

Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting
Held June 10, 2021
Via zoom video conference
9.00 – 11.00

In attendance:

Kumari Beck (Education)
Sherryl Bisgrove (Biological Sciences)
Dan Laitsch (Education)
Steeve Mongrain (Economics)
Janice Regan (Computing Science)
Michael Sjoerdsma (Engineering Science) Chair
Brian Green (Executive Director)
Melanie Lam (Minutes)
Jennifer Scott (Member Services)

Regrets:

Dave Hannah (Business)
Suzanne Norman (Publishing)
Alexandra Weiland (Archives)

The meeting was called to order at 9.12 am.

1. Approval of Agenda

Approved with no additions.

Moved: Dan Laitsch/Sherryl Bisgrove

Carried.

2. Approval of Minutes of May 27th, 2021

Approved as circulated.

Moved: Kumari Beck/Sherryl Bisgrove

Carried.

3. Business arising – none to report.

4. Presidents Report – Mike Sjoerdsma

- The VPA has noted that the faculty renewal plan in FASS has been suspended until a new Dean is appointed.
- A new Dean has been appointed in the Beedie School of Business.
- SFUFA has been informed that faculty members would not be required to teach hybrid/blended courses starting in September, but faculty in individual departments are being told otherwise. It is unsure if faculty members will be able to select this or if it would be an assigned mode of delivery. In addition, there are other potential scenarios starting in September that could increase faculty workload, such as recording more classes, managing more student accommodation requests and supporting international

students who are not here in person. If this is the case, extra support and resources will be required. SFUFA is continuing to seek clarification on these issues and will raise some of these concerns at the next consult meeting.

5. Executive Director report

- The staff in the SFUFA office are hoping to be back to a regular schedule in September. Brian noted he would be more available to faculty members on campus during the summer months.
- Pension Plan: SFU had erroneously included transition costs for senior administrators, Deans and Associate Deans which amounts to about 5% of the overall costs which the university has agreed to cover. The \$5,000,000 million down payment for the transition cost – SFUFA was hoping to put down more, but was advised by the university that it was too late to do so. SFUFA has met with both parties (BCCPP and SFU) and have ironed out these issues. Two pension information sessions are scheduled for next week, one on Monday June 14th and Wednesday June 16th. Representatives from the BCCPP, SFUFA, SFU and Barbara Sanders who is an academic pension trustee, will be participating. Other Faculty Associations including UNBC have shown interest in SFUFA's transition to a defined benefit plan and have reached out to SFUFA for more information.
- Early last year, SFU announced that Research Associates and Research Assistants would be recognized as employees of SFU. Some of these employees have now come forward and shown interest in joining SFUFA. There are about 30 Research Associates, these are employees with PhD's who do research work like SFUFA members but who do not teach and SFUFA is reaching out to them. In addition, SFUFA was approached by a group of Research Assistants in FHS, from the Canadian Drug Policy Coalition, about 13 of them who are interested in joining a bargaining unit and SFUFA is talking to these employees as well.
- It was noted that overall, communication with FR has improved and advocacy issues are now being addressed.
- Brian reported that the Covid-19 working group had a meeting and it was productive. The group had good open conversations about some issues that SFUFA had brought forward, for example, taking steps to address faculty workload.
- It has been reported to SFUFA that a couple of faculties appear to be talking about combining sections and treating them as a single course for the purposes of faculty workload. That is a concern for SFUFA and for TSSU. If anyone on the executive hears anything more about this issue please bring it to Brian's attention.

6. Member Services

- Jen gave an update on the current advocacy issues and the 3 large grievances on the table. One arbitration is scheduled for August and Jen and Brian are working together with legal counsel to prepare for this.
- As part of the new CUSC terms of reference, every year the exec committee of each member organization can provide feedback about the efficacy of the committee. If any SFUFA exec members have thoughts about how the central committee can improve or be more efficient – please provide these suggestions to Jennifer before next Thursday.

7. Committee Reports

- Health & Safety Committee: The North East Health and Safety committee is looking for a SFUFA rep to be on the committee. There appears to be some changes in preparation for the fall, where the review of safety plans and lab inspections etc. is being downloaded to departments. CUSC will still be handling high level reviews of safety plans.
- Micro credentials issue which was addressed at the recent Senate meeting - it is recommended that SFUFA keeps an eye on this.
- Access to campus and labs/permissions to return to campus: the rules appear to be inconsistent across faculties. SFUFA would like to know if there is a standard way this is going to be managed as of July. The recommendation is to raise it at the next consult meeting.
- The Parking Committee is meeting in July.

8. Items for Consultation – June 17th

- i. Transit update: we understand SFU has been meeting with TransLink about plans for the return to campus and would like to hear an update on what is anticipated.
- ii. Budget: we would like an update on the University's enrollment and overall budgetary situation as we prepare to return to campus
- iii. Blended course designation: we would like to hear what is anticipated with the new blended course designation; will this be something faculty members can select, or would it be a set, and assigned, mode of delivery?
- iv. Return to campus and access to offices and labs: mixed messages for faculty members regarding their ability to access office space and labs. Is there a standard University expectation for how this is to be handled as of July?
- v. Recording: we are wondering about the various recording facilities available. For example, how many rooms will have recording infrastructure available; which systems will have support and which require faculty to manage on their own; are we anticipating bandwidth concerns?

11. **Other Business** – the next townhall meeting for staff and faculty re SFU’s return to on-campus education is being held today at 11 am.
12. **Adjournment**
There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 am.