calls on the CSCU System Office to fulfill its pledge and make its intentions and process transparent around academic planning, so it can be reviewed, discussed, and debated by all stakeholders- including students, faculty, and staff- in a democratic process and so each program review is aligned with the missions of each institution;

BE IT RESOLVED that, in the interest of shared governance, all currently collected data, financial information, and analyses to be used in the academic planning process be given to the faculty senates so faculty can participate and properly evaluate the validity of the proposed metrics;

BE IT RESOLVED that, in the interest of shared governance, the currently proposed timeline by the system office be removed and redesigned in consultation with the faculty senates.