

draft:

Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting
Held Thursday April 9, 2020
Via Zoom video conference
9.30 – 11:30 am

In attendance:

Kumari Beck (Education)
Sherryl Bisgrove (Biological Sciences)
Dan Laitsch (Education)
Steeve Mongrain (Economics)
Suzanne Norman (Publishing)
Janice Regan (Computing Science)
Michael Sjoerdsma (Engineering Science) Chair
Rochelle Tucker (Health Sciences)
Alexandra Wieland (Archives)
Melanie Lam (Minutes)
Jennifer Scott (Member Services)
Brian Green (Executive Director)

Regrets:

Genevieve Fuji Johnson (Political Science)

1. Approval of Agenda

Approved as circulated.

Moved: Dan Laitsch/Alexandra Wieland

Carried.

2. Approval of Minutes of March 12th (special bargaining meeting)

Tabled to the next meeting.

3. Business Arising - none to report.

4. Presidents Report – Mike Sjoerdsma

- Following SFUFA's special bargaining meeting on March 12th, it was noted that David Broun, SFUFA Chief Negotiator and Mike Sjoerdsma met with Jon Driver, VPA *pro tem* and Jennifer Perry, Executive Director Faculty Relations to discuss the status of bargaining.
- The VPA is working with the CRA to see if some external rules regarding professional development expenses for faculty, can be relaxed during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- In addition to a Covid-19 FAQ page, the VPA office is archiving important email updates

regarding COVID-19 on their website and faculty members have noted they find this useful.

- As part of SFU's COVID-19 response, IT Services has launched a pilot implementation of the videoconferencing service Zoom, to provide additional support for remote work, teaching and learning and Mike noted he has joined the pilot project.

5. Executive Director report – Brian Green

- Bargaining: There have been a few stumbling blocks and the recent follow up meeting with Jon Driver was productive. SFUFA and the administration have re established a plan to put together a new document highlighting the issues that are hindering progress.
- Covid-19 related member issues: Brian noted that SFUFA is responding to a number of member queries and are working with the administration to address the following: Workload for faculty, especially for limited term lecturers, expanded and immediate access to PDR funds for purchasing equipment for remote work, extra funding for TA support, impact on Sessionals and food service workers at SFU, current and planned study leaves, how the current situation is going to be reflected in future biennial reviews, having tax forms for home office and expenses provided to all by default. The executive recommended that some of these issues be raised at the next senior admin meeting on April 16th.

6. Member Services report – Jennifer Scott

- At the last employee council meeting Jen noted that the employee groups were advised that HR has recommended to the food service provider on campus, Sodexo, that food services staff get compensated during the covid-19 closure. It was further noted that HR has also asked Homewood Health (counselling and psychological help) to eliminate the cap on the number of counselling sessions permitted for faculty and staff.
- In addition to dealing with covid-19 related membership issues, Jennifer has also been working on bargaining with Brian and the rest of the negotiating team and supporting the Equity Committee.

7. Committee Reports

- Sherryl noted that the SFUFA Equity committee is updating its terms of reference, is planning on holding a meeting soon and are gearing up for elections.
- Dan gave an update on two senate meetings which were conducted via Zoom and noted it was business as usual.
- The AVP Students and International search committee met and has drawn up a list of

candidates to be interviewed. A final decision is expected by the end of May or early June.

8. a) Grading options

Many faculty members have noted that they would prefer to go directly to the option of providing a Pass/Fail to students for the 2020 summer semester, instead of providing a numerical grade and then giving students the option to change their numerical grade to a Pass/Fail. There is a significant increase in workload associated with this process and faculty members are concerned that they are not being provided the degree of autonomy and flexibility during this crisis.

b) PDR office supplies for Covid-19.

Regarding online teaching demands, there are additional costs being transferred to faculty members and SFUFA members would like SFU to consider different ways of offering support that is apart from dipping into PDR funds. Faculty would like to be able to expense stationery costs associated with online teaching, they would also like SFU to waive the monitor size restriction during this time and are asking to use PD funds to buy ergonomic furniture and stand up desks etc. for one's home teaching set up. The executive recommended raising these issues at the next consult meeting on the 16th.

c) Deadline for the composition of TPC committees

Faculty would like to see the deadline for this adjusted and Brian noted that an announcement will be made about this shortly.

9. Items for Consultation – April 16th

(New issues related to Covid-19)

- i. Assessment and faculty autonomy - in issues like grading, we are concerned that faculty are not being provided the degree of autonomy they deserve.
- ii. Resources for changes in teaching – SFUFA is hearing from many people about issues of resource support as they adjust to online teaching demands. We would like to discuss ways of offering support, such as PDR flexibility, equipment and resources more generally, especially for contract faculty; ergonomics, desks, computers, cameras, mics, software; options for direct reimbursement of expenses, as well as having tax forms for home office and expenses provided to all by default.
- iii. Workload, TA support, expectations - these are huge questions for many faculty, and we would like to discuss what SFU is looking to offer additional support and to compensate members for huge increase in workload. We are also concerned about implications for the future, and how the current situation is going to be reflected in future biennial reviews.

- iv. Timelines - We understand decisions about things like the Fall semester cannot be made yet, but a timeline for key decisions would be helpful.

(Held over from last time)

- v. Data breach - SFUFA would still like to hear about the earlier data breach, including causes, response, implications, and any thoughts on potential issues in current shift to online.
- vi. HR and staffing delays and restrictions - a number of areas are reporting serious delays in staffing, and orders from HR to adjust hiring processes and standards in ways that negatively impact hiring. We would like to hear if there is anything in particular causing the delays, and raise concerns about the more general issues of restrictive processes.
- vii. Calendar - next year's calendar includes still more partial weeks, further complicating planning. We would like to understand the rationale for the changes, and hear how faculty members can bring their voices to the planning process.

10. Other Business – none to report.

Adjournment. There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 11:26 am.