

SCSU Faculty Senate President's Report – September 20, 2023, meeting

- 1) *Fiscal Impacts / State Budget / University Budget*** – CSU-AAUP faculty leaders and other senate and curriculum faculty leaders across the system continue to engage in on-going communication regarding the fiscal issues impacting the system. Please closely attend to announcements related to this topic as the year progresses. Please see email announcement dated 9/11/23 for CSU-AAUP's Position on Academic Program Planning, which is also included in the President's Report for the 9/13 Special Meeting.

Of note, the 2024 edition of U.S. News Best Colleges has been released, <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/southern-connecticut-state-university-1406>

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*** – As introduced in previous reports, 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. The group is scheduled to meet again on 10/2.

At the 9/5 meeting, the faculty leaders introduced questions and comments related to the APP, which are outlined in the President's Report for the 9/13 Special Meeting.

Additional topics discussed at the 9/5 meeting included the EAB consultants. Administration shared that working with EAB consultants may not be discontinued. We will keep this item on future FLC agendas to learn more about what continuation will look like.

Faculty leadership also inquired about the intention for Interfolio use in the Faculty Evaluation process beginning AY 24-25, and specifically the opportunity for a faculty member to serve in a coordinator role for this process. Both items were confirmed by administration as being intended and underway. The FS Technology Committee has since been charged with monitoring and following up on both topics.

Other topics introduced at the FLC meeting with administration, but time did not permit further discussion, included: reports of under-ordering by the bookstore, Continuing Education (follow up to disapproval of Resolution S-2023-15), course caps as described in Resolution F-2020-03 from Fall 2020, Institutional Identity, consortia degree programs, and Student Opinion Surveys. These items will remain on future meeting agendas. The FS Academic Policy Committee has since been charged with monitoring and following up on the matter of the bookstore and Resolution S-2023-15. The FS Technology Committee has since been charged with addressing Student Opinion Survey (the instrument itself, response rates, incentives for completion). The FS Elections Committee has since been charged with developing a survey of all faculty in collaboration with

SCSU AAUP to gather input and feedback. Survey items will be similar to those posed at the May 2023 SCSU-AAUP and Faculty Senate Co-Sponsored Retreat, which included the topic of Institutional Identity. The goal of such a survey is the gathering of even wider faculty input.

- 3) Travel Funds Report for FY2024 AAUP Full Time & Part-Time Travel Funds, Creative RG & Travel (as of 09-18-23). 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 9/18)	Encumbered	Balance Remaining
AUP768	AAUP Conf Workshop & Travel FT - 2024	\$ 853,068.10	\$ 4,972.80	\$ 49,382.74	\$ 798,712.56
AUP771	AAUP Conf Workshop & Travel PT - 2024	76,835.70	-	3,125.00	73,710.70
VPA017	Faculty Creative Activity- RG	85,000.00	69,833.78	-	15,166.22
VPA018	Faculty Creative Activity- Travel	85,000.00	1,068.81	-	83,931.19
	Totals	\$ 1,099,903.80	\$ 75,875.39	\$ 52,507.74	\$ 971,520.67

- 4) *Preparation for the 9/20/2023 meeting* – There will be two elections:

1. Election: Faculty Senate representative to the DEI Advisory Council

Information about DEIAC Charge, from Dr. Diane Ariza, Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

At Southern, we value diversity of experience and perspective among members of the university community. In fact, we understand diversity to be a generative and necessary factor in any intellectual environment. In our pursuit to understand diverse perspectives and experiences, we envision the creation of a more inclusive and just Southern community willing to engage in institutional transformation where humanity, belonging, community, and systemic change are priorities in all we do.

The charge of the Southern Connecticut University Diversity Advisory Council (DEI Advisory Council) is to model inclusive and equitable leadership across the campus community by raising the awareness of DEI principles in pursuit of Southern’s commitment to becoming a social justice and anti-racist university. Through education and development, our goal is to effect institutional change which can be evaluated through benchmarking, statistical analysis, and other measurable outcomes.

Under the leadership of and in partnership with the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the DEI Advisory Council advocates for members of the Southern community by:

- *Elevating important DEI issues to the vice president of the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and to the president of Southern.*
- *Providing, in partnership with the Division of DEI, consultation and leadership on current and new initiatives and learning opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and alumni.*
- *Advising the Division of DEI on best practices and approaches for creating a more inclusive and equitable campus community toward attracting and retaining a diverse faculty, staff, and student body.*
- *Serving as coaches, mentors, and accountability partners related the strategic priorities of the*

University as directed by the University Strategic Plan.

• Recommending, based on information gathered from their respective divisions, departments, and communities of identity, best approaches to ensure ongoing DEI efforts are effective and meet the needs of those who feel most marginalized.

DEIAC Terms

1) The members of the DEI Advisory Council will serve either a one or two-year term and meet regularly with the Vice President of the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the DEI Advisory Council Co-Chairs to discuss issues and initiatives related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability, or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs.

2) All members must participate in the DEI Management Training Program.

3) All members will participate in monthly meetings.

2. Election: Faculty Senator to serve on Chief of Police Search Committee:

- i. The first committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for the last week in September (TBD). The expectation for the service commitment is the remainder of the Fall 2023 semester.

- 5) 2023-2024 – [Resolutions approved by Faculty Senate](#) – Updates on the resolutions and their status may be found on the FS website. FS President comments regarding Resolution F-2023-01 (attached below):
 1. The Resolution approved by Faculty Senate on Wednesday 9/13 by a vote of 41-1 has undergone a clerical update since it was displayed on screen at the meeting: wording of the title of the BOR Resolution in the fourth “Whereas” was updated to reflect the correct title of their Resolution and a parenthetical was added to “see” that Resolution (copying and pasting their entire Resolution into F-2023-01 was never intended). This is not a change to content or meaning to any part of the Resolution; it is akin to addressing a typo or formatting issue in the document, which is permitted after a vote has occurred.
 2. The corrected copy was sent to the University President on Thursday 9/14. The immediate reply received on 9/14 from the University President was that he would like to meet to discuss, **and a morning meeting is scheduled for 9/19.**
 3. Regardless of the President’s response, it is believed/understood that the Resolution’s content requesting action on the part of CSCU Administration is not enforceable through the CBA. Nevertheless, Faculty Senate will continue to advocate for transparency and shared governance; I have submitted a request to speak at the BOR meeting on 9/21 to present, quite literally read aloud, Resolution F-2023-01. Other senates will likely send a representative to present their Resolutions as well. The senate presidents of CCSU and ECSU have shared an intention to do so, given their Resolutions have passed. It was reported that WSCU’s senate business includes a scheduled discussion of this topic on 9/20. If WSCU brings forward a Resolution, their Resolution may also be presented by their representative at the BOR meeting. All plans are still tentative, and planning is underway. Finally, it has reached faculty leadership that the 9/21 BOR meeting may be held at SCSU in the Adanti Ballroom.

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Resolution Regarding the CSU Budget Crisis and Proposed Academic Program Planning Process

Whereas, Southern Connecticut State University exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence;

Whereas, The Faculty Senate is the official governing body for shared governance;

Whereas, CSU and SCSU are facing monumental and escalating projected budget deficits over the next several years;

Whereas, The CSU Board of Regents resolution dated June 28, 2023, and titled “RESOLUTION Concerning THE CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES SPENDING PLANS FOR FY 2024 AND ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TO RESOLVE CURRENT AND FUTURE BUDGET SHORTFALLS” calls upon each CSU institution to devise, by November 1, 2023, a . . . (see RESOLUTION dated 6_28_23);

Whereas, The faculty of SCSU have been tasked by the university administration, pursuant to the BOR’s charge related to the projected multi-million dollar budget deficits across the CSU institutions, with undertaking an urgent comprehensive academic program review for purposes of identifying potential cost savings;

Whereas, An approach to academic program review focused only or primarily upon budgetary concerns places those concerns ahead of the academic and educational values, and thus endangers the academic integrity of the institution;

Whereas, Such an approach to the current budget crisis implies that the purpose of academic program planning is to generate decisions about the elimination of departments and programs and the termination of faculty positions;

Whereas, Neither the CSU system office nor the SCSU administration has provided the faculty with crucial requested information defining the mechanisms and metrics by which information about academic programs and departments will be employed to reach such decisions;

Whereas, The pursuit of the current Academic Program Planning is redundant with several well-established and comprehensive ongoing mechanisms for said review, including annual department reports, StAR reviews, and reviews by numerous external accrediting agencies for the university, its schools and colleges, and its departments and programs;

Whereas, The Collective Bargaining Agreement between CSU faculty and CSU already includes well-defined processes for the proposal, consideration, and implementation of program and department revision, reorganization, and/or elimination and for the termination of faculty, and it is not the role of faculty bodies to make any determination about changes to, or elimination of, programs outside of that process;

Whereas, Increasing the university’s revenue and funding from the state government is the most viable pathway to fiscal solvency;

Whereas, The most practicable pathway to sustainable fiscal viability for the university, to the extent that it involves reducing the university’s budget, is a gradual, predictable, and carefully planned diminishment of funding, rather than the abrupt and large-scale cuts proposed by Connecticut’s governor and approved by the legislature; and

Whereas, The high-quality public education reflected in the programs at SCSU represent significant economic value for our state and provide an engine of social mobility for our citizenry; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the faculty calls upon CSU administration to amend their austerity-focused approach to academic program planning and the impending fiscal crisis to include and place greater emphasis on revenue-side solutions; and

Resolved, That the faculty 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; and

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; and

Resolved, That in the interest of shared governance, the currently proposed timeline by the CSCU System Office be removed and redesigned in consultation with the university senates; and

Resolved, That the faculty calls upon CSCU administration to collaborate with us in creating and implementing a sustained campaign of public information and legislative and gubernatorial advocacy for the educational value of the university and the need for adequate, stable, and predictable state funding for public higher education.