

## Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting

Held December 12, 2013

DAC

9:30 – 12:00 noon

### In attendance:

Neil Abramson, Chair & President (Business)  
David Broun (Physics)  
Glenn Chapman (Engineering Science)  
Julian Christians (Biology)  
Russell Day (Psychology)  
Holly Hendrigan (Library)  
C. Schwarz (Stats and Actuarial Science)  
Maite Taboada (Linguistics)  
Brian Green, Executive Director  
Jennifer Scott, Membership Services Officer  
Melanie Lam, Executive Assistant (Recorder)

### Regrets:

Natalia Gajdamaschko (Education)  
Maureen Fizzell (Business)  
Krishna Pendakur (Economics)

### **1. Approval of Agenda.**

Approved with one amendment - move #7 Unionization discussion to 4b.

Moved: R. Day/D Broun

Carried.

### **2. Approval of Minutes of November 21, 2013 Executive Meeting.**

Approved with one amendment: remove the word temporary in motion listed under item #5.

Moved: C. Schwarz/D. Broun

Carried.

### **3. Business Arising.**

- Jen Scott and R. Day are meeting with reps from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning at SFU in an attempt to gather student/faculty statistics for SFUFA.
- Equity Study update: It was noted that the Committee (SFUFA elected reps and Academic Women) had an initial meeting but it is uncertain if they met with Equity reps from the Administration. B. Green noted he would obtain an update on this and circulate it to the Executive shortly.

### **4. President's Report.**

N. Abramson reported on the following:

- A. Petter has requested that SFUFA endorse SFU's 50th anniversary fundraising campaign. Neil also noted that SFU's anniversary coincides with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SFUFA and he discussed with A. Petter, the possibility of hosting a joint event.
- SFU is developing huge ventures in terms of student exchange programs with China and India and there was discussion about developing programs at SFU to increase the skill levels for Professors who teach International students. The Executive noted it would support an increase in remedial services to help prepare students for University level English rather than increase PD programs for Professors. In addition, support in the form of extra Teaching Assistants in the classroom is another idea that SFUFA would support.

- On December 11<sup>th</sup> Neil circulated an email update to members re: interest arbitration negotiations with the Administration and Unionization and Brian received a few comments from members. It was noted that the legal counsel for the Administration has not had an opportunity to review SFUFA's counter offer proposal.
- Unionization:
  - UVIC collected 60% of their signatures in only 7 weeks and had only engaged with 10% of their membership, before they began the Certification Campaign. SFUFA has engaged with roughly 30 – 35% of the membership so far which is more than what UVIC had before they began their Drive; UVIC also noted that most members who were not engaged tended to pay attention and give their opinion on the issue only when signature cards were being collected. At the recent CAUT Council meeting, they had noted that extending the length of time for further Unionization discussions and member education usually results in reaching only 5% more of the membership. Momentum is also another driving factor and a delay in the process may increase the risk of SFUFA losing momentum for the Campaign. Another factor to consider is timing and the fact that most Faculty members would not be on campus during the summer months for the collection of cards/signatures. UNBC are also moving forward quickly to unionize and there are indications that the BC government is considering increases below inflation for the next round of bargaining. Due to all the above factors, Neil proposed that SFUFA begin the process of collecting cards for the Certification vote in February 2014, which is earlier than planned. Since members were originally told at the General Meeting that SFUFA would provide until September 2014 for education, member outreach & information gathering, the Executive recommended circulating a web survey to members asking them to vote on the proposal of an early start to the Campaign. The Executive reiterated that it was important for SFUFA to be prepared and ready and a CAUT Organizing Check-List was circulated to the Executive for review. Some of the initial to-do's for getting the Campaign started are forming an organizing committee, identifying a lead organizer or campaign coordinator, establishing a timeline, listing goals and objectives and reviewing relevant labour legislation. If members do agree on the early start, voting will most likely commence in May 2014 and voting will be in person. B. Green noted he has the names of 27 volunteers from various faculties including Health Sciences, FASS, Communications, Science and Contemporary Arts who have put their names forward to assist with the Campaign. The Executive also recommended posting a Q & A about the Governance issue for members to review. Executive members J. Christians and N. Abramson noted they would work with the Campaign volunteers. It was recommended that SFUFA review the Constitution before commencing the Certification Drive.

**MOTION:**

That SFUFA commence an early Certification Campaign contingent on the results of the members' online web survey to be circulated next week with a closing date of January 8, 2014.

**Moved:** D. Broun/G. Chapman

Passed: Unanimously

## 5. Executive Director's Report.

- In preparation for a possible early start to the Certification Drive, Brian will begin organizing volunteers, ordering cards and drafting a preamble message to be included with the online web survey to be circulated to members.
- Brian encouraged Executive members to attend the next Pub Night event slated for Monday December 16 in East Vancouver.
- About 8 members in total attended the recent holiday open house at the SFUFA office on December 8th.
- The Executive will be meeting for lunch at the DAC following today's meeting.

## 7. Items for Consultation

- I. Student preparedness - We are concerned about the decline of student preparedness, and the negative impacts on both students and faculty.

We recall recommendations some time ago regarding improved supports for English as an Additional Language and wonder what has become of them?

We would also like a general discussion about services that might be made available for students that are not fully prepared for university learning, including consideration of additional TAships and other supports for faculty and mechanisms for more robust assessment of student preparedness, either at the entrance point or before advancing to upper division courses.

- II. Exam scheduling issues - We would like to bring to your attention ongoing concerns about the venues for and timing of examinations.

- III. Teaching Professor - We would like to hear what progress is being made at the departmental and faculty levels to prepare for applications for teaching professor, and discuss the challenges that we are likely to confront as these applications begin to come forward.

Related to this, we would like to talk about steps to make teaching appointments eligible for internal grants and other resources that might assist them in developing a research profile.

- IV. Grant processes - We would like to raise a few points regarding grant applications.

The use of the SFU signature sheet is time consuming and, it seems to us, unnecessary. We would like to talk about other options that are less administratively onerous.

We are very happy with the services provided by SFU's grants facilitators, and would like to talk about possibilities for expansion of grant-related supports.

## 8. Other Business

- SFUFA will bring forward for discussion at the January Consult meeting the issues around the recent academic integrity case.

## 9. Adjournment.

There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 11.56 am.

Moved: D. Broun/J. Christians

Carried.