

Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting

Held September 5, 2013 at the Bennett Library: Wosk Room 7100

In attendance:

Carl Schwarz (Stats and Actuarial Science)
Neil Abramson, President (Business)
Glenn Chapman, Past President (Engineering Science)
Krishna Pendakur (Economics)
Julian Christians (Biology)
David Broun (Physics)
Maureen Fizzell (Business)
Natalia Gajdamaschko, Treasurer (Education))
Holly Hendrigan (via skype Library, Surrey)
Melanie Lam, Executive Assistant (recorder)
Brian Green, Executive Director
Jennifer Scott, Membership Services Officer

Approved: Sept 19/13

Regrets:

Maite Taboada (Linguistics)
Russell Day (Psychology)

1. Approval of Agenda.

Approved with the following amendment: Discussion of agenda item #8 moved ahead of #5.

Moved: J. Christians/N. Gajdamaschko Carried.

2. Approval of Minutes of August 22, 2013 Executive Meeting.

Moved: M. Fizzell/J. Christians Carried.

3. Business Arising.

There was nothing to report.

4. President's Report.

N. Abramson reported on his recent meeting with A. Petter, which included a discussion on the following:

- Appropriate criteria for evaluation of First Nations Professors at SFU. There was much discussion about this item at the table and whether or not SFUFA should push to initiate a process to have SFU hire more First Nations Professors in order to attract more First Nations students. It was noted that one model for this is the University Winnipeg who actively encourages faculty to incorporate Indigenous perspectives in their coursework and have developed many degree programs to meet the need for First Nations students, such as the aboriginal self governance program. J. Scott will get more information about the program and report back to the Executive.
- Other topics of discussion with A. Petter were faculty unionization and gender pay equity.
- The Executive reviewed the pros and cons of moving from final offer selection to interest-based arbitration in the next round of bargaining and noted that the Administration is open to discussing this further. The Executive felt it would be beneficial to share the details of the UBC arbitration figures and salary scale information with SFUFA members and D. Broun promised to forward this information to Neil.
- Neil is beefing up member engagement and has several events planned during the fall months starting with a coffee drop in where members are invited to drop by and discuss their thoughts on faculty unionization and other issues that are of concern to them.

5. Executive Director's Report.

B. Green reported on the following:

- The Advisory Council members are meeting in October.
- 2013/2014 BOG and Senate sign up sheets were passed around to the Executive.
- The CUFA AGM is on the same day as the next Consult with senior admin and Brian and Jennifer will not be able to attend the Consult. Glenn will Chair the meeting for Neil who is away on vacation for two weeks.
- The fall general meeting is being scheduled in November. Members will be given notice ahead of time and will be encouraged to bring forward their discussion items ahead of time.

6. Chief Negotiators Report

- C. Schwarz circulated a Bargaining Plan for the Executive to review and noted the following:
- September – October: finalize and approve the 4 members of the bargaining committee and seek volunteers to be a part of the bargaining advisory committee. Late October – survey to members asking them to rank priorities; Late November – SFUFA cost our position; January/February – finalize our position in prep of budget letter from provincial government.
- It is unlikely that bargaining will start before February 2014.
- Carl will give updates to the membership at the fall general meeting.
- There has been no reaction from PSEC about the UBC award and SFUFA is not aware of PSEC's mandate for the next round of bargaining.
- SFUFA may want to consider revising the criteria to bargain for items other than salary and benefits. D. Broun, B Green and C. Schwarz are working together on this item and Executive members were encouraged to pass on their thoughts to the team.
- SFUFA should consider filing a grievance against the overuse of market differentials in hiring.
- B. Green will talk to Alan Black SFUFA legal counsel re: names of arbitrators for the next round of contract negotiations.
- In terms of outreach activities, It is recommended that members of the bargaining team visit departments and interested groups and that the bargaining team meet monthly with the Bargaining Advisory Committee.

7. Items for Consultation

1) Maintenance/ Health and Safety - We all saw the story in the Vancouver Sun regarding SFU's failing infrastructure. We note that Pat did stress that the figures presented in the story were much higher than the University estimates, but the problem of maintenance is a significant one nonetheless. We are particularly concerned about the impact on the health and safety of the community; a number of our members in Education have suffered from serious health problems as a result of mould, and while SFU has tried to resolve the problem it has only worsened over the last couple of years. At this time, the Education building is in a serious crisis. We have a specific request - that the University conduct a thorough examination of offices and classrooms to identify mould, asbestos, or any other health or safety concerns, and that this list be made available to all so that people are aware of any issues and appropriate action can be taken.

2) Community engagement - This is a pillar of the University's vision. SFU is not the first or only institution to look at ways to improve community engagement. Two questions:

a) has the University looked at strategies adopted elsewhere, and can something be produced to help

faculty as SFU identify specific strategies that might be successful?

b) Development of such strategies can be a significant undertaking. How is the work of faculty in this regard to be recognized concretely, i.e. in salary review and promotion and tenure processes?

3) Can we get some information on resources for confidential destruction of personal records that are stored electronically? A faculty member may delete student files, but the information is not necessarily destroyed. Some information on what we need to consider, liabilities that exist, and resources available would be helpful.

4) This year, the university provided additional support for NSRERC applications – such as assistance getting the information into the common CV system. We appreciate the additional support, and it made a tremendous difference, though demand outstripped the amount of support that was available. Can we expect this assistance to continue and perhaps be expanded? Might some of this be automated from the data currently in the SFU CV system?

5) Canvas and other systems - Roll out of new technology has not been smooth, and there are a number of problems migrating to the new systems. In some cases, previous work must be done again from scratch. Similar concerns emerging with CQ5. We would like to hear what the administration is hearing about the transitions, what is being done to address the problems, and what might be done to assist faculty with the additional work arising from the transition.

6) Parking - We would like an update on the parking situation. We were under the impression that there were some temporary changes being made, but that overall access would not be reduced. We now hear that some 1000 parking spots are gone, and will not return, and that fees are being restructured such that many faculty are seeing an increase in parking costs.

8. Unionization information session

- In response to a request from the membership at the last AGM, SFUFA is organizing a second information session on faculty unionization in October so that members can hear from both sides of the unionization debate. Brian Brown from CAUT, Nancy Laughton UBCFA President and someone from UVIC are potential speakers. The Executive recommended that SFUFA get speakers who can speak to the concerns of all members and that SFUFA get the membership engaged and involved as much as possible on this issue. The Executive acknowledged that this topic is challenging to manage and noted that they need to think about how SFUFA will finally decide on this issue. The effect of unionization on the salary scales is the most important issue for faculty members. It was noted that a fact sheet about unionization is posted on the SFUFA website. Another recommendation was to get SFUFA legal counsel A. Black to compile the pros and cons and legal ramifications of unionization to present at the beginning of the information session. More information about the session will be circulated to the Executive shortly.

9. Member Outreach

- We need to increase SFUFA's strength and create a culture of involvement and to develop a strategy for achieving this outcome.
- We do a good job helping individual members but there is no collective involvement. It would be nice if Executive members get ideas of the important issues directly from members so that this could be taken to the Consult meetings with senior admin.
- The top issues of concern to members are faculty unionization, pay equity and LOA.
- Neil has scheduled two drop in coffee sessions for members, on September 9th and October 1st at the Renaissance café in the AQ. Brian noted that he has already received a lot of positive feedback from members after the first e-mail was circulated to members.
- A pub night is being organized on October 3rd from 7 – 9 pm . More details to come.
- Two luncheons are also being scheduled at the DAC in October to give members an opportunity to bring forward issues of concern to them. The recommendation is to have a 10 – 15 minute talk on an issue and then give members a short questionnaire to complete about their views on the subject.
- Members of the Executive should meet with interested members in their faculties/constituencies and report back to the Executive on what they learned from members.
- On October 16th, members will be invited to join the Executive at the Highland Pub following the unionization information session.
- Holly and Neil will meet with Librarian/Archivists to get a feel for what their main concerns or underlying interests are. A date is to be determined.

10. Other Business

- Brian reminded Exec members with signing authority to get to the bank to complete the necessary documents.
- BNS is unable to give SFUFA a secured Visa card unless the bylaws are changed and Brian will follow up with Chelsea Park re: this issue.

14. Adjournment.

There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Moved: C. Schwarz/J. Christians

Carried.