

Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting

Held April 11, 2024

In Halpern 126

9.30 – 12 noon

In attendance:

Bertille Antoine (Economics)
Kumari Beck (Education, Chair)
David Broun (Physics)
Tim Beischlag (Health Sciences)
Janice Regan (Computing Science)
Mike Sjoerdsma (Engineering Science)
Rochelle Tucker (Health Sciences)

Regrets:

Ronda Arab (English)
Adena Brons (Library)
Ljiljana Trajkovic (Engineering Science)

Brian Green (Executive Director)
Melanie Lam (Minutes)
Jennifer Scott (Member Services)

Quorum was achieved and the meeting was called to order at 9.34 am.

1. **Approval of Agenda**

Approved with one addition – compensation for SFUFA exec members.

Moved: Bertille Antoine/Mike Sjoerdsma

Carried.

2. **Approval of the March 21st meeting minutes**

Approved as circulated.

Moved: Tim Beischlag/Bertille Antoine

Carried.

3. **Business arising**

- SFUFA Elections: Course releases for potential SFUFA Directors:
For those Directors eligible for a course release, who happen to not have teaching duties in a particular semester, it was noted they would still be compensated for the extra workload required to carry out SFUFA duties. The course release amounts are stipulated in the Collective Agreement.

4. **Presidents Report**

- CUFA updates: Faculty Associations are being encouraged to document their unionization process; Dr. Amy Parent from SFU has been honoured with the Ehor Boyanowsky Academic of the Year Award; changes to government policy on sexual violence investigations are coming into effect this year; CUFA is seeking a Secretary/Treasurer for their Board of Directors.
- Joint Committee discussion on faculty & staff renewal – Kumari gave an update and noted that ultimately SFU is going to fund more continuing faculty positions and this is a positive initiative. Although this will not impact all faculties equally, it was reported that most Deans are in support.

- Meeting with SFU Chairs & Directors: This took place on April 10th and attendance was good, there was discussion about the faculty renewal plan and the group recommended that SFUFA host an orientation session every Fall for Chairs & Directors.
- SFUFA Academic Freedom Survey: Lyn Bartram, Dave Hannah, Brian and Kumari have been working on this. The group will meet with M. Javdani from the Equity Committee to review both surveys to ensure there is no overlap. The data/demographic survey or census to be circulated by the VPPEI's office will take place in September 2024.
- Mike Sjoerdsma, SFUFA's Vice President and Treasurer is being seconded to an excluded position in his department and will be leaving his SFUFA post from May until September 2024 and SFUFA will need to appoint an acting Treasurer.
- As part of SFU's People Plan, a Faculty Engagement Working Group is being struck and the focus will be on improving academic leadership development. SFUFA would rather see more support and resources provided to faculty who are already in leadership positions and will continue to campaign for this.

5. Executive Director report

- The universities approach to the faculty renewal plan is significant and SFUFA will wait to hear from departments once details are revealed.
- Med School: The full program proposal is going through all the senate committees currently and to a special closedsenate committee meeting on May 13th and to the BOG on May 23rd. Following that, a submission for accreditation will be made. Recruitment will take place in the Fall of 2025 and the first intake will be for 2026 for 48 students. The program will offer a MD program, residency programs focused on family medicine, and a continuing professional development (CPD) program. SFU will be talking to SFUFA about the faculty piece in the near future.
- Cuts have been made to BEST cleaning services and SFUFA will be raising this issue at the next consult meeting in April.
- SFUFA is in the process of negotiating a contract for those in CEE and SFU Learning Commons and are close to finalizing a proposal for these new SFUFA members.
- Professional ranks & tenure for Teaching Faculty – conversations with SFU are going well. SFUFA is also trying to negotiate lower workloads and a semester off every year for Teaching Faculty.

6. Member Services report – Jennifer Scott

- Jen gave an update on her advocacy cases.
- There has been a surge in students seeking accommodations through CAL, and this often translates to an increased workload for faculty members. SFUFA will be meeting with SFU's Human Rights Officer to see how we can best address some of the gaps that exist in the system.

7. a) Housing crisis impacts and faculty safety concerns

- SFUFA is hearing from faculty and students about the increased impacts of the housing crisis on campus, particularly in Burnaby. Some examples are open drug use in public spaces, fires being lit to keep warm, vandalism & theft, and this takes place on a daily basis in certain areas.

Although SFUFA recognizes that there is a social crisis, we would like to ask the administration about the specific steps they are taking to keep students and faculty safe. The executive recommended raising this at the next consult meeting with senior administration and bringing this to the attention of the Central University Health and Safety committee.

b) Committee reports

- The Parking committee is meeting on May 1st
- Janice gave an update on the proposed Med school discussion at Senate.
- Ljiljana was absent and there was no update on the Equity/Human Rights committee.

8. Items for Consultation – April 18th

- i. Cuts to cleaning services - cleaning services at SFU are already insufficient. The announced cuts make an already bad problem worse, and constitute in our view a health and safety concern. While cleaners are laid off, we understand BEST has hired additional supervisors; we also are hearing that cleaners are not being provided cleaning materials and being directed to use SFU's hand soap and hand sanitizer for their duties. The treatment of this group of workers is not only incompatible with SFU's values and commitments regarding EDI, but the cost cutting measures of the contractor now pose a direct health and safety risk for the entire university community.
- ii. Housing crisis impacts at SFU – SFUFA is hearing, and seeing, increased impacts of the housing crisis on campus. Drug use and fires are just two examples of what students, staff and faculty face as they come to work and study. We recognize the social crisis, and the need for structural rather than police responses, but we also believe SFU needs to be attentive to the health and safety risks that arise. We would like to hear what steps are being taken to ensure that the community can and feel safe when coming to campus.
- iii. Maintenance – SFUFA is continuing to hear concerns about the lack of maintenance, particularly regarding washroom facilities. The community is now being told that only urgent issues of repair will be attended to, with the result that conditions continue to deteriorate and fewer and fewer facilities are available. We would like to hear what plans are in place to ensure adequate, working facilities for the community.
- iv. Faculty Renewal and Budget - we would like our whole executive to hear about the proposed changes to Faculty Renewal and its budgeting, as was presented at our joint committee meeting this week.
- v. Members are being told that they are not allowed to follow normal processes to book events that Risk Services deems too controversial - for members booking events related to Palestine. Risk Services should not be gatekeeping faculty events, and we would like to hear what steps the University is taking to ensure that members are not treated differentially in access to university space.

- 10. Other Business** – SFUFA AGM April 30th: There was a discussion on whether to offer a hybrid option, and whether to host a social for members following the AGM. It was noted that SFUFA tends to get the most attendance numbers when the AGM is held on Zoom videoconference. Some SFUFA executive members are heading out to a CUFA event immediately following the AGM this year and therefore it was recommended that we keep the AGM on Zoom but consider hosting a social event next year. It was also recommended that the AGM be scheduled during the first couple of days during the exam period, which is better timing for faculty.

- 11. Adjournment.** There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 11:19 am.