

Faculty Senate President's Report- October 1, 2025, meeting

1). Faculty Senate Announcements

The Ethnic Heritage Center will be visiting the Senate on October 29 to share what they do and how they can work with members of the university. In the meantime, they sent me the following information.

Blake Street Historic Cemetery Tour ~

Sunday, October 26 (National Visit-A-Cemetery Day), 1pm

Meet on Jewell Street Across from Beecher Magnet School, New Haven

RSVP and Share:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/1ChwTUVmP7/>

Join us for a special National Visit-A-Cemetery Day program with a guided walking tour led by local experts of the rarely visited historic Blake Street Paupers' Cemetery in the Westville section of New Haven.

What is a so-called paupers' cemetery, how many are there in New Haven, how did they evolve in the context of New Haven's social history, and how are they governed and managed today? We will seek to answer some of these questions, along with exploring the fascinating lives of some of the people buried here at Blake Street, such as Lois Tritton, the last person to be sold in a public auction of enslaved people in New Haven in 1825.

The walking tour will be followed by an (optional) clean-up of this neglected space to help bring dignity and peace to those interred here.

~ ABOUT THE TOUR ~

Sherill Baldwin, a family historian and genealogist, and Aaron Goode of [Walk New Haven Cultural Heritage Tours](#), will offer a walking tour of historic Blake Street Cemetery in Westville for [National Visit-a-Cemetery Day](#). Originally the indigent-burial section of the Westville Cemetery, Blake Street is unusual in that it has many full-sized headstones, some of which are marked and well-documented while others are not. A family historian and genealogist, Baldwin has been researching the lives of people buried at Blake Street Cemetery for several years. On the tour we will learn some of the fascinating stories she has uncovered. Over 2100 people of all ethnic backgrounds were buried at Blake Street from about 1881 to 1931, when New Haven opened another paupers' cemetery at a more remote site on Woodin Street.

October 26 is also "Visit a Cemetery Day," a day to embrace changing seasons, connect to our ancestors and take in the beauty and peace of cemeteries. In honor of this day and in

remembrance of those buried at Blake Street, following the walk we will have a clean-up of the cemetery including litter and some invasives removal. Gloves and other tools will be provided.

Directions: The tour will start on Jewell Street at 1pm, from which we will walk over to Blake Street and enter the Westville Cemetery's Blake Street entrance. Please wear proper shoes, bring water, hat, sunscreen, and bug spray if needed. Please also bring gloves and a trash bag if you plan to stay for the litter cleanup.

Parking: Either side of Jewell Street, between Whalley Avenue and Blake Street. Please do not park inside the Mishkan Israel or Westville Cemeteries.

Accessibility: The terrain is a bit rough at this cemetery with no aisle-ways. We ask you to recognize this tour is at a cemetery, a place for reflection; children and adults should be respectful of this sacred space.

Sponsored by Walk New Haven Cultural Heritage Tours and the New Haven Bioregional Group.

2). Travel Funds Report AY 25-26

Provost Irwin sent me an update regarding the travel office.

- They now have 3 people working in travel to assist with processing.
- The travel position will soon be posted if it is not already.

Travel Drop-In-Session - Hands-on Guidance (In-Person)

Bring your Travel Authorization or Travel Reimbursement to discuss directly with AP staff.

- *Wintergreen Banner Room:* October 17th, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

For questions regarding outstanding travel, please contact Dale Bodyk.

3). Meeting with Chancellor Maduko

This Tuesday I will be meeting with Chancellor Maduko to discuss the presidential search. I ask that you email any questions or comments you want answered regarding the search. Chancellor Maduko will also be visiting the Senate on November 11 to answer questions. I will report on the meeting in the next President's report.

4). The Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Faculty Leadership Council (FLC) meetings with administration –

During this month's meeting of the Faculty Leadership Committee, various issues were discussed including how H1B visas can impact our faculty searches by limiting our access to international faculty. The proposed visa charge is \$100,000. We will be inviting Erin Heidkamp to the Senate to give us further information.

The university is looking carefully at expenditures on campus, and all duplicative programs are being examined. Given the current budget deficit, care and coordination are necessary to ensure money goes where it is needed. One program being examined is faculty access to Zoom. As of right now, our license for Zoom will expire on January 28, 2026. Provost Irwin will be collecting more information from faculty before making any final decisions regarding programs used at the university.

5). BOR meeting September 25, 2025

There were 9 speakers at the meeting which took place at Western. Three were students who all spoke in favor of the expansion of the Mary Ann Handley award (formerly known as PACT). There were students from Western, Eastern, and Central. Please encourage your students to get involved. I would especially encourage students to speak about issues that impact them and the wonderful work they do here at Southern. We want to make sure we stand out as a distinct university.

Several faculty members from community colleges spoke about equity in pay. Another urged the BOR and Chancellor Maduko to be advocates for higher education during a time in which the federal government is cutting programs and funding.

Three new regents were introduced, two of whom were students.

Chancellor Maduko spoke about the growth of enrollment across the CSC system. He also spoke about the Connecticut Automatic Admissions Program (CAAP). He spoke about how this has streamlined admissions for students and has eased the transfer from community colleges to four-year universities. He urged all to be advocates for keeping higher education affordable. The Mary Ann Handley program has provided 91 million in aid to students since 2020. The impact of federal cuts to student aid and research funding must not be ignored, and he spoke about how the disruption in funding to minority serving institutes undermines decades of work. Finally, he addressed the Sodexo Strike. While we are not directly involved, he urged the corporation to quickly resolve the situation and support fair wages.

There were reports from standing committees and an update from Western about their upcoming NECHE visit.

6). Travel Fund Update as of September

Jeff Webb is still awaiting an update on the status of the Travel Fund this month.

Southern Connecticut State University							
FY2026 AAUP Full Time & Part-Time Travel Funds, Creative RG & Travel (as of 09-16-25)							
Index	Description	FY 2026 Budget	FY2026 Expenses	FY2026 Encumbrance	FY 2026 Balance	Prioryear Carryover	Total Available-FY26 Allocation & Carryover
AUP770	AAUP Conf Wrkshp & Travel FT - 2026	\$ 380,113.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 380,113.00	270,624.28	\$ 650,737.28
AUP773	AAUP Conf Wrkshp & Travel PT - 2026	42,235.00	-	-	\$ 42,235.00	21,053.35	\$ 63,288.35
VPA017	Faculty Creative Activity-RG	85,000.00	108.00	-	84,892.00	-	\$ 84,892.00
VPA018	Faculty Creative Activity-Travel	85,000.00	-	-	85,000.00	-	\$ 85,000.00
	Totals	\$ 592,348.00	\$ 108.00	\$ -	\$ 592,240.00	\$ 291,677.63	\$ 883,917.63

6). Meeting with CFO, Lillian Wanjagi

Last week I had my quarterly meeting with CFO Wanjagi. She was able to share a lot of useful information. I asked about people waiting for procurements. While I did not have specific information, she was able to explain the process. Any purchase request over \$25,000 needs to first go to the attorney general's office where they are examining everything at a microscopic level. There is an RFP process for anything over \$100,000. Once it leaves the university, it is at least a six-week turnaround which can be further delayed if a contract is not signed or has expired. Vendors need to accept the terms of the contract that the state of Connecticut sets out. It states that no one can sue the state even if the state is at fault. Vendors are understandably reluctant to sign these. It requires vendors' education, so they realize this is the only way the university can do business with them. She discussed the implementation of Jaggaer, a web-based user-friendly system that will serve as our centralized platform for purchasing goods and services. It is designed to move procurements from a paper-based system to a more transparent and efficient service. It will take about six months to implement.

CFO Wanjagi also spoke about the travel office and the current understaffing issue. Nina Cote and Dale Bodyk are relatively new to the university but have been working hard to fix the backlog. They are currently looking for two more members of their department. CFO Wanjagi emphasized that everyone is working extremely hard and trying to clean up a system that was not working well. She also assured me that the Space Committee will be starting soon with representatives from Senate, SGA, and chairs.

Another cost saving measure is the switch from DocuSign to Adobe. With DocuSign, there is a fee associated with every envelope and signature added. Adobe is already available to us with no added cost.

I also asked about changes that may occur with the Block Grant with the state. Some ideas being floated include changing the formula with which money is distributed. Currently, out of state students are not included in the count which is problematic to Western and Eastern because they are close to other state borders and typically get more out of state students than Southern or Central. It has been proposed that out-of-state students should also be included. Additionally, Early College students are currently counted. We have the most robust Early College program, and it is growing rapidly. Removing them from the count would put us at a further disadvantage.

Another change coming to the university is the switch from Banner to Banner SaaS. Banner SaaS will encompass all areas of hiring from onboarding to retirement. Currently we have a disconnected system with recruitment occurring in DEI. Banner SaaS will streamline the process by allowing applications to move between departments, so candidates do not need to reapply for the same type of job in a different department. It will also hyperfocus on onboarding.

Wanjagi sent an all faculty and staff email on September 9, 2025, which outlined the process. She wrote;

As part of the university's recent organizational realignment, Information Technology is now housed within the [Division of Finance and Administration](#), adding to our existing functions in human resources, budget, finance, facilities, and university police. This integration strengthens our ability to coordinate strategically across these essential areas of campus operations. Implementing Banner SaaS and Jaggaer is a direct next step in strengthening HR and Finance operations, providing modern tools that reduce administrative burdens, streamline processes, and create a stronger foundation for supporting students and employees.

These upgrades mark an important advancement for Southern's future, aligning with best practices in higher education. We are dedicated to increasing resource efficiency while ensuring staff feel heard, valued, and supported.

Both systems should be operational by late winter of 2026. I will be extending an invitation to CFO Wanjagi to visit the Senate and answer any questions.

7). Contract negotiations

This is just a reminder that contract negotiations are ongoing. It is the first time it is an open negotiation with members allowed to watch. Consider joining the watch party on campus or streaming the negotiations. If you do watch, you are under the same restrictions as a member of the negotiating team, which means you may not talk to a member of the press about what is going on.

8). Senate Presidents meeting

I met with the presidents of our sister universities for our monthly meeting. We discussed the grade appeal process and Western is seeking guidance on creating a University Academic Standing Committee. At Central, President Toro has charged that Senate with forming an ad hoc committee to review and report on faculty release time. I shared that we are in the process of collecting data at our university to look at release time and how it is distributed. We also spoke about Student Opinion Surveys and their impact.

9). Preparation for the meeting on 10/15/2025

We will be meeting as a large group on Wednesday. We will need some Senate representation on various university committees which we will address.