

**Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting**

**Held March 14, 2024**

**In Halpern 114**

**9.30 - 12 noon**

**In attendance:**

Bertille Antoine (Economics)  
Ronda Arab (English)  
Kumari Beck (Education, Chair)  
Adena Brans (Library)  
David Broun (Physics)  
Tim Beischlag (Health Sciences)  
Janice Regan (Computing Science)

**Regrets:**

Mike Sjoerdsma (Engineering Science)

Ljiljana Trajkovic (Engineering Science)  
Rochelle Tucker (Health Sciences)  
Brian Green (Executive Director)  
Melanie Lam (Executive Assistant) Minutes  
Jennifer Scott (Member Services)

The meeting was called to order at 9.38 am.

**1. Approval of Agenda**

Approved as circulated.

Moved: Tim Beischlag/ Ljiljana Trajkovic

**Carried.**

**2. Approval of the February 15<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes**

Approved as circulated.

Moved: Bertille Antoine/Adena Brans

**Carried.**

**3. Business arising - none to report.**

**4. Presidents Report**

- Kumari gave an update on the VPPEI Data Taskforce and noted that the launch date for their survey is in the Fall 2024.
- It was noted that the administration is not going ahead with antisemitism and islamophobia training at SFU, but will explore other ways to support the community during the Middle East conflict.
- A Respect and Personal Safety working group has been established and will be active during Welcome Week.
- Indigenous faculty are in favour of strengthening indigenous staff and faculty recruitment but would like to see more supports in place for existing indigenous initiatives, before expansion plans are considered.
- Kumari gave an update on the CAUT academic freedom and tenure committee meeting that she recently attended and noted that CAUT is putting together a "Toolkit" for academic freedom- similar to their Equity Toolkit.

**5. Executive Director report**

- Faculty Relations response times to SFUFA advocacy cases remains slow.
- A number of faculty who chose not to cross the TSSU picket line last Fall, have now received notices from SFU about salary deductions. Although SFU is allowed to dock pay during a strike, there are questions about the timing of the deductions, and the inconsistency in which the strike policy is being applied. SFUFA will be following up with affected members.
- Research Ethics Board: Jennifer gave an update on the current REB membership and noted there is currently no Chair Person and 7 vacant positions on the Board, and this may have implications for faculty members participating in research.
- Health spending account update: The university shared a list which was reviewed and inconsistencies were found. SFUFA will be following up on this with Faculty Relations.

**6. Member Services report - Jennifer Scott**

- SFUFA has received several complaints from faculty related to the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy R60:01 and Jen gave an update on the issue.
- A replacement for the signature sheet is being rolled out at the end of March and SFUFA anticipates there will be many problems as there was very little (if any) community consultation.
- There is going to be an equity demographic survey distributed by the VP PEI Office and the draft was shared at joint committee.

**7. a) Teaching Releases**

Following up on a discussion at last year's executive planning session, the executive discussed whether Teaching Releases should be reviewed every year based on budget and priorities, or whether the number of TR's should be capped. It was noted that serving on SFUFA committees counts as service to the university.

After some discussion, the executive recommended keeping the current Teaching Releases as is and adding two extra TR's into the budget starting next fiscal year.

Currently, Teaching Releases for the President and Chief Negotiator are built into the Collective Agreement. Other TR's are: 1 each for the Tenure and Promotion Advisor, Equity & Human Rights Chair, Vice President, and Community Relations Director.

**b) Bylaw revisions**

In order to align with the Societies Act, the following minor Bylaw revisions will be brought forward to the membership for ratification at the next AGM in April. Bylaws V.8,9, and 10 are being renumbered to read as Bylaws V.7(b), (c) and (d), and the text of Bylaw VII titled *Indemnification* - will be deleted and replaced with new text.

**Motion:**

That the above noted Bylaw revisions be brought forward for ratification by the membership at the next SFUFA AGM on April 30<sup>th</sup> 2024.

Moved: Ljiljana Trajkovic/David Broun

**Carried.**

## 8. Committee reports

- Parking committee: There has been no action taken on SFUFA's complaints so far and there was no meeting.
- Equity & Human Rights committee:
  - The revised Terms of Reference are being reviewed by the committee and the deadline for submitting this to the SFUFA executive is the end of April.
  - A workload survey has been drafted by Mohsen Javdani - it is an in-depth survey dealing with workload and has a different scope than the survey being prepared by the VP, PEI Data Taskforce. Mohsen will attend today's SFUFA exec meeting to review the draft.
  - Collection of anonymous feedback from SFUFA members - this item will not be pursued by the committee.
  - Mohsen reviewed the draft Equity Committee survey with the SFUFA executive. It was noted that the survey intends to collect deep level information about the broader challenges faculty members face regarding workload and other inequities they may face. It covers elements such as freedom of speech, empowerment, harassment etc. It was recommended that questions re mental health and work, life, balance also be included. It was noted that the SFU survey being conducted by the VP, PEI Office is meant to be more of a census and should not overlap with this survey. There was concern about the survey being too long and there was a recommendation to split it into two parts, allowing the participant to exit survey before answering the open-ended questions. There were other recommended edits to question 1, 15 & 16. Brian and Kumari noted they would set up a meeting with Mohsen to discuss next steps, and to compare the questions to the academic freedom survey that SFUFA is working on. The SFUFA executive committee thanked Mohsen for dedicating his time and energy into this project.
- Community Engagement: Senate: There was a discussion about the new Medical School & potential switch to a 12-week semester

## 9. Items for Consultation - February 15th

- i. Medical School - SFUFA would like to ask for an update on the medical school since the provincial government has now provided an indication regarding its funding commitments.
- ii. Research support - we are hearing concerns about a range of issues related to research and research support, including ongoing issues with the REB (structure, minimal risk studies, membership), research accounting, and the new I-uali approach to vetting research proposals.
- iii. Budget cuts - SFUFA would like an update on what is happening with the budget management; we are particularly concerned about increases to class sizes that are disproportionately impacting teaching faculty with no recognition in workload assignment.
- iv. Exam policy and scheduling - we would like to discuss plans for the summer exam schedule so as to see if we can avoid issues that have arisen in previous years.

**10. Other Business**

a) Teaching Faculty Meetings: Rochelle Tucker held 3 meetings that were well attended. There was good dialogue regarding the timelines for the tenure process; expanding workload and class sizes is a big issue for teaching faculty. Some reported seeing an increase of between 60-120 more students in classes. Other issues: Inadequate PDR; no mechanism for teaching assessments; Faculty are happy with the Collective Agreement increases.

b) **Motion**

That Jorge Cardenas Garcia be appointed as SFUFA's representative to the Vancouver Campus Safety Committee.

Moved: Kumari Beck/Janice Regan

**Carried.**

**11. Adjournment.** There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 12.02 pm.